░ HARINGEY COUNCIL ░

Scrutiny Review - Customer Services

MONDAY, 7TH NOVEMBER, 2005 at 19:00 HRS - CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH ROAD, WOOD GREEN, N22 8LE.

MEMBERS: Councillors Bevan (Chair), Bax, Bull, Gilbert, Millar, Oatway and Peacock

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

2. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of urgent business. Where the item is already included on the agenda, it will be dealt with under that item but new items of urgent business will be dealt with at item

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY, IN RESEPCT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (PAGES 1 - 12)

That the Panel confirms the notes of the last meeting as an accurate record of the proceedings.

5. ORAL EVIDENCE FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (PAGES 13 - 18)

Pre-prepared questions and answers attached.

6. ORAL EVIDENCE FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & PERFORMANCE

7. CUSTOMER SERVICES - PRE BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW 2006/07 (PAGES 19 - 54)

The Assistant Chief Executive (Access) will present the report to the Panel.

8. ORAL EVIDENCE FROM THE IT PRIORITISATION MANGER (PAGES 55 - 62)

Pre-prepared questions and answers attached.

9. URGENT BUSINESS

To deal with any new items of urgent business admitted at item 2.

Yuniea Semambo
Head of Member Services
5th Floor
River Park House
225 High Road
Wood Green
London N22 8HQ

Afazul Hoque
Principal Support Officer
Tel: 020-8489 2663
Fax: 020-8881 2662
Email: Afazul.hoque@haringey.gov.uk

✳ HARINGEY COUNCIL ✳

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4TH OCTOBER 2005

Members Present: Cllrs John Bevan, Gideon Bull & Susan Oatway

Also present: Jane Waterhouse (JW) (Head of Customer Services), Harry Gulrajani (HG) (Finance & Performance Manager, CS), Lydia Dlaboha (LD) (Expert Adviser), Afazul Hoque (AH) (Principal Scrutiny Support Officer).

1.   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Judith Bax, Stephen Gilbert & Sheila Peacock.

2.   **URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

3.   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY, IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

None.

4.   **APPOINTMENT OF EXPERT ADVISER**

Lydia Dlaboha introduced herself, she is a Consultant with Housing Quality Network (HQN), which mainly worked on housing projects. There are a lot of cross cutting issues such as customer care, access and performance. She led on the Housing Mock Inspection in Haringey which took place in preparation for the ALMO. There were some vital issues picked up in the mock inspection on customer care, equality, diversity and the links of customer service with housing.

The Panel endorsed the appointment of Lydia Dlaboha as an Expert Adviser to this review subject to the terms and conditions of appointment set out in the service level agreement.

5.   **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY PERFORMANCE ISSUES**

The Head of Customer Services introduced this report, which followed a question and answer session:

Q1)   Is Homeless Unit part of Customer Services (CS)

Ans 1) Homeless Unit is not part of CS or part of this review. Although external Inspectors do look at how local authorities serve vulnerable people in the community. A key challenge for Customer Services was joint working and the Housing Improvement Plan in response to the housing mock inspection detailed ways to address this issue.
Action: JW- Issues relating to CS in the Housing Mock Inspection, along with the Improvement Plan relating to them be presented at a later stage of the review.

Q2)   The Customer Services Telephone Survey data table for CSC's & CC had a high proportion of actions which were agreed with customers but not carried out. Can you explain why that is? Can this data be split into Directorates to identify those departments not undertaking the actions.

Ans2)   This may not necessarily be a Customer Services issue. For example if a resident phones up about a Housing Repair, but for some reason the repair does not get done but the transaction has been completed on CS side then this obviously is out of the remit of CS. This data can be split into Client Service and I will provide a copy to the Review Panel.

Action: JW – Data of % of action carried out by Client Service. (Please See Appendix 4)

Q3)   During our visits to the CSC's it was obvious managing and displaying leaflets was an issue. There were boxes lying around and it was not clear if the leaflets they contained were out of date.

Ans 3) We are currently looking into this and it has been proposed that Corporate Communication take responsibility for all reception and corporate leaflets, which includes version control. At present we have boxes lying around as departments get them printed in bulk and give to us as it is cheaper and we have to store them wherever possible. The re-design of some of the reception areas in CSC will create further display space, in particular for ALMO.

It was noted that the CSC's were a very important way of communicating with residents for the Council. It was imperative that the information displayed are accurate and sufficient.

Q4)   CS's last recruitment was undertaken through the website. This meant that a lot of people were excluded. Are there any Government Schemes which pays for local people to train in such a job, or do you have any plans to recruit local people? What do you look for in your officers? Local people will have more empathy towards residents and also a better understanding of the issues affecting the borough.

Ans 4) Through the New Start Scheme we have taken on 2/3 people each year, and most of these have secured permanent jobs with the Council. There may be a possibility of setting up a Customer Service Academy which is self financing. This will obviously need to be thoroughly thought out with sufficient resources invested.

Q5)   What kind of an impact does IT have on Customer Services?

Ans 5) CS is very reliant on IT as it has major impact on our performance. CS is now last in line to be Tech Refreshed due to the compatibility of some of the software's.

Action: AH to arrange for Mark Saffrey (Prioritisation Manager) to attend meeting in November.

Q6)   Do CS have access to any other database on residents from other directorates of the Council?

Ans 6) Most departments do not hold the type of information that we need and capture in the CRM system. We are looking at ways we can share our system with other databases. The Council has managed to negotiate a site contract with Cyborg which means that the Council will not have to purchase a license for all the sites.

Q7) There does not seem to be much information on benchmarking?

Ans 7) Currently there is not much information on similar services. Haringey is leading on a benchmarking group and the data we have gathered is the only data available.

Q8) How much duplicate data is there on your database? How often do you clear duplicate data?

Ans 8) We have about 270,000 people on the database and of those 26,000 are duplicate. These are not all Haringey residents they can be people visiting and working in the borough. The database is from 2001 when CS came in to existence.

Q9) What do you do to get feedback from Customers?

Ans 9) The following consultations are undertaken annually:

- The Annual Residents Telephone Survey – 1,000 people are surveyed and survey undertaken by independent agency researchers and the data is put together by CS.
- The Exit & Call Back Survey is undertaken 6 months after the telephone survey. It is also undertaken by Independent staff but managed by CS.
- The Corporate Reception Survey is undertaken annually
- A Customer Services London Group had also undertaken a research on 14 boroughs. Initial results show high level of satisfaction.

Action: Chair asked to see results of this survey. – JW & AH (Please See Appendix 5)

- At the end of each call all callers are asked 'were they happy with the service they received'. The data on this is currently not available but would be soon.

Q10) Any ideas where the weak link is in client service?

Ans10) There are regular meetings with Client Service where operational staff meet from both side to discuss the key issues. There are also log books which you can have a look at.

Action: Chair asked to attend one of the liaison meetings and view notes of log and notes of meeting. - JW & AH (Please See Appendix 6)

Q11) Does the 15 minutes waiting time referred to in the performance data is from when a customer takes a ticket at the reception?

Ans 11) The waiting time to be seen at the reception is not easily measurable. In addition the upgrade to the CRM system will ensure that waiting time at the reception is reduced as transaction time is reduced. The 15 minutes reefers to the time once a customer has taken a ticket and waits to be seen by a customer services officer.

Some further questions and answers which were sent to the officer prior to the meeting are attached as appendix A.

6. **REVIEW WORK PLAN**

The Review Panel made the following comments on the work plan:

That the meeting arranged for 18th October 2005 be combined with the meeting on 29th November 2005. JW to arrange staff from CS and Client Sides to attend meeting on 29th November 2005. CS will arrange for facilitation of this focus group.

LD suggested that perhaps visits to private sector or Housing Associations such as English Churches or Metropolitan Housing may be a good learning experience for Members.

JW suggested that perhaps a visit to Westminster Council Call Centre which is operated by a private company would be beneficial.

LD stated that Customers view points needed to be taken in to account. JW said that a focus group with customers could be undertaken and agreed to arrange a focus group with local service users.

Action: AH to amend work plan and arrange the visits.

Meeting ended at 8.35pm.

_____
Cllr John Bevan
Chair, Scrutiny Review of Customer Services

Q 'N' A: Customer Services Scrutiny Review (041005)
Item 05 (Customer Services Key Performance Issues)

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
1	2.1	Despite a substantial improvement in 'callers seen in 15minutes', please explain why there has been a 10% drop between 2004/05 and 2005/06	May and June's service levels were affected by problems with new IT system implementations, as well as changes in demand as a result of client service actions. More specific information is in the answer to Question 10 about Wood Green CSC's(Customer Service Centre) performance. Wood Green CSC was the worst affected because of its size and complexity, and its historic importance as the place people go for Council Tax enquiries and the only place to go for The Children's Service enquiries.. Later months of the year tend to be quieter and service level much better, so comparing the whole of last year, with the first 5 months is misleading. For the same period April to August 2004, the CSC service level was almost identical to this year, at 68%.
2	2.4	What steps are we taking to ensure that the downtime referred to is kept to a minimum?	Planned downtime is restricted to outside of operational hours. Managed service contracts include financial penalties for downtime.

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
3	2.5	Please explain a little more about how the annual telephone survey works	A list of Customer Service contacts for the previous 6 months is extracted from the Customer Relationship System (CRM) and then: ♦ checked through the Telephone Preference Service - to ensure that no-one is called who has specifically requested not to be ♦ randomised and prepared for use. Over a 1 week period those on the list are phoned and following explanation of why the survey is being carried out and their agreement to participate, a standard set of questions are asked. The questions asked include standard customer satisfaction and customer care questions as well as questions that support future service development (additional opening hour preferences for example). Demographic questions (ethnicity, disability) complete the questionnaire. Analysis of the results is carried out using the industry-standard software package SNAP and analysis provided to managers for use in identifying issues specific to their centres.

