



# Customer Engagement Update

Jane Witherow

7<sup>th</sup> March 2024

# Agenda



## Customer Management



## Complaints



## AI Feedback



## Blue Badges



# Customer Management

## Front of House Team



- Deal with customers on a face-to-face basis
- Dealing with our most vulnerable citizens
- Dealing with aggressive presentations
- Process applications for Gold Cards and Parking Permits
- Offer digital assistance support to those who need help on the self-service PCs
- Signpost to the correct services



- Support disabled customers and sensory impaired residents to access services
- Working with the Customer Reference Group
- Use the translation services for non-English speaking customers
- Treat our LGBTQ+ customers with respect and dignity

# Customer Management

## Telephony Team



- Take calls about a wide range of council services
- Advisors are dealing with more complex enquiries
- Deflection rate is approx. 40%
- 40% reduction of calls into the contact centre
- 88% of calls are made using a Smart Device
- Provide accessible channels such as the Mobile Phone and SignVideo BSL translations for Deaf Customers
- Call wait times are back to average of 8 mins
- Abandoned calls consistent with pre-AI levels at 20%

# Customer Management

## Online



- Darcie and Ali SmartWeb – over 40K queries
- Darcie and Ali SmartPhone – over 500K queries
- Darcie and Ali SmartPhone which point to online information
- MyAccount for personalised updates and interactions
- Digital offer on the majority of services



- The current deflection rate of Darcie is approx. 40%
- Changing behaviour – seeing a shift from telephone and email channels to online contacts
- 88% of those who call us are doing so from a Smart device

# Customer Management

## Future direction



- Single Front Door by rationalising the duplicate front doors across the organisation
- Continue to develop service accessibility with community/ref group
- Free up the experts to focus on more complex needs
- Internal version of Darcie and Ali for staff support
- More intelligent versions of Darcie and Ali
- Wider use of Darcie and Ali
- Expanded channels – email and social media
- Use of AI for service fulfillment – gold cards, blue badge, managing inboxes
- Maintain F2F, Telephone contact channels

