

INFORMATION
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**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

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Agenda Item No 8

meeting date: 21 SEPTEMBER 2010  
title: SHARED SERVICE CONTACT CENTRE  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES  
principal author: PETER HOTHERSALL

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To update Committee on the progress made in the Contact Centre during the last 6 months.

2 RELEVANCE TO THE COUNCIL'S AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES

2.1 Implementation of the Contact Centre initiative has improved the way the Council is able to serve the public. As such it is key to the achievement of the Council's core values of striving to achieve service excellence and ensuring that services are accessible to all. It also contributes to our underlying aim to be a well-managed Council.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Shared Services Contact Centre (SSCC) and the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software contract has been in place since Nov 2004 and will expire in Nov 2011. This contract is a collaboration between LCC, Pendle, Rossendale, Burnley, Chorley and Ribble Valley Councils.

3.2 A progress report against the workplan was presented to Committee in March, at which time a further update was requested in six months.

4 PROGRESS OVER THE LAST 9 MONTHS

4.1 I am pleased to be able to continue to report that casual staff have no longer been employed, instead Level 'B' reception staff have supplemented the call handling during busy periods or for holiday/sickness situations. In a reciprocal arrangement Contact Centre staff are continuing to be used to cover Level 'B' reception during holidays/sickness.

4.2 We have made further changes to the CRM scripts to enhance our use of the system. As reported previously, the interface costs to the back office computer systems are large and not feasible in our present economic climate. Alternative but slightly more labour intensive, no cost solutions have been put in place.

4.3 Discussions have continued with service managers who have/will have dealings with the Contact Centre. This has furthered our understanding of their requirements and how the Contact Centre can help them. Working practice changes are now happening that enables the Contact Centre to answer more calls at the first point of contact. These changes have helped the Contact Centre deal directly with the following:

- Street scene calls, which include 3 stream waste, assisted collections, fly tipping, missed refuse, paper collection, special collection, and commercial sacks.
- Prices for Land Charges requests
- Council Tax banding enquires
- Advise on how to apply for a bus pass

- Location, opening hours and type of refuse accepted by the nearest waste centre
  - Initial flooding grant call information
  - Energy Efficiency and Central Heating grant information
  - Grant for Performing Arts application information
  - Taking bookings from April to October for the Free Markets
  - Local Councillor details
  - Initial pre application information for planning applications
  - Environmental health queries
- 4.4 After detailed discussions with the Planning and Environmental Health sections the Contact Centre staff are able to deal with a larger proportion of calls at first point of contact. However, these calls are proving to be of a longer duration to ensure they are dealt with correctly.
- 4.5 If the calls are LCC related (e.g. highways, street lighting) the operatives can now input the problem request directly into the LCC system for the resident.
- 4.6 In addition, the Contact Centre has provided support to many departments within the Council e.g. assisting with National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) address cleansing (on average ½ day per week), enveloping for the Revenues and Benefits Department.
- 4.7 The Contact Centre assists the Environmental Health section's NI182 satisfaction survey by telephone cold calling
- 4.8 The Contact Centre has been given responsibility for
- Emails to the webmaster emanating from the 'contact' area of the web site
  - The website's A to Z and Parish Council pages
- 4.9 We have been able to improve reporting from the CRM system, and figures for January to August are shown at Annex 1. We have no intention of purchasing add-on software for reporting during the current contract.
- 4.10 The voice recordings from the CRM system continue to be used on for resolution of official complaints and investigations into aggressive customer behaviour.

## 5 RISK ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 *Resources:*

- (a) Financial – The SSCC project is a 7 year financial commitment (currently £53.5k per annum) to the Partnership until November 2011. The early payments were made using externally provided (I.E.G) grant funding. The last payment is due in Feb 2011.
- (b) Staff – The staffing complement remains at 2.5 FTE Customer Service Advisors plus a working Supervisor. Casual staff are available but not envisaged to be needed

*Technical, Environmental and Legal:*

None

*Equality and Diversity:*

A consistent approach to our customer contact via telephone, email and the website will ensure that we deal with all members of the public in an equal manner

*Political:*

None

*Reputation:*

Continued use of the Contact Centre will provide an enhanced quality of service to our customers.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The Contact Centre has continued to expand the services it provides. This has clearly released capacity for back office staff to concentrate on other work.

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

7.1 Note the continuing progress that is being made in ensuring the Contact Centre is the 'first point of contact' for all sections of the Authority.

PETER HOTHERSALL  
ICT MANAGER

PF51-10/PH/AC  
14 September 2010

## Calls to the Contact Centre

*Analysis of calls resolved at first point of contact*

Enquiry Subject	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10
Assisted Collections (solved)	10	1	15	7	1	4	4	6
Bank Holidays (solved)	0	0	110	154	27			10
Bus Pass (solved)	17	22	32	32	14	32	45	34
Garden waste collection (solved)	119	1	1	17				
Missed Refuse (solved)	2,353	349	91	175	161	201	425	262
Missed refuse	145	125	99	146	71	165	60	128
Paper sacks sent out		59	56	119	60	62	60	50
Paper/refuse (solved) dates for next collection	104	96	25	29	25	45	38	20
Special Collections (solved)	16	37	45	43	35	49	45	50
Special Collections	339	425	489	457	366	400	412	404
Waste Disposal Sites (solved)	10	124	440	196	26	25	26	25
3 Stream	70	52	204	72	102	201	70	178
Street Scene	167	137	140	157	132	168	124	106
Street Scene (solved)		16	39	114	19	52	42	52
Fly Tipping	8	4	14	7	8	12	12	9
Grants (solved)	38	44	30	10	3	9	18	7
Collection days for both paper and refuse			75	35				
Chasing calendars			95	131				
Ribble Valley Homes	73	70	79	36	53	63	66	63
LCC Self Serve	29	38	35	28	35	43	25	15
LCC Social services, Trading Standards	102	112	131	108	175	113	158	116
Misc chasing specials, united utilities, library no, directions etc.	87	746	585	750	821	901	852	565
Cold calling	146	248	390	131	171	198	198	205
Planning	25	99	89	113	160	203	184	141
Compost bins		3	2	8	15	17	9	5
Ctax banding & other enq			21	38	15	13	25	10
Bookings/ enq's for Markets				37	24	39	42	37
Job Applications sent out				3				
Land Charges					8	4	5	5
School enq's for recycling for P McGeorge					35	40		
Bin Survey (solved)						95	36	
Environmental Health							18	62
Core Strategy Planning								32
TOTALS	3,858	2,808	3,332	3,153	2,562	3,154	2,999	2,597

### **Summary of all calls**

	<b>Jan 2010</b>	<b>Feb 2010</b>	<b>March 2010</b>	<b>April 2010</b>	<b>May 2010</b>	<b>June 2010</b>	<b>July 2010</b>	<b>Aug 2010</b>
Total number of calls to the Council	6,265	4,935	5,710	5,399	4,420	5,560	5,230	4,482
Number of calls answered	6,124	4,871	5,627	5,307	4,379	5,488	4,959	4,393
% of calls answered	98	99	99	98	99	99	94 <sup>1</sup>	98
Number of calls transferred	2,266	2,063	2,322	2,426	1,934	2,145	2,144	1,697
% of calls transferred	37	42	40	45	44	39	41	38
% resolved at first point of contact	63	58	59	58	56	58	57	61

<sup>1</sup> Holiday period for staff