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
4	2.5	What effort is being made to address the fact that 13% of the 1000 customers who took part in the telephone survey were either 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied'?	Results indicate that a substantial part of the dissatisfaction appears to be related to long queuing times and to some areas of customer care. Queuing times particularly in the Call Centre (CC) are reducing following major investment in new staff and we are now well within achieving the service target of answering calls or seeing customers within 15 seconds/15 minutes respectively. The investment which was only just coming on stream at the time of the last survey, is expected to lead to a reduction in dissatisfaction in the next survey (scheduled for March 2006). With the customer care related issues we have instituted a new individual staff monitoring procedure that concentrates more on service quality. This includes elements of customer care monitoring. Any issues identified during monitoring are then fed into the Performance Appraisal process and addressed through training and development, and possibly capability procedures. To compliment this, regular customer care training is carried out for new staff and for those existing staff that require refresher training.
5	General	Please give me a breakdown of the % of customers that use the 4 CSCs since they all came on line.	Attached, Appendix 1.

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
6	General	What steps are being taken to inform customers that they can use any of the 4 CSCs across the borough?	A recent survey (Exit & Call Back Survey - June 2004) indicated that many customers are in fact aware of their ability to travel between and use other centres - especially CSC customers where nearly 30% use other centres or the Call Centre, however only 5% of Call Centre users use our CSCs.

Promotion of Customer Services (CS) services has been carried out by poster, leaflets, Haringey People etc. over the past 18 months but has in general concentrated on range of services and access arrangements (opening hours, addresses).

There are currently some difficulties in promoting a use any centre message as for technical reasons Children's Services - admissions can only be provided through the Wood Green Centre. A resolution will allow us to promote a use any centre message (together with opening hours extensions at Wood Green and the additional services that will be made available over the coming months.

A feature of the next advertising campaign will be an increase in service promotion in community languages. |
| 7 | App 2 | What constitutes an email response? A holding response or a complete response? | A complete response. A response is sent out informing the customer when they can expect a complete response. This acknowledgement will be automated from November 2005 when the CRM system is upgraded. |

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
8	App 2	What steps are being taken to encourage more people from ethnic minority backgrounds to join the Customer Services team?	Customer Services is very successful at attracting people from ethnic minority backgrounds and our profile as at February 05 is attached, App 2.
9	Gen	What do you say to the critics of the CSCs agenda who claim that the fluctuating and, in most instances, disappointing response rates, are proof that the agenda is not delivering for the people of Haringey?	CSC's measure the response rate to our customers, through our ticketing system. In most cases prior to the CSC's opening, waiting times could not be measured. To improve this figure significantly, would lead to many of our staff being unproductive at quieter times during the day., and would not be cost-effective. We are planning to improve this response rate over time, by more and better analysis of our peak times, and deploying staff to match these demand patterns, as well as by working even more closely with our Client Services to be better able to predict changes in demand. Satisfaction levels recorded in regular Annual Telephone Surveys confirm a continuing high level of customer satisfaction (and reducing levels of dissatisfaction) with the service provided. Further confirmation came recently from a cross-London benchmarking survey of 200 of our customers. The survey found that only 11% of those interviewed claimed to have waited more than 15 minutes and over 94% considered that the waiting time was acceptable given the nature of the enquiry they were making.

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
10	App 2	What is the explanation for the drop in waiting times at Wood Green between April and May 2005?	Significant system problems in May affected performance. These included • Qmatic failure and roll back to previous version (no service 1st week). The queues were managed manually and required a significant and complicated arrangement in a centre which has 3 receptionists and 17 service desks. • Opti-time implementation problems (from 12/5), increasing transaction times. • Civica concessionary travel implementation (relatively minor problems) (from 3/5) • High level of Council Tax recovery action 2nd and 4th weeks • Benefits recalculations in late April but sent out late and increased benefits enquiry flow as result. Any one of these problems would have been containable, but the occurrence of all of them together had a significant impact.
11	App 2	What is the explanation for the waiting time of 25:02 at Wood Green between in May 2005?	See answer to 10 above

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
12	App 2	What is specifically being done to address the fact that, overall, some 25.4% of all customers were not seen within 15minutes aggregately across the 4 CSCs?	To improve this significantly, by deploying more staff, would not be cost-effective. We are planning to improve this response rate over time, by more and better analysis of our peak times, and deploying staff to match these demand patterns, as well as by working even more closely with our Client Services to be better able to predict changes in demand.
13	App 2	Please explain what 'average contact rate per productive staff hour' means.	Numbers of customers seen or calls answered divided by the numbers of hours staff are productive. A productive hour is time actually at the service desk serving customers or available to answer the phone.
14	App 2	Has any analytical work been done to see if there is a link between sickness rates and higher throughput of customers in individual CSCs or excessive waiting times etc?	Sickness rates at CSCs are generally lower than at the Call Centre and an appropriate minimum level of staffing resource is always maintained within each CSC, moving staff between centres if necessary. Sickness levels in 2005/06 are shown in Appendix 2 (second table) of the circulated report
15	App 2	Please explain what factors are taken into consideration when assessing 'productivity'	Productivity is customer contact time (number of contacts x average transaction time) as a percentage of productive time.
16	App 2	Taking into consideration the number of customers per CSC, please supply me with a ratio of staff per customers for each of the CSCs	Attached, Appendix 3.

Question No.	Page/ Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
17	App 2	Please explain what 'unit cost per call/visit by site (Staff costs divided by no of calls' means	Staff costs from the SAP financial system at the particular centre divided by the numbers of customers seen at that centre. It gives a crude estimate of the staff cost of the transaction. It also gives an indication of cost trends over time as a result of fluctuations in cost, and demand trends.

Appendix 2

A headcount taken in February 2005 showed the following ethnicity and gender profile for customer services.

Grade	Total Staff	White	White %	B&ME	B&ME %	B&ME (F)	B&ME (F) %	Undeclared	Undeclared %	Women	Women %
Sc1-Sc5	27	8	30%	18	67%	19	70%	1	4%	26	96%
Sc6-SO2	135	47	35%	83	61%	74	55%	5	4%	104	77%
PO1-PO3	24	12	50%	12	50%	5	21%	0	0	13	54%
PO4-PO7	9	4	44%	5	56%	1	11%	0	0	6	67%
PO8+	1		100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100%
Totals	196	71	36%	118	60%	99	50%	6	3%	150	77%

Customer Services is well represented at all levels by Black and Ethnic Minority and female staff.

Agenda Item 5

Draft
Answers to Questions to Executive Member for Community Involvement
Scrutiny Panel on 7 November 2005

1. **Can you tell us what the current and prospective customer services strategies are? What is the aim of the service and how does this link across the services of the council? What are the key barriers if any to achieving the strategy?**

The Customer Services strategy is based on four simple premises:

- Accessing services should be a good quality experience;
- Services should be accessible in one place, which suits the individual;
- The service should be consistent; and
- The service should deliver a result.

In the longer term, we want the primary way into the Council to be the web because it is both convenient for users and cost effective. This is becoming increasingly possible as tactical technological solutions are developed, but some of our residents do not feel comfortable using the web or have no easy access to it. In the meantime, residents can access us in one of our four Customer Service Centres or preferably, the Call Centre. We will also have a number of places, receptions and libraries, where enquiries will be dealt with well, where public access PCs are available for use and where their use will be supported.

This is the underpinning for the vision, which is:

Over time, 80% of customer contacts with the Council will be handled through Customer Services channels (customers services centres and call centre, e-mail, the internet and other self service channels) and 80% of these will be completed at first contact, so that customers may contact the Council when, where and how they need to.

This work contributes to the Council's overall priority of delivering excellent services and, when successful, will result in improved perception ratings of both the Council overall and individual services.

The key challenges are:

- Continuing to improve the working between client services and Customer Service;
- Fully exploiting our investment in information technology: Customer Services is essentially a paperless environment and this presents significant challenges in maximising the availability and functionality of our systems; and
- Continuing to invest in and extract value from the Customer Relationship Management system. We have invested in an

industrial strength system with massive capabilities and there are substantial development opportunities. We have proactively replaced our supplier and the new supplier (CapGemini) started work in January 2005. We anticipate substantial activity in 2005/06 in resolving basic configuration issues within the system and improving the capability to achieve more strategic objectives.

2. **What are the key corporate customer services improvement targets in place and what plans are there to achieve them**?

The key corporate customer service improvement targets are detailed in the PBPR and are as follows:
- Continued improvement of service levels in the Call Centre – in terms of calls answered in 15 seconds, calls answered as a percentage of calls offered and average waiting times;
- Increased services offered through all channels, and the web site in particular; and
- Progress towards the 80/80 vision.

The specific proposed targets are in the PBPR which is elsweher on the agenda.

3. **How is the value for money and efficiency agenda being addressed?**

The revised CPA arrangements increase the focus on being able to demonstrate Value For Money. Taken with the decision to establish an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) for the Council's housing, there is a challenging agenda to ensure that the Customer Services channels are perceived by the residents and the ALMO as their service of choice, which demonstrably offers value.

Customer Services has a developed performance management system and the IT systems that we use enable us to measure and manage our performance. Consequently, we do understand how much of our staff time is productive and how efficient that time is. Over the last 18 months, we have made improvements in efficiency, by reducing transaction times and by managing non-productive time downwards.

Further efficiency gains will be delivered as a result of the Siebel Development programme. We are anticipating a reduction of 1 minute per transaction increasing the capacity of Customer Services and reducing the unit cost per transaction further. This is reflected in the proposals in this year's budget savings to extract around £900k of efficiency savings from the Customer Service operation over the next three years.

The Council has been leading bench marking activity on a pan London basis so that we can compare the cost and quality of our operation and we are commissioning research to retest the value which customers attach to the way we organise our service.

4. What is the balance between cost and performance (customer satisfaction) and how is this decided on?

There is a balance to be struck between cost and service level offered to the customer. The targets in the PBPR over the planning cycle reflect a pragmatic approach to achieving that balance.