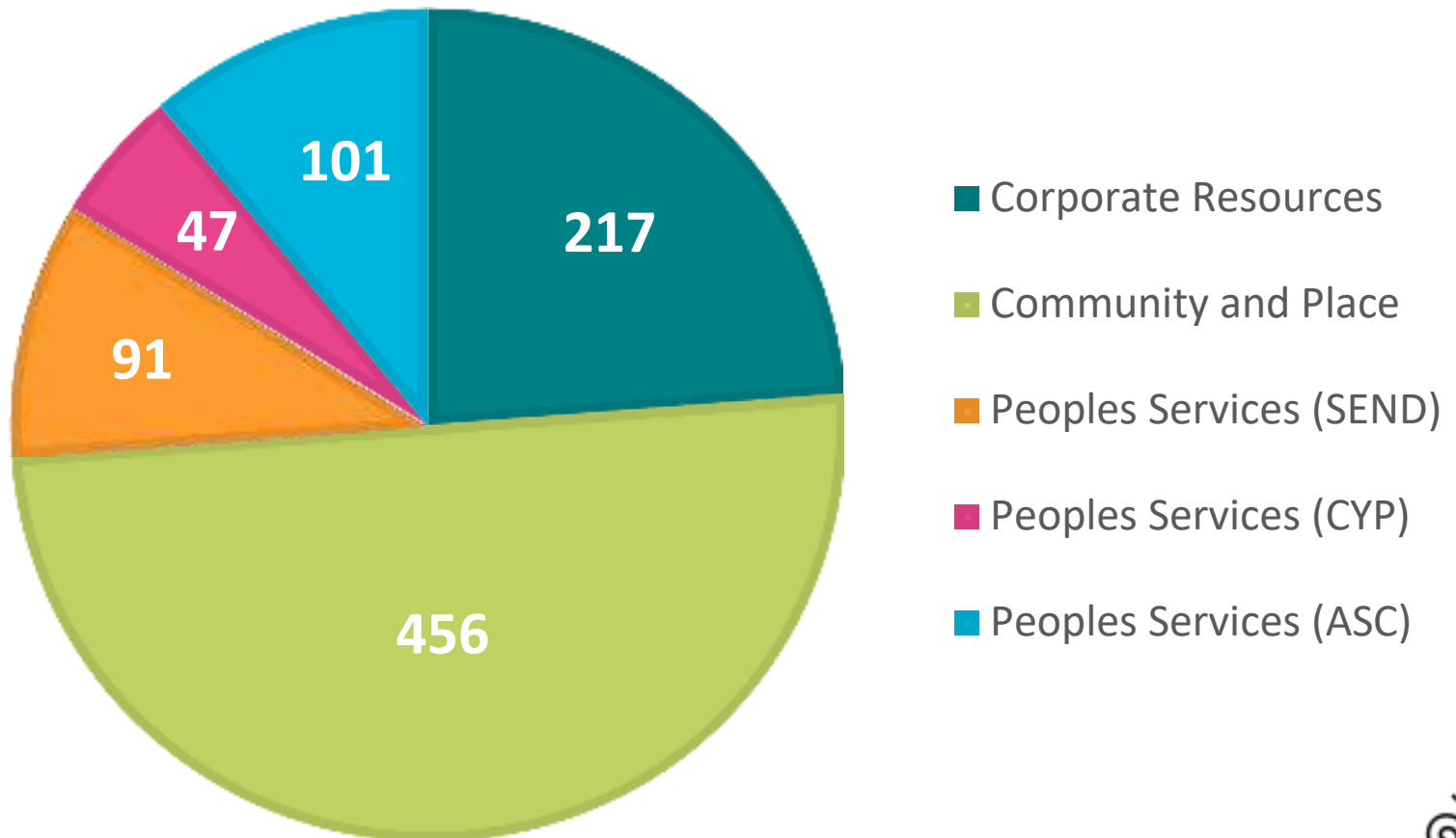
# Complaints

- Corporate Complaints, Adult Social Care Complaints, Children's Social Care Complaint
- Customer submits a case and Customer Management allocate it to the service to investigate and respond to the customer