Customer demand on the service is bursty and unpredictable within reasonable statistical tolerances over short time periods (say 15 minutes), consequently to achieve high levels of service e.g. a high proportion of calls answered in 15 seconds, it is likely that customer service staff would have to be waiting for calls for an unacceptably high proportion of their time.

The overall approach is, therefore, based on:
- Setting realistic targets;
- Further improving our management of peaks and troughs in demand; and
- Considering initiatives to extend the range of contacts with which Customer Services deals.

5. How does Customer Services performance compare against other authorities?

Customer Services service delivery design is different from many of our comparators. For example, our average transaction time is much longer than our comparators and this will be because:
- Our cut off point is deeper than other authorities (we complete more at first contact)
- We have much more data entry, Customer services staff are using the CRM system and client service systems with as yet no system integration.

In terms of service level in the Call Centre particularly, performance is amongst the best.

There is little comparative data for Customer Service centres. The Council has supported and analysed a survey across 14 London Boroughs. The results of this are encouraging:

Customer Services for London Survey results	London average	Haringey
Was the Customer Services Officer you spoke with welcoming and professional	98.7% yes	97.8% yes
Was the time that you waited acceptable	92.4% yes	94.8% yes

Customer Services for London Survey results	London average	Haringey
given the nature of your enquiry		
How long did you wait - more than 15 minutes	15.1%	11% 89% seen within 15 minutes (our target 70%)
Was the environment welcoming and user friendly	94.6% yes	98.9% yes
Were we able to provide the service that you wanted or direct you to the correct point of contact	95.9% yes	94.8%
How do you rate the service received	1.3% said poor	0.5% said poor
Why did you choose to visit the service - better service	23.9%	28.8%
Why did you choose to visit the service - only way for the enquiry to be handled	33.9%	26.1%
Why did you choose to visit the service - convenience	20.6%	34.8%

6. **Please explain the impact customer services have on the residents of Haringey? To what level of customer service do you think the council should aspire to?**

As the face of the council, Customer Service Centres deal with a wide and diverse range of people in the local community. The services we offer span across the whole community. Specific groups in the community are targeted by virtue of the services they require e.g. pensioners applying for their bus passes.

Parking	Resident and local business vehicle users, non-Haringey residents and businesses parking in the area
Abandoned Vehicles	Haringey residents and non-Haringey residents
Graffiti removal	Haringey residents and non-Haringey residents
Concessionary travel	Resident pensioners and disabled residents
Housing	Any Haringey Council tenant and/or resident in housing need
Benefits and Local Taxation	Any lower income resident for benefits and any resident for Council Tax
Child Protection	Anyone with concerns about a resident child.
The Children's Service	Parents and children resident in Haringey or attending Haringey schools

We provide services and information to residents, businesses and visitors to the borough as follows:

Customer grouping	No. of telephone callers per year	No. of personal callers per year	Total No. of callers
StreetScene: Parking Abandoned Vehicles Concessionary Travel Permits Graffiti Removal	75949	8941	84890
Housing Management and Repairs	72890	20856	93746
Housing Strategy and Needs	6813	12049	18862
Benefits and Local Taxation: Benefits Council Tax	144169	100421	244590
Children's Service	0	12147	12147
Others			
Total	299821	154414	454235

The level of Customer service to which the Council should aspire is best of breed: that is top quartile perception ratings.

7. How do you think customer service could continue its improvement in performance?

By continuing with the strategies that have been employed successfully so far:
- Performance management
- Process improvement to reduce transaction times.
- Understanding what factors create demand and taking action jointly with client services to avoid them.
- Migration of services and customers to the web services.

8. Are there any communities you feel the Council are not reaching out through the customer services channels? How do you think we should reach out to these hard to reach groups?

A clear analysis of the service user base is essential to enable the service to identify quality or service take-up issues. All data gathered as part of customer consultations or as part of service delivery aims to add to this.

Our CRM system is designed to allow detailed analysis of our user base and the targeting of services/promotions etc. Measures are in

hand to improve the collection of data will lead to a comprehensive view of the demographics of our customers

Customer consultation is based on the clear identification of community sectors (disability, ethnicity, employment, age, housing status) and enables analysis of results as a very specific level. In 2005 the overall satisfaction rate was 77.1%, which disaggregates as follows:

- Disabled users 79.3%
- White users 75%
- Asian users 64.1%
- Black users 77.3%
- Council tenant users 80.7%.

We do not yet understand why the Asian communities' satisfaction level is so different and will be undertaking some focus group work to explore this.

Perception of service quality is high and in most cases improving.

To ensure that improvement is recognised survey results will continue to be publicised widely together with details of actions to be taken to deal with issues arising.

9. **Any future changes in areas which are likely to impact on customer service centres and the call centre?**

   Any legislative, organisation, process or technology changes that arise in Client Services will have an impact on Customer Services.

   The successful ballot for developing an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) for the Council's housing offers focus for improving the accessibility of services to Council tenants and leaseholders, consolidating more of these services through the Customer Services channels, particularly the CSCs and Call Centre. This development also poses challenges to ensure that the Customer Services channels are perceived by the ALMO as their service of choice, and satisfying the inspection requirements to demonstrate efficiency and value for money.

10. **Does the Council have any aspirations to secure a Charter Mark in Customer Services?**

    We have no current plans to do this.

Pre Business Plan Review   2006/07

Business Unit: **Customer Services**   **Budget Holder**: **Jane Waterhouse**

This Pre-Business Plan Review template has three main sections:
♦   Section A: Sets out progress against current year's objectives, performance targets and budget
♦   Section B: Identifies the factors that will affect the work of your business unit in the next three years
♦   Section C: Sets out proposals for the years ahead

There are 4 appendices:
Appendix 1 - lists business unit relevant performance indicators, floor targets, year to date and end year projected performance against targets and action to be taken to deal with under-performance. (Compiled by Improvement & Performance, completed by Business Unit
Appendix 2 - Value for Money profile – (Compiled by Audit Commission)
Appendix 3 - Analysis of expenditure against budget and Grants – (Compiled by Corporate Finance, completed by Business Unit)
Appendix 4 - CPA KLOEs against which the business unit is to be assessed – (Compiled by Improvement & Performance)

SECTION A - Where is the Business Unit now?

1.   Vision

Please state the vision for your business unit - this vision should be derived from the Council's overall vision. It should be a short and aspirational statement that will guide the work of your staff.

Over time, 80% of customer contacts with the Council will be handled through Customer Services channels (customers services centres and call centre, e-mail, the internet and other self service channels) and 80% of these will be completed at first contact. so that customers may contact the Council when, where and how they need to.

2.   Objectives (Current Year)

In the following table set out progress against current year objectives and identify any areas of work that will need to be carried forward to the next financial year. **Please also highlight your business units contribution to the equalities standard level 3 and 4**

Objectives	Progress so far	Anticipated progress at year end	Areas of work to carry forward
More services to Customers – **widening** our service provision to more Council services, extended opening times and more access channels e.g. e-mail and Internet access to achieve the target of **80%** of all customer contacts with the Council, – **deepening** our processes so that **80%** of these contacts are completed at first contact as far as the customer is concerned.	Implemented projects: Epayments Concessionary Travel into Civica Parking Permit pilot Planned Repairs BPR Council Tax BPR Children's Service enquiries in Wood Green CSC FOI Focussing on improving performance in the Call Centre diverted resources away from the project to realise the Strategy. Also, project timescales were flexed to accommodate emergent priorities.	The following projects are expected to be implemented: Children's Service enquiries in all CSCs Enforcement Recreation (phase 1) Occupational Therapy (phase 1) Out of Hours (phase 1) Parking Permits in all CSCs Door Entry BPR Benefits BPR Electoral Registration Capgemini were selected as our new Siebel CRM integrator and we will implement Siebel Release 1 in October.	Remaining Customer Services Strategy Implementation. Programme to be agreed at Council Executive on 1 November
Reduce waiting times in order to continue to improve responsiveness to customers at first contact.	Average queuing/waiting time in the Call Centre/CSC's are two of our five key indicators. The Call Centre has an average queuing time of 28 seconds(YTD July05) against a target of <40 seconds. In the CSC's, 66%(YTD Jul05) of our	We expect to achieve both these targets at year end.	There will be further improvements in waiting times in future years

2.   Objectives (Current Year)

In the following table set out progress against current year objectives and identify any areas of work that will need to be carried forward to the next financial year. **Please also highlight your business units contribution to the equalities standard level 3 and 4**

Objectives	Progress so far	Anticipated progress at year end	Areas of work to carry forward
	customers are seen within 15 minutes against our target of 70%.		
Reduce transaction times and make our processes more customer friendly	In the Call Centre, we are currently exceeding our target, whereas in the CSC's, progress has been hampered by the delay in Siebel development, and the increased numbers of Local taxation customers.	It is estimated that we will reduce call handling times by one minute	Further Siebel development to improve existing processes and build new services into Siebel.
Improve Access to Services and support for customers, in particular, people with special literacy and language needs, and people who have visual, aural and mobility impairments.	Turkish/Kurdish interpreting surgeries have been established in 3 CSCs where there is proven demand for the service. 1,500 Turkish/Kurdish interpreted enquiries were dealt with over the last quarter ie June/July/August. Interpreting facilities are also available for any language, including BSL.. Arrangements are in place for Winkfield Rd resource centre to arrange for BSL signers to attend customer interviews in CSCs. Response to requests are monitored and performance targets are met.

The Older People Forum reviewed services offered by CS. All CSCs | Register of interpreting services delivered is to be reviewed to determine any change in demand and resources allocated in response. "Working with interpreters" course is currently being developed. First course will be run before end of year

"Managing diversity" training course is currently being developed. This will include working with older people to heighten staff awareness. The first course is expected to run in November 2005

The Call Centre is introducing Type Talk. This is a user-friendly | Customer surveys to gauge satisfaction of interpreting services.

To continue work with the Older People Forum to identify areas for improvement.

As more services become available on the website through eforms and other means, we will promote their use across the public access PCs. This will enable movement of customers to access channels which area available outside normal office hours and have disabilities which limit their access to the |

2. Objectives (Current Year)

In the following table set out progress against current year objectives and identify any areas of work that will need to be carried forward to the next financial year. **Please also highlight your business units contribution to the equalities standard level 3 and 4**

Objectives	Progress so far	Anticipated progress at year end	Areas of work to carry forward
	are DDA compliant. Physical resources were felt to be at a high standard. Customer surveys and feedback from older people reflect a strong satisfaction level of services provided. (Feedback via Housing forums and Feedback forms) We have four public access PCs in Wood Green CSC, which are not well used at present	service specifically designed for the deaf and hard of hearing. A demonstration has been scheduled for September, and it is planned that this will be introduced formally into the Call Centre, Autumn 2005. Public access PCs will be extended to other CSCs, with promotion to encourage their use for customers who do not have internet access at home	more traditional channels.
Customer Care to take a more holistic approach to customers to: • exploit opportunities to offer access to multiple services	We record the numbers of multiple enquiries within the CSC's, and further Siebel development will enable the reporting of multiple enquiries in the Call Centre.	We will analyse the numbers of multiple enquiries to ensure we are exploiting all opportunities, and look at methods of promoting this.	As the service offering is widened and deepened there will be more opportunities to handle multiple enquiries at one visit or within one call, improving the use of customers time.
• ensure that service is provided seamlessly from beginning to end of the service delivery experience,	The most recent survey in May 2005 demonstrated continuing improvement in customer satisfaction and in most customer care indicators. Differences in the	Analysis of survey results indicating issues requiring attention are distributed to service managers for preparation of action plans. It is expected	The service aims for continuous improvement. However, customer expectations are likely to increase as service levels and

4

2. Objectives (Current Year)

*In the following table set out progress against current year objectives and identify any areas of work that will need to be carried forward to the next financial year. **Please also highlight your business units contribution to the equalities standard level 3 and 4***

Objectives	Progress so far	Anticipated progress at year end	Areas of work to carry forward
	level of customer satisfaction (Haringey's overall service) and customer care (CS staff skills) may indicated service delivery issues - the data collected facilitates the identification of service specific issues. • Customer satisfaction 77.1% (up 4.9%) • Courteousness & politeness 94.5% (up 1.5%) • Ability to deal with enquiries 80.5% (down 2.2%) • Ability to answer questions 84.7% (up 0.3%) • Explanation in a way that was understood 90.8% (up 5.7%) • Staff helpfulness 89.1% (up 5.2%)	that these plans together with improvements already in hand (additional staffing in the Call Centre, better management of queues etc.) will drive further improvement over the coming year and be reflected in future surveys. Service-specific issues are being fed back to service providers for attention. We will analyse the difference between customer service satisfaction and overall satisfaction by client service, so that we can share this with our client services and address the deficiency together.	quality improve and the service will find itself aiming at a constantly moving target. CS will make continuous improvements to services but accepts that it will always be capable of more.

3. Performance

Please complete Appendix 1. For all indicators where performance against target or threshold is at risk set out:

Ref.	Description	2005/06 target / threshold	2005/06 performance to date	2005/06 projection	Proposed remedial action to achieve target
	FOIA requests responded to in 20 days	90%	60%	60%	This assumes a return to previous higher performance after the summer holiday period. More resource needs to be applied in services, by increasing the priority given to responding to requests, and in Customer Services to improve co-ordination and support. See growth bid below which proposes additional funding for resources in Customer Services..

4. Value for Money

Appendix 2 provides a Value for Money profile for your service. In particular, where your VFM indicators are above or below the nearest neighbour or London average please set out the following information. If your service is not included in the Audit Commission VFM profile please provide your local indicators (the headings can be changed to suit)

Indicator	Current cost	Current performance	Nearest neighbour average		London average		Reasons for difference	Proposed actions
			Cost	Perf.	Cost	Perf.		
Total cost per call/visit Including CSCs, call centre and switchboard	£4.54 2005/06 YTD £4.43 (04/05)	98% calls in 15 seconds (target 90%)– switchboard 70% calls in 15 seconds (target 70%) – call centre 68% visitors in 15 mins (target 70%) - CSCs	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	We have a local indicator, but very little is known regarding other Authorities.	To be developed in Local Local Authority Call Centre Benchmarking Group, administered by Haringey Customer Services for London Group has this an objective in 2006/07. Please see attachment on VFM-Customer Services.

5.   Finance *Appendix 3 shows an analysis of the cost of your service.   Where there are over-spends or under-spends either as at end of August or at projected year-end, please state reasons and proposed remedial action in this box.*

5.1   Spend against Budget – cash limit excluding overheads and capital charges

At the end of August, we have an overspend of £62k. We expect to have recovered this by year end.

5.2   Impact of Previous Years' Investment (New Table) (*List key investments received over past 2 years per area/service and demonstrate how this has led to improved service provision/outputs*

Area/Service	2003/04 £'000	20004/05 £'000	2005/06 £'000	Planned Impact	Actual Impact
Call Centre		535		To improve service level within the call Centre on 2003/04 out-turn of 9.3% of all calls answered within 15 seconds to 45% in 2004/05 and 70% in 2005/06.	Service level for 2004/05 was 43% against a target of 45%, and is on track to meet .the 2005/06 target of 70%.
Access Channel Migration			50	To encourage migration to self service channels	Provision of public access PCs and encourage use of them in CSCs

5.3   Agreed cashable efficiency savings 2006/07 to 2007/08 *(Please set out progress on savings already agreed over the next 2 years)*

Details of efficiency	2005/06 £'000	2006/7 over 2005/6 £'000	2007/8 over 2006/7 £'000	Progress
Improved processes	14	114	150	Siebel Release 1 in November 2005 will introduce capability to reduce transaction times by 1 minute across CSCs and the Call centre
Total	**14**	**114**	**150**	

5.4   Pre-Agreed Revenue Investment Proposals *(growth bids).*
(Please comment on progress on use of investments previously agreed)

Detail of Investment	2006/7 over 2005/6 £'000	2007/8 over 2006/7 £'000	Progress
None			

6.   Risk Management

6.1 Please set out the key risks from your risk register and your mitigation strategy

Risks	Mitigation	Further actions required
Managed service providers do not provide an adequate service.	Annual review of service providers accounts. Development of Exit strategy.	Customer Services involvement in service level reviews
Building facilities are inoperable.	Emergency and Business Continuity Plan has been produced and is tested	A replacement for the Call Centre building is yet to be identified and agreed
Reputational damage to the Council due to poor Customer Service	Performance improvement programs	
Employee service provision is poor because of high sickness and turnover.	Sickness absence is being managed rigorously Turnover is low in comparison with industry norms	
Customer Service fails to meet demands of users.	Monitoring of service demand and highlighting trends in a timely manner. Development of lead indicators with client service departments.	

6.   Risk Management

6.1 Please set out the key risks from your risk register and your mitigation strategy

Risks	Mitigation	Further actions required
ALMO arrangements	Position ourselves as the front line service of choice	Establish Value for Money positioning and efficiency improvements
Unbudgeted additions to Customer Services workload as a result of actions/developments/externally and internally imposed changes in client services	Develop forward view of changes through improved service liaison mechanisms to enable proper consideration of the impact on Customer Services.	Develop mechanism to make impacts more visible and improve quality of discussion in the service liaison arrangements

SECTION B - What will affect the work of your Business Unit in the next three years?

7.   Legislative, regulatory, national policy changes or other external pressures

The Freedom of Information Act came into force in January this year and since then Haringey have received 316 requests, some of which have been complex and difficult to respond to. There will be a need to develop and improve the service to requestors, and improve our performance on response times. Our experience so far has allowed us to predict additional resources required to support the service going forwards, and provide greater assurance for directorate staff.

The Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI Directive) also requires research and development activity so that the Council can respond to the Directive's requirements adequately.

8.   Community Strategy

Please *identify what is your business unit's current contribution and progress and could further contributions could be made?*
Referring to the community strategy action plan.

Community Strategy priority	Current contribution	What more could be done?
Provide modern, better quality, more accessible services for everyone who needs them, particularly health and social care services	The primary purpose of the service is to improve the customers' experiences of service delivery at the first contact with the Council.	Being part of the Chief Executive's Service (Access) provides substantial opportunities to affect customers' experience over a wider service offering, across Libraries and Neighbourhood Resource Centres, informed by feedback from Neighbourhood Management and supported by IT Services and technology. Health and social care services are not yet available within the service, but is included in the programme of service extension encompassed in the Customer Services Strategy.
Narrow the gap between the east and west of Haringey by improving the most deprived areas	By improving service delivery at a local level through our Customer Services Centres. There are more Customer Services Centres in the East than the West of the Borough reflecting the relative need.	Increasing availability of public access pc's in CSCs in Tottenham particularly and encouraging their use

Deployment of CRM to Libraries and Neighbourhood resource centres in the east of the Borough supported by outreach Customer Services Officers. |
| Create safer communities | The need for customers to travel distances at inconvenient times is much reduced as the service vision is achieved and services are offered in more locations. Access to the Call Centre, extended opening hours and the development of on-line access enables all members of the community to access council services easily and in many cases from the comfort of their own home. This is particularly advantageous to those members of the | More services available by phone and on the internet and other self service channels, programmed in to the Customer Services Strategy realisation and the IEG programme. |

11

8. Community Strategy

Please *identify what is your business unit's current contribution and progress and could further contributions could be made?*
Referring to the community strategy action plan.

Community Strategy priority	Current contribution	What more could be done?
	community that are vulnerable or at risk. Customer Services Centres have been designed in line with the highest standards, particularly with regard to the needs of disabled users (as laid out in the DDA) and with regard to the Health & Safety of both staff and users.	
Create a cleaner, greener environment with better transport and leisure opportunities	Reduced need to travel at all to access Council Services	More Services available in the Call Centre and through self service channels will reduce the need to use transport.
Raise achievement in education and create opportunities for life-long success.	The introduction of 4 public access PCs in Wood Green CSC	Installation of more public access PCs in other CSCs

9. Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Key Lines of Enquiry

Appendix 4 lists the Level 3 CPA KLOEs or JAR equivalent that are relevant to your service and gaps identified as part of your Directorate's CPA Action Plan. Where current plans are not sufficient to close the gap please explain :

KLOE	Unclosed gap to level 3	Proposals to close gap	Dependencies/joint working
There no KLOEs that are allocated to Customer Services. However, we will contribute to KLOE achievement in our client services, particularly: -ALMO KLOE 30 and 31 -Benefits Performance Standards			

12

10.	Customer Focus	
Customer type	**Current assessment of perceptions**	**Proposed actions to improve perceptions to an acceptable level**
External Customers: A clear analysis of the service user base is essential to enable the service to identify quality or service take-up issues. All data gathered as part of customer consultations or as part of service delivery aims to add to this. • Customer consultation is based on the clear identification of community sectors (disability, ethnicity, employment, age, housing status) and enables analysis of results as a very specific level. • Our CRM system is designed to allow detailed analysis of our user base and the targeting of services/promotions etc. Measures in hand to improve the collection of data will lead to a comprehensive view of the demographics of our customers.	• Disabled user satisfaction 79.3% (overall 77.1%) • White user satisfaction 75% (overall 77.1%) • Asian user satisfaction 64.1% (overall 77.1%) • Black user satisfaction 77.3% (overall 77.1%) • Council tenant user satisfaction 80.7% (overall 77.1%)	Perception of service quality is high and in most cases improving. To ensure that improvement is recognised survey results will continue to be publicised widely together with details of actions to be taken to deal with issues arising. The lower perception amongst Asian customers is of concern and we will arrange qualitative consultation to explore the reasons.
Internal Customers	Regular service liaison meetings provide an opportunity for internal customers to air their views on Customer Services performance and effectiveness in a structured way. These meetings are held: -monthly, with service managers and operational	Both Customer Services and our client services have an effect on each other, and the quality and seamlessness of the service offered to the customer. The liaison meetings are being enhanced to explore these areas to

13

10. Customer Focus

Customer type	Current assessment of perceptions	Proposed actions to improve perceptions to an acceptable level
	staff -quarterly, with Heads of Service/Assistant Directors to discuss more strategic issues In addition we have operated staff visits to increase operational staff awareness of Customer Services processes and improve Customer Services staff understanding of the service context within which they operate, Generally, perceptions and working relationships are improving.	improve co-operatiove working and the effectiveness of the service delivery to customers.

11. SMART Working

	How effective are current activities?	What more could be done?
People (including recruitment and retention, and progress against your People Plan)	Customer Services have developed an Open day approach to recruitment to reduce the time and effort needed to recruit the right staff. Turnover remains low. The process of analysing CSO Performance Appraisal development objectives and planning training activities to meet requirements is now well established. Quality monitoring and employee of the month criteria have been reviewed to ensure staff are rewarded for desired behaviours.	Strengthen induction and ongoing training for Team Managers and Receptionists

11.   SMART Working

	How effective are current activities?	What more could be done?
Work methods and Technology	Customer Services has been fully involved in the Benefits and Local Taxation and Housing Repair BPR pilot. Local Taxation and Planned repairs has been implemented. Customer Services has an ongoing programme of process review to ensure that they are fast, flexible and efficient.	Continue ongoing process review. Exploit opportunities presented by Siebel releases to optimise processes and improve efficiency and customer focus.
Workplace	The Call Centre has recently relocated to 95 Western Road which offers modern and accessible working environment for our staff. The four Customer Services Centres were designed to high standards, but are requiring refurbishment because of heavy wear.	This PBPR includes a bid for annual redecoration and maintenance budget of CSCs to ensure the high standards remain.

11.1   Local Management Considerations
Please highlight considerations in relation to the business unit working environment, work methods including IT, Recruitment, Retention. Please provide a brief summary on progress of your people plan

Working with client services continues to pose challenges in achieving seamless customer service. There has been an improvement in working relationships through the service liaison meetings which meet monthly with operational staff and quarterly with business unit heads. The meetings are structured and are of improving quality, and provide an effective place for considering the causes of impacts on the client services and Customer Services of the actions of the other. Examining the causes of fluctuations in demand is providing a focus for discussion about remedial actions. However, there is still much to do to capitalise on these meetings to make real change for customers.

These discussions are guided by our Service Level Agreements (SLAs). We now need to enhance these SLAs with our client services to capture the impacts of each others actions on our respective service levels and make these more visible and open to scrutiny.

SECTION C - Proposals for the year ahead

12.	**New objectives for the next financial year** *(Please also refer to Section A, Box 2 for areas to be carried forward. Current Year Objectives and Section B in completing this table.)*		
Objective	**Why is this important?**	**Key activities**	**Dependencies and joint working**
More services to Customers – **widening** to achieve the target of **80%** of all customer contacts with the Council, – **deepening** our processes so that **80%** of these contacts are completed at first contact (Customer Services Strategy Realisation project)	To improve customer service at first point of contact, improve customer perceptions of the Council and its image as a high quality service provider.	Implementation of new services into the Customer Services approach. Review of the Customer Services Strategy Realisation (to be considered by CEMB in October and Executive in November). The review covers progress, a revised programme and additional areas to be included in the programme. To increase the proportion of transactions conducted through self service channels (-email, the website and automated telephony)	It will be essential to work jointly with Service Areas to implement the strategy. It will also be vital that Customer Services work closely with the ALMO Project Team. Key dependencies are the Siebel Development Project, BPR project and IEG project.

12.	New objectives for the next financial year *(Please also refer to Section A, Box 2 for areas to be carried forward. Current Year Objectives and Section B in completing this table.)*			
Objective	**Why is this important?**	**Key activities**	**Dependencies and joint working**	
Reduce waiting times - nos from BVPP	To improve customer satisfaction and improve resource utilisation (contributing to efficiency and value for money)	To review staff deployment in the context of customer demand and ensure staff waiting is kept to a minimum To review factors which affect demand and work with clients to remove and/or reschedule periods of peak activity.	Customer flow. Client services ability to predict and be flexible about peak activities in order to enable better resource planning and deployment.	
Reduce transaction times From Siebel Development	To improve customer satisfaction as a result of using less customer time, improve staff productivity and release efficiency savings for re-investment.	Process review. Exploit the capabilities of the Siebel CRM system to shorten transaction times	Dependent on Siebel development programme and continued funding.	
Improve Access to Services	To improve support to customers accessing the service and ensure social inclusion.	Provide appropriate interpretation facilities Introduce Typetalk into the Call Centre Increase the number of transactions available in 24 hour service channels.	Working with the Haringey Interpretation and Translation Service Workinh with IT and services to increase availability of processes in self service channels.	

Page 35

17

12.	**New objectives for the next financial year** *(Please also refer to Section A, Box 2 for areas to be carried forward. Current Year Objectives and Section B in completing this table.)*			
Objective	**Why is this important?**	**Key activities**	**Dependencies and joint working**	
Customer Care	To improve customer satisfaction and ensure that interaction with the Council is an effective and pleasant experience for the customer	Reduce waiting times Add value to transactions by offering more service interactions in the same place Improve the quality of customer service Maintain and improve the quality of the environment in CSCs	Dependent on Siebel development Dependent on Customer Services Strategy Realisation project delivery Dependent on staff development and management Dependent on success of investment bid	

13.	**New Capital Investment Proposals** *(please list all capital proposals that have been submitted in the separate capital appraisal process)*			
Proposed investment (description of scheme/programme line)	**Capital sought**			**Council contribution required as a % of overall capital cost**
	2006/07 £	**2007/08 £**	**2008/09 £**	
Resources for updating Publication Scheme and requirements arising from the Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI Directive)	35,000			
Voice Recording Solution	75,000			One off

18

14. New Revenue Investment Proposals *(growth bids). This must include any additional revenue implications arising from any capital proposals in Table 13.*								
Proposed investment	**Linked to Community Strategy Objectives (1 –5)**	**Justification (linked to Section A and B) and planned impact**	**06/07 over 05/06 £'000**	**07/08 over 06/07 £'000**	**08/09 over 07/08 £'000**	**Staff affected**	**Posts affected**	**Dependencies/ impact**
(a)		***Revenue Investment***						
Freedom of Information staff resources	1	To improve performance and to reduce pressure on Directorate Complaints Officers and Service Managers. The Central FOI Team (in Customer Services) would take on: • the co-ordination of complex and cross directorate requests. • A greater degree of support to service personnel on exemptions, process and progress chasing.	70	70	70	2	2	FOI response PI Information Commissioner investigations
CSMs – refurb of CSCs	1	To undertake a planned programme of small refurbishments (carpets, soft furnishings and redecoration).	100	50	50	0	0	To maintain a clean, comfortable and welcoming environment for customers that they will respect and care for.

14. **New Revenue Investment Proposals** *(growth bids). This must include any additional revenue implications arising from any capital proposals in Table 13.*								
Proposed investment	**Linked to Community Strategy Objectives (1 –5)**	**Justification (linked to Section A and B) and planned impact**	**06/07 over 05/06 £'000**	**07/08 over 06/07 £'000**	**08/09 over 07/08 £'000**	**Staff affected**	**Posts affected**	**Dependencies/ impact**
(b)		***Revenue implications of capital bids (table 13)***						
Voice Recording System		Maintenance of software	10	10	10	0	0	Maintenance of system and continued usability

15. **New cashable efficiency savings** *(Insert proposed efficiency savings (from targets given in Annexe 3), giving an outline of the proposed saving, the impact that this saving will have on performance (if any), the value of the saving in 2006/07 to 2008/09, the number of staff who would be made redundant and the number of posts which would be deleted. This is additional to the already agreed efficiency savings set out in table 5.3 and any savings already identified under the Programme Board.)*							
Proposed efficiency saving	**Impact on performance**	**06/07 over 05/06 £'000**	**07/08 over 06/07 £'000**	**08/09 over 07/08 £'000**	**Staff affected**	**Posts affected**	**Dependencies/ impact**
Siebel Development resulting in improved efficiency: -process improvement -understanding what creates demand and taking action to satisfy needs and reduce demand -migration to self service channels	Improved transaction times whilst maintaining service levels	100	219	316	40	31	The Customer Services Strategy Realisation project will enable some of these savings to be made in Client Services as transactions are transferred to Customer Services. This is dependent on the development of a

15. New cashable efficiency savings *(Insert proposed efficiency savings (from targets given in Annexe 3), giving an outline of the proposed saving, the impact that this saving will have on performance (if any), the value of the saving in 2006/07 to 2008/09, the number of staff who would be made redundant and the number of posts which would be deleted. This is additional to the already agreed efficiency savings set out in table 5.3 and any savings already identified under the Programme Board.)*

Proposed efficiency saving	Impact on performance	06/07 over 05/06 £'000	07/08 over 06/07 £'000	08/09 over 07/08 £'000	Staff affected	Posts affected	Dependencies/ impact
							robust method of agreeing and enacting virements
Total		100	219	316	40	31	

16. New non-cashable savings No specific targets have been set, but as part of the wider efficiency agenda, including Gershon, we need to identify non-cashable savings which show how we are becoming more efficient as an organisation. *Non-cashable savings are achieved by (1) Higher output or increased quality (extra service, extra productivity, etc) for the same inputs or (2) Proportionately more outputs or improved quality in return for an increase in resources.*

An example of a non-cashable efficiency is a review of business processes which results in more transactions being processed with the same number of staff whilst maintaining quality of service.

Proposal	Impact on performance *(for LBH &/ partners)*	06/07 over 05/06 £'000	07/08 over 06/07 £'000	08/09 over 07/08 £'000	Dependencies / impact
None					
Total					

Appendix 1

Performance Indicators

Please see separate tables. Open the PBPR PerformanceTables file and select your business unit from the filter on the left-hand side of the spreadsheet. This will show all relevant indicators and floor targets for your business unit.

Business Unit BV ref.	PAF/Local ref.	Description	2003/04	2004/05 Outturn	2005/06 YTD	2005/06 Projected Year End Position	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Customer Services	LSU 11	Customer Services Centres- Waiting times – personal callers seen in 15 mins	65.4%	77%	68%	75%	70%	75%	75%	80%
Customer Services	LSU	Call Centre - Telephone answering Average Queueing Time - min:sec	3:28	1:13	0:27	0:40	0:40	0:30	0:25	0:20
Customer Services	LSU 13	Call centre telephone answering in 15 seconds - of calls presented (all call centre calls)	9%	37%	70%	70%	70%	80%	85%	85%
Customer Services	LCS 1	Call Centre calls answered as a % of calls presented	38%	61%	94%	80%	80%	85%	90%	95%
Customer Services	LSU 14	Switchboard- Telephone answering in 15 seconds	90.8%	91.3%	98%	95%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Customer Services	LCS 2	Telephone calls answered as a % of calls presented - council wide	76%	76%	86%	80%	80%	85%	90%	90%
Customer Services	LCS 3	Telephone answering in 15 seconds - of calls presented (Council wide)	67%	67%	81%	75%	75%	77%	80%	85%
Customer Services		Responses to FOI requests in 20 days	N/A	64%	60%	60%	90%	93%	95%	95%

Appendix 2

Please see separate attachment for your service's Value for Money Profile

For the purposes of progressing the Value For Money agenda, Haringey has been grouped with the following Boroughs:

Brent, Croydon, Ealing, Greenwich, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hounslow, Islington, Lambeth, Hackney, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Merton, Southwark and Wandsworth.

5.1
How well does Customer Services currently achieve good value for money.

Very little is currently undertaken in the form of Cost Benchmarking between Boroughs in the area of Customer Services.

Customer Services participate in current benchmarking activities with the Local Authority Call Centre Benchmarking Group (LACCBG), as well as being a member of the Customer Services for London Group. All performance data that is currently benchmarked within the LACCBG are quantitative. Haringey administer the group together with Tower Hamlets, and we will be looking to develop cost benchmarks over the coming months using the questionnaire below.

The performance data is collated quarterly, and the last complete comparative data available is for the April to July 2005.

Of those Authorities in our VFM family, only Brent, Ealing and Lewisham participated in this last quarter, although Croydon, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hounslow, Islington, Lambeth, Merton and Redbridge have participated previously.

Returns are voluntary with Authorities only receiving the completed data for those quarters that they participate in.

Of the Authorities in the VFM grouping Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Southwark and Wandsworth are not members.

LOCAL AUTHORITY CALL CENTRE
BENCHMARKING GROUP
APRIL - JUNE 2005

NAME OF AUTHORITY	CODE	CALLS OFFERED	CALLS ANSWERED	% ANS'D	%ANS WITHIN 15/20 SECONDS	AVG. WAIT FOR ANSWER	AVG. TALK TIME PER CALL	CALL HANDLING TIME	STAFFING	CALLS ANS PER STAFF	TALK TIME PER STAFF (mins)	CALL TIME PER STAFF (mins)
4 BRENT REV & BEN	BRERB	82962	67666	82	19	157	348		21.00	3222	18689	0
5 BRENT SOC SERV & GEN	BRESS	33727	24883	74	34	52	165		12.00	2074	5702	0
6 BRENT STREETCARE	BRESC	36317	31207	86	48	37	204		11.00	2837	9646	0
10 EALING	EAL	67151	44683	67	4	197	135	251	15.00	2979	6702	12462
11 EALING SOCIAL SERVICES	EALSS	11467	10034	88	10	110	136	287	7.00	1433	3249	6857
14 HARINGEY	HAR	95515	90350	95	71	26	320	515	66.27	1363	7271	11702
18 LEWISHAM	LEW	138433	104686	76	N/A	137	214	408	Not supplied			

Due to the fact that all Authorities have differing arrangements within their Call Centres, Authorities are encouraged to breakdown their statistical information as much as possible. This enables us to compare like with like as far as possible.

For the purpose of this quantitative benchmarking, Switchboard stats are excluded where possible.

Haringey has a range of services that are delivered through its Call Centre, namely Graffiti reporting, Housing & Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax, Housing Management & Repairs, Housing Strategy & Needs, and Parking & Abandoned Vehicles.

The differing services offered within Call Centres makes the comparison of totals difficult, as no two authorities offer the same range or mix of services from their Call Centres. By breaking the statistics down, closer comparison becomes possible.

The next big factor to take into consideration is the total handling time per call. This varies significantly by service, with it generally acknowledged that Council Tax and Benefit calls take longer. The further variance is the depth to which the query is resolved at this point of contact.

Haringey's processes are significantly deeper than many other authorities, hence the variance in Call Handling Times. This however reduces the need for the Customer to contact the Authority again.

In the Local Government Customer Service Benchmark report (by Mystery Shoppers Ltd), Haringey ranked 6th of the 16 authorities in our Group.

To put our performance into context, in the UK Contact Centre Operational Review in 2004 in Public Services:
- Average call length was 207 seconds in comparison with our 515 seconds, reflecting the range of quite different approaches to service depth.
- Abandonment Rate was 8.9% against our 5.5% performance year to date (not included in the table above)
- Average speed to answer was 24.6 seconds against our 26 seconds.

5.2
How well does Customer Services manage and improve value for money.
Customer Services management are very aware of the importance of efficiency and Value for Money.

Efficiency and its contribution
Customer Services has a developed performance management system and the IT systems that we use enable us to measure our performance to a degree that most other Council services are not able to do. Consequently, we do understand how much of our staff time is productive and how efficient that time is. Over the last 18 months, we have made improvements in efficiency, by reducing transaction times and by managing non-productive time downwards. This has given us the capability to absorb increased demand without further increases in investment. Since the start of this financial year Housing Service calls to the Call Centre have increased by 15%, Council Tax calls have increased by 24% and Benefits calls have increased by 21% based on a 12 month rolling year trend. The resultant overall trend is a projection of calls to be taken in 2005/06 of 21% more than in 2004/05.

Nevertheless, there is still some spare capacity in the Call Centre, when staff are waiting for calls to come through. In order to fill some of that spare capacity we have been exploring with our existing client services, the increased use of our staff to do tasks which are not on demand, as calls are. For example, tasks such as email handling and responses to e-forms, for services we already offer. Using up some of this spare capacity will reduce the unit cost per transaction.

Further efficiency gains will be delivered as a result of the Siebel Development programme. In release 1 of the programme (in late October/early November 2005) the changes are expected to deliver a reduction of 1 minute per transaction increasing the capacity of Customer Services and reducing the unit cost per transaction further.

In addition, we are participating in several process improvement initiatives within Haringey Council arising from Business Process Redesign projects such as Benefits and Local Taxation, Homelessness, Housing Planned Repairs, Highways, Occupational Therapy and Adaptations. Some of these reviews have resulted in deepening of existing processes and others in reduced transaction times for particular processes by getting rid of unnecessary process steps.

The ongoing development of Siebel will deliver further transaction time improvements, as well as enabling more of the transactions to be carried out over self service channels such as the web.

The migration of customer transactions to the website and other self service channels, will not only deliver increased accessibility outside normal office opening times, but will also increase the cost effectiveness of the service provided.

The impact of increasing services available through the website is very marked when comparisons of customer contacts through Customer Services channels between 2003/04 and 2004/05 are made. There is a relatively small change overall, but a substantial increase in web traffic. Overall customer contacts have increased from 4,719,000 to 5,025,000, including the significant increase in web traffic. The change is shown in the table below:

Channel	2003/04	2004/05	Change	Change %
	'000s	'000s	'000s	
Face to Face	2,137	1,042	-1,095	-49%
Telephone	1,352	1,832	+482	+35%
White mail (post and faxes)	508	852	+344	+67%
email	57	137	+80	+140%
Web	665	1,161	+496	+75%
Total	4,719	5,025	+306	+6%

We have much greater confidence in the volumes collected in 2004/05. The numbers for face to face, telephone and white mail are grounded in a higher degree of certainty than those for 2003/04. Consequently, the apparent growth in white mail may be because they were under-represented in 2003/04. Similarly, the reduction in face to face contacts may be because they were over-represented in 2003/04. However, whilst the Council is now easier to get through to on the phone, it would appear that customers have chosen to access the Council by other means than face to face, effecting a significant channel shift.

How our Service is Valued

Value is much more complex, in that there is the cost component but there is also a consideration of the value of the service to customers, residents, tenants, client services and the Council as a whole. The Customer Services Strategy has been based on the premise that better accessibility, better customer service and consistency of outcome is of value. The benefits for the Council and its customers will continue to be:

- The availability of all services in one place – in the CSCs, the Call centre and the Council Website. In the telephone survey of Customer Services customers in 2005, 66% of respondents were Council tenants, and their latest contact with Customer Services had been as follows:
  - 66% on Housing landlord issues
  - the remaining 34% were mainly on Council Tax, Benefits, Parking
  With the increasing range of services available through Customer Services this will ease the tenants' and all respondents' accessibility to these new services.
- The capability to access all of these services in one interaction.
- The depth of the processes in Customer Services so that transactions are increasingly completed at first contact and require less contact with housing and other service managers.
- Improved customer service and consistent outcomes as a result of Customer Services process control.

These have had the effect of increasing Council tenants' satisfaction rates (very satisfied and satisfied) in the annual Telephone Survey as follows:

	Council Tenants' Responses		All respondents
Year	Housing Landlord issues only	All Services	
2005	80.0%	80.7%	77.1%
2003	71.9%	75.4%	72.2%
2002	62.5%	69.1%	74.5%

The results show that the increase in satisfaction is much greater with tenants than with the respondents as a whole and that they are now more satisfied than the respondents as a whole, although this difference is not statistically significant.

Benchmarking

We are also involved in benchmarking activities as a driver to service improvement.

The data we currently benchmark with the Local Authority Call Centre Benchmarking Group is shown in the table on page 24.

The following elements 8 to 11 will be the basis of cost benchmarking yet to be adopted:

Costs:

8
- Employees (including NI/SA)
- Other (supplies and services, central support, capital charges)
- Total

Costs per Call Answered:

9
- Employees (including NI/SA)
- Other (supplies and services, central support, capital)
- Total

10 Total Call Handling Time (minutes)

Costs per Call Handling Minutes:

11
- Employees (including NI/SA)
- Other (supplies and services, central support, capital)
- Total

Factors that will affect cost comparisons:
1. Staff costs vary considerably between authorities. Depending on staffing strategies and structures, the depth of resolution of call, the knowledge needed by the staff taking enquiries – all these may vary significantly between authorities.
2. Training costs, we have a very developed training programme leading to a high rate of staff retention.
3. Levels of duplication of entry i.e. system integration, we have no system integration and consequently double and triple entry of data into client systems affecting transaction length and wrap up time.

We are also part of the Customer Services for London Group (a sub group of London Connects) and we are working on developing benchmarks for Customer Services Centres specifically to address Value for Money, and to develop comparative efficiency measures. We have just completed a pan London user satisfaction survey to compare satisfaction levels with this group of 14 London Authorities

In addition, a National One Stop Shop Benchmarking Group has been established, which we have joined but has not yet produced comparative data.

Appendix 3 - Financial Tables CUSTOMER SERVICES

Table 1. Cost of Your Service (This table will be filled in by Finance Mgrs to agree to the cash limit for Period 4). Please give the projected year end variance for each service budget within your business unit)				
Service Area	**Gross Expenditure Budget @ P4 05/06 (£'000)**	**Gross Income Budget @ P4 05/06 (£'000)**	**Net Budget @ P4 05/06 (£'000)**	**Net Projected Outturn 05/06 (£'000)**
C00100 Customer Service Mgr	77	0	77	
C00101 Customer Management	786	0	786	
C00102 Call Centre	2622	0	2622	
C00103 Customer Service Apex	525	0	525	
C00104 Customer Service Hornsey	282	0	282	
C00105 Customer Service Wood Green	885	0	885	
C00106 Customer Service North Tottenham	365	0	365	
Total	**5542**		**5542**	

Table 2. Cost of Your Service (This table breaks down your budget into expenditure & income types)	
Subjective Description	**Budget @ P4 05/06 (£'000)**
Employees	5412
Premises	5
Transport	26
Supplies & Services	79
Third Party Payments	
Transfer Payments	
Support Services	
Contingencies	20
Total Expenditure	**5542**
Government Grants	
Other Contributions	
Receipts	

Table 3	Grants *(of this revised budget please set out what grants are included, what they fund, the end date and plans for accommodating in mainstream funding)*			
Grant	**Amount £'000**	**Purpose**	**End Date**	**Mainstreaming Plans**
Not applicable				
Total				

Appendix 4 -   CPA KLOEs

CPA < level 3 descriptor	Current assessment	Gap	Plans to close gap	Unresolved gap
There no KLOEs that are allocated to Customer Services. However, we will contribute to KLOE achievement in our client services, particularly: -ALMO KLOE 30 and 31 -Benefits Performance Standards				

This page is intentionally left blank

Questions for Assistant Chief Executive (Access)

1. **Is there a specific date when you expect to meet the 80/80 vision, as in the business plan and other documents it mentions over time. Do you think that we should set a specific date for achievement of this target?**
   The Council agreed the Customer Services Strategy at Council Executive in July 2004 to achieve the vision of 80% of Customer Contacts to be handled through Customer Services channels and that 80% of these are to be completed at first contact.

   This is an aspiration rather than a specific target. Whilst I still believe that the aspiration is realistic and that we are working towards it, I would be reluctant to set a specific target until there are firm plans in place and the requisite funding is agreed. This is probably a matter for the next administration.

2. **Why has the total cost per call/visit increased from £4.43 in 04/05 to £4.54 in 05/06? How can we reduce this cost?**
   This is a 2.5% increase, less than the increase in costs and, therefore, a real terms saving. Cost per call is calculated by dividing the total Customer Services budget by the number of contacts (calls answered and customer visits).

   Dealing with an increased amount of customer contacts without increasing staff resources will reduce both spare capacity and cost per call. The Customer Services Strategy will deliver additional customer contacts. At the same time the service will be working to reduce transaction times and increase productivity allowing us to deal with these additional customer contacts without increasing staff numbers.

   Please also note that the 05/06 is a year to date figure and so will vary as customer demand changes over the year.

3. **How is the total cost of customer services allocated and billed to the clients who use it facilities?**

   Customer services costs are recharged to clients through the corporate overhead process, based on the volume of activity weighted by the average duration of the interactions.

   The initial funding is transferred from the client service based on a scoping exercise which assesses the numbers of staff required to undertake the work.

   The Customer Services budget comprises (in round terms):

Customer Service Officers	£3.4m
All Other Staff	£2.0m
Supplies and Services	£0.1m

Overhead recharges	£2.8m
Total Recharged to client services	**£8.3m**

4. **Please provide details as to how and where from the next 3yrs savings are to be found, 900k.**

Customer Services are expected to save £899k over the next three years. These saving will be achieved through our Siebel development programme resulting in improved efficiencies including process improvement, understanding what creates demand and taking action to satisfy needs and reduce demand and migration to self service channels. These will be delivered through a combination of taking on new services (more service from the same resource) and some Customer Service staff reductions, through natural turnover.

5. **Are there any plans for the Hornsey CSC when the town hall site is developed?**

There is a continued demand for a CSC in Hornsey CSC. Any changes that affect the CSC are being discussed between Customer Services Management and Property Services

6. **Has it been agreed with all interested parties for housing to conduct its interviews at the csc. If not what parties have still to agree, is the start date agreed?**

The Director of Housing has agreed with the Head of Customer Services that Housing should conduct interviews at a Pilot CSC (Hornsey) from December 2005. There are some residual issues which are being worked through.

7. **Has the need for Saturday opening been tested, if not why, if so what was the result? Does staff attendance on Saturdays incur premium pay rates?**

A recent customer survey identified Monday evenings as a the most preferred extended opening for CSCs, with Saturday mornings as the next preferred option. A pilot recently commenced in Wood Green CSC where opening hours have been extended to 7pm on Monday evenings. This pilot will allow us to understand customer demand and determine if further extending opening hours would be cost effective.

The Call Centre is now open until 8pm Tuesday to Wednesday. Joining up with the Out of Hours service will give us the opportunity to further extend opening hours.

Recently recruited staff have contracts which include Saturdays as standard working hours and so it would not be necessary to pay premium pay rates.

8. **Are there any plans to use job centre plus programmes / new deal programmes etc to recruit and train new staff? Utilizing any government funding that may be available.**

Customer Services have employed 2 to 3 young people a year through the new start scheme and the majority have secured permanent jobs with the Council. There may be a possibility of setting up a Customer Services Academy which is self financing. This will obviously need to be thoroughly thought out with sufficient resources invested

9. **What is the Customer Focus Stream Board? What is the Member Working Group on Customer Services? What do these Groups do? Please explain the impact of these groups on service provisions.**

Customer Services Member Working Group

The Customer Services Member Working Group Terms of Reference is:

1. To support, challenge and champion Customer Services and customer service across the Council, from the customer experience through to the technology enablers.
2. To oversee the implementation of the customer services strategy.
3. To oversee the implementation and development of the IS/IT strategies.
4. To support the member e-champion in their role.
5. To maximise the opportunities for customer feedback and input into the future development of customer services.
6. To monitor and challenge the performance within customer services and on key corporate customer service metrics.
7. To monitor and promote the development of e-democracy and the provision of Members' IT facilities.
8. To support Member capacity to lead and publicise Customer Services as above.

Membership of the Group is Cllrs Adje, Sulaiman, Reith and Milner.

Customer Focus Stream Board
The Purpose of the Board is to oversee the assigned projects and ensure their coherence and delivery. The Board meets monthly, is chaired by the board Assistant Chief Executive (Access) and attended by representatives from each Directorate. The Board is accountable to and escalates to the CEMB Programme Board. The objectives of the Board are:

- to oversee a range of projects, providing strategic insight and providing coherence between projects and streams;

- to co-ordinate with other streams;

- to consider and approve/recommend to programme board project briefs and business cases;

- to manage and monitor the realisation of the expected benefits from the stream;

- to resolve (or find ways of resolving) risks, issues and policies escalated by other stream boards and/or projects; and

- to monitor, support and challenge assigned projects; and

- to provide service input to stream activity and facilitate activities within directorates.

Projects that report to the Stream Board include:

- Benefits and Local Taxation Improvement Project
- Customer Services Strategy Realisation Project
- Siebel Development Project
- E-Payments Project
- Highways Implementation Project
- Homelessness & Housing Options Project
- Housing Repairs   Project
- Leisure System Replacement Project
- Local Land and Property Gazetteer Project
- Property Management System Project
- SAP Realisation of Benefits Project
- Web Development
- Tech Refresh Project
- E-democracy Project

Questions for IT

Q 1 What is your perception of the IT support provided and what are the strengths and weaknesses? How are the weaknesses resolved?

The perception of support is generally good, but we are constantly working to improve performance.

Our Strengths are:-
- Incidents for Customer Services are treated as a high priority (due to the impact)
- Clear escalation process
- ITIL frame work in place
- Regular meeting with our suppliers

Our challenges are;-
- We're currently supporting two environments: legacy and the refreshed environments. This will be resolved by the completion of refresh.
- Contracts need to be reviewed to reflect our core business hours. (This assumes that funding can be identified)
- A significant amount of change is required to manage a continuous stream of government projects. This is managed through robust project and programme management.
- The extent to which Customer services are reliant on IT solutions. This managed by extensive support.

Our sources of learning to improve the service are
- Lessons learnt from previous issues
- Industry recognised techniques and best practices used within other organisations or taken from the ITIL frame work to address a weakness
- Post implementation review with suppliers and Project Managers
- Reviews and recommendations by internal audit
- Risk management using the BS7799 approach
- Feedback from users and from training to improve the education of our staff and Users.

Q2 Current Plans

The next phase of our plans is to deploy a new version of Siebel, which will be deployed week commencing 7 November. This is a major upgrade utilising the Public Sector version of the Siebel product. It introduces new "easier to use" processes and activities for the Customer Services operatives in the Call Centre and Customer Service Centres and also provides the foundation for the continued evolution of Siebel.

Future enhancements to Siebel will be aimed at continuing to both widen the services provided by Customer Services and "deepen" the service offerings through integration between Siebel in the front–office and the back-office "departmental" systems. This evolution will include Siebel interacting with various customer channels such as face-to-face, web, phone, fax, SMS etc.

The plans are not rigid, it allows for flexibility to support the evolution and any changing priorities of the Customer Services Strategy.

Q 3 How are system downtimes resolved? How do you minimise the time it takes to resolve such issues?

Down time is measured from the moment the call has been logged within Clarify (the call logging system) until the call is resolved (deemed fixed by the user). The resolution process is to:

- Log it with the Helpdesk. All IT are logged and classified within our call handling system, Clarify; Details taken from the user assist the helpdesk analyst determine a number of categories eg: Impact and issue, Urgency and Priority,
- All incidents are given a Priority categorised between P1-P5 and then passed to the appropriate resolving team. There are 11 resolving teams used to support 'all councils' systems, who in turn are supported by third parties with appropriate contracts and Service Level Agreement (SLA)
- During the life span of an incident, an owner is allocated to the incident (as it's possible for a call to be passed between teams) it's the responsibility of the owner to investigate the issue and where possible implement an appropriate fix. Where a fix has been tried and failed or the impact deem to be disrupting or affecting a building or business unit performance or their operational functionality, the incident is escalated within the IT services management structure.
- There is a clear escalation route when issues are not resolved.

All systems and services deployed during the last 12 months have added resilience built into the design of the systems/services, these include:-

- Hot fixes for hardware (hardware can be removed without effecting the services or impacting the users further)
- Network resilience for infrastructure failures (alternate routing for data should the network fail.)
- Uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) and generators for power failures.
- Third parties can also connect to our network to provide a prompt fix/investigate reported issues.
- System best practices such as monitoring system performance and management of data growth are conducted on a daily basis.

Q4 Plan & Introduce New Systems

A project Board has been established for Customer Services. It is chaired by Head of Customer Services and includes management representation from both Customer Services and IT Services. Currently this board is focussing upon the upgrade to the Siebel Public Sector version in November.

The Board manages the priorities for IT investment based upon the needs of the Customer Services Strategy. Projects are planned and executed in accordance with the Council's Project Management Framework and are jointly staffed and led by Customer Services and IT project managers.

Customer Services lead the business implementation, undertaking change management activities with the appropriate level of support from IT. In the case of Siebel, over the course of the next 24 months it is anticipated that on average, 3 new releases per year will take place in line with the roadmap, thereby providing new functionality in a regular and controlled manner and avoiding the higher risks associated with "Big Bang" deployments

Q5 When is the tech refresh project planned for the customer services department?

Customer Services are planned to be deployed w/c 5th December 2005.

Q6 Do you think the implementation and post implementation process will affect the performance of customer services? What contingency plans are there to minimise system down time during this period?

The implementation of Tech Refresh should have minimal affect on Customer Services operation. The deployment of the new technology will be scheduled with the business unit to ensure cover can be provided by other operators whilst users are cutover. The switch over of a user takes approximately 15 minutes and can be coordinated with break times or overnight. Post implementation floor walkers are present to deal with issues arising immediately in addition to User handouts and guides. The number of floorwalkers is based on the umber of users being refreshed at one time.

This page is intentionally left blank

Answers to Questions for Jane Waterhouse on IT
Scrutiny Panel on 7 November 2005

1) **What is the CRM system and how does it affect Customer Services?**

The CRM system comprises;
- A customer database which includes a history of each customer's contacts with the Council and their outcomes.
- A source of business rules and processes to ensure that customers enjoy consistent treatment and outcomes for any given set of inputs/requests for service or information.
- A knowledge base of information
- A source of support for customer service staff operation of client service systems.

The system enables the generic Customer Services staff to handle a wide range of request for service and information consistently and professionally. Without it, specialist staff would be required creating bottlenecks and impacting on service levels and flexibility of staff deployment.

The system is a very large database with enormous analytical capabilities. The next release of Siebel (developed with CapGemini) will allow us to exploit this capability. Outputs we are expecting post release 1 include:
- Dynamic monitoring of service delivery against a number of demographic profiles
- Regular tracking of user satisfaction at the point of service
- Comprehensive and real time measurement of the degree of resolution at first point of contact.

2) **Options for enhancements – What options are there, how much and in which direction, what's happening in the industry generally and what future possibilities are there?**

The changes in the contracting arrangements for the Siebel Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and system development undertaken by our new integration partner, offer opportunities to improve efficiency in Customer Services and improve the quality of experience for our customers. The new Siebel configuration to be released shortly also offers the opportunity to access greater functionality such as case management. This additional functionality will be used to enrich the processes used, to improve data quality, data capture and analysis, to improve efficiency and to improve customer service and accessibility further, both through the self service and the mediated (face to face, telephone and e-mail) channels. Consequently, we

are developing a longer term investment programme to exploit the investment in this functionality.

The Siebel system will also be accessed wider than Customer Services:
- It is already used to support Freedom of Information request fulfilment;
- We have firm plans for it to be used to support e-mail response via the web in all Council services (due for roll out after Christmas); and
- We will be using it in the short term to track contacts with businesses across the borough wide in those services that do not currently have a mechanism to record them. This last improvement will support the development of recommendations about how the Council improves its support to the borough's business community.

Customer Services in local authorities are increasingly investing in Customer Relationship Management systems, partly as a direct result of the Government's expectation embodied in the priority service outcomes for eGovernment. Increasingly local authorities are seeing the strategic benefits of understanding how customers interact with them, seeing the customer contact points with all their services in one single view of a particular customer but also the patterns of contact over a wider demographic profile. This vision will enable local authorities to serve their customers better and design their service delivery structures to suit customers' needs better and more efficiently.

3) **Can you tell us about the current CRM system and its strengths and weaknesses?**

Many of the systems strengths are listed in the answer to the previous question.

In addition, the system is "industrial strength", i.e. it is designed for commercial use and many large organisations use it to manage their customer relationships. In such cases their success criteria are about return business and sales target achievement. In transferring this thinking to local authorities, for us, it's about successful interactions with our customers that require no further action by the customer and increased user satisfaction.

The system is also highly configurable to meet our specific needs and now includes specific features which have been developed for the public sector, such as case management which we are going to be using in Freedom of Information request fulfilment.

The system is a brand leader and is extremely well supported by Siebel and is now owned by Oracle.

The challenge, which is shared with many of our IT applications, is that there is on an going need to invest in developing and improving the system. We need to ensure that investment in it will deliver a payback to the Council. In this case, the development of Release 1 is expected to deliver a reduction in the average transaction time of a minute and is enabling Customer services to achieve the savings target in the PBPR in the coming years.

4) **Please tell us the costs and benefits of this new system and how in your view it will affect the performance of customer services?**

The system has been in place for over 4 years now. It went live with the first service, Parking, on 31 October 2001.

The system is hosted by Serco (formerly ITnet) and is to be supported from Release 1 by CapGemini. In addition, the management of the contractual arrangements are supported by Central IT Services and Northgate Services also have an input of fault resolution and supporting change as it affects the Council infrastructure. The cost of these arrangements and the site licence for the software is approximately £825K per annum.

The benefits of the system and how it affects Customer Services performance have been described in the answer to questions 2 and 3.

This page is intentionally left blank