# Complaints

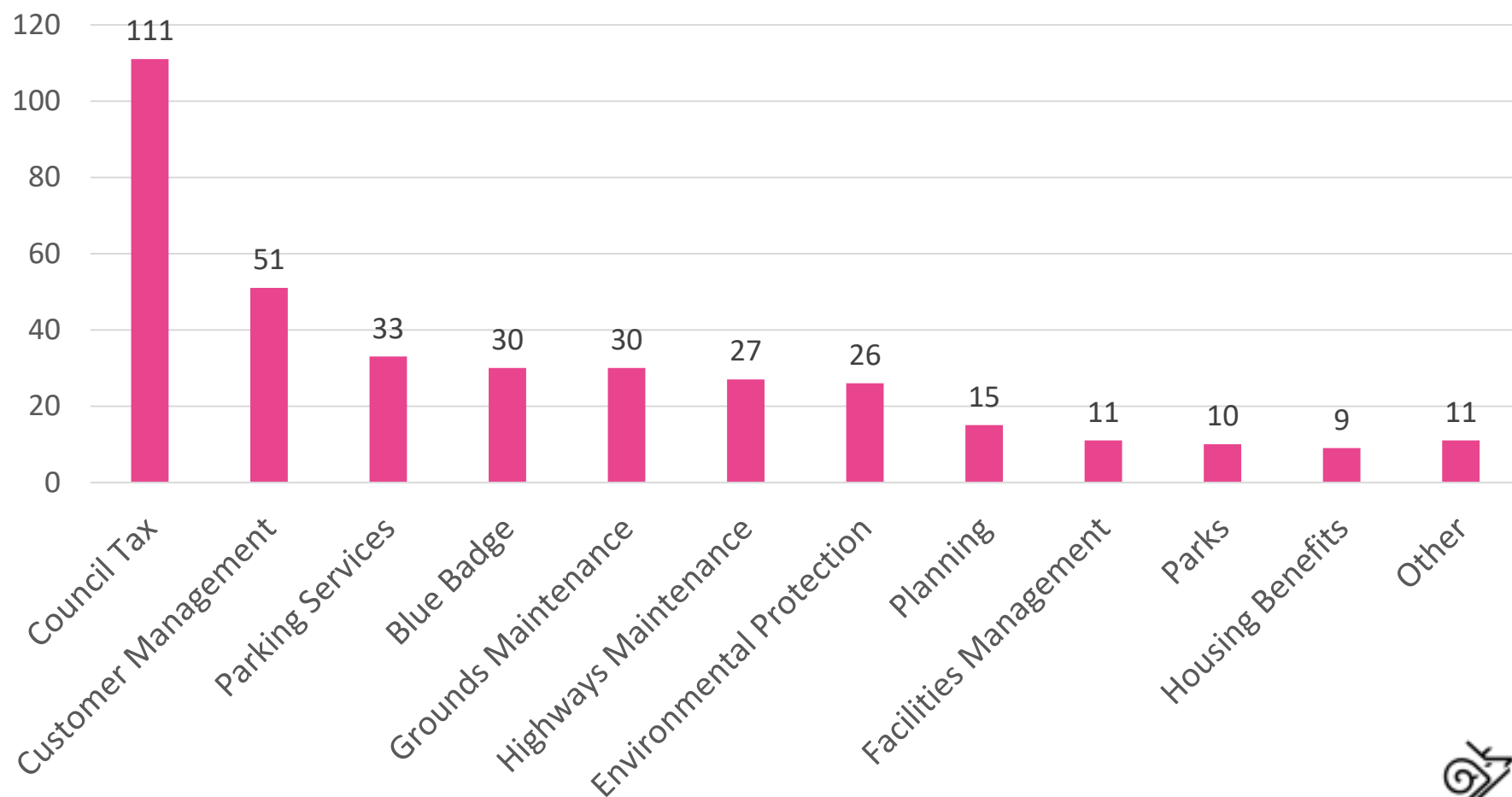
## Cases – by Directorate





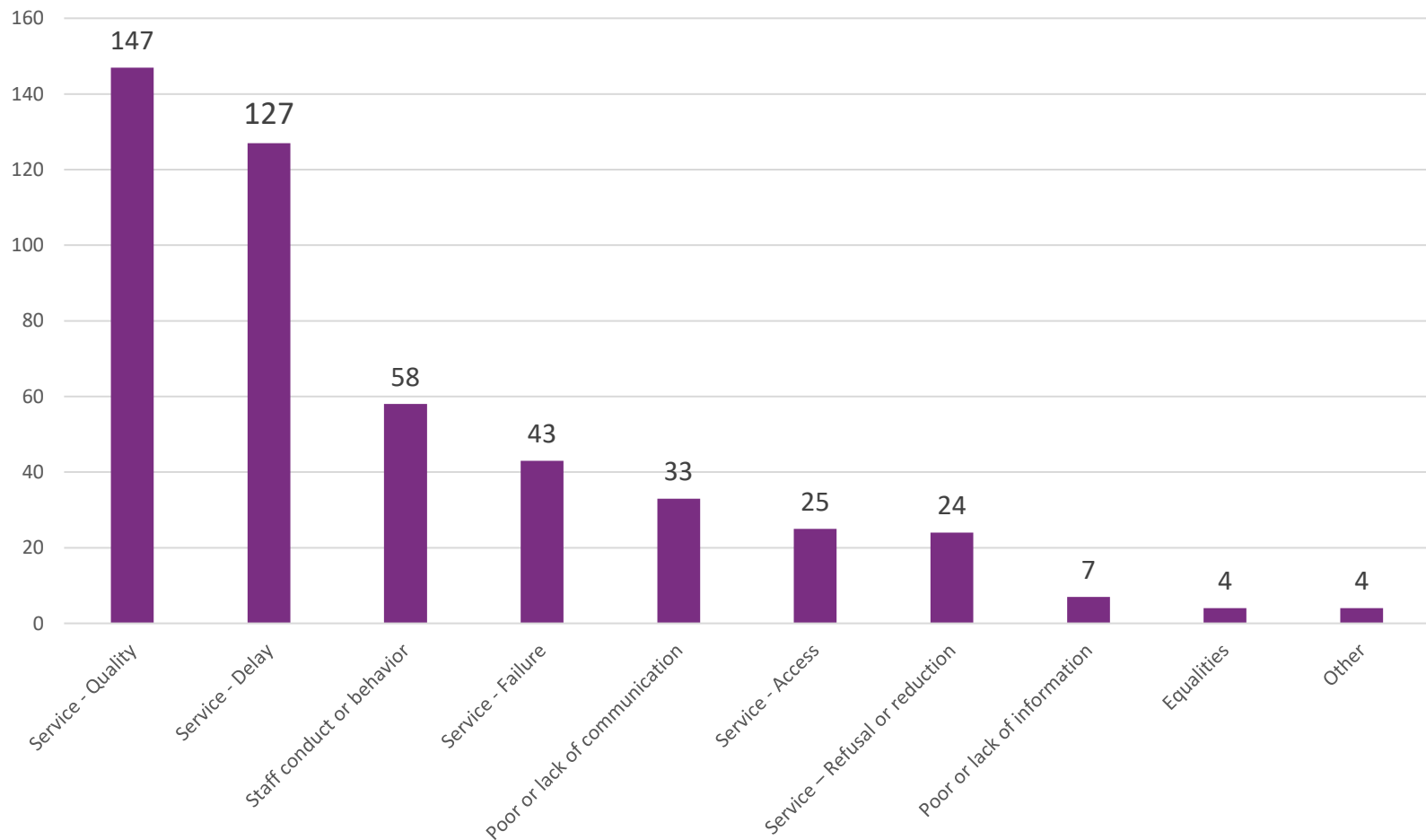
# Complaints

## Cases by Service Area (Corporate Services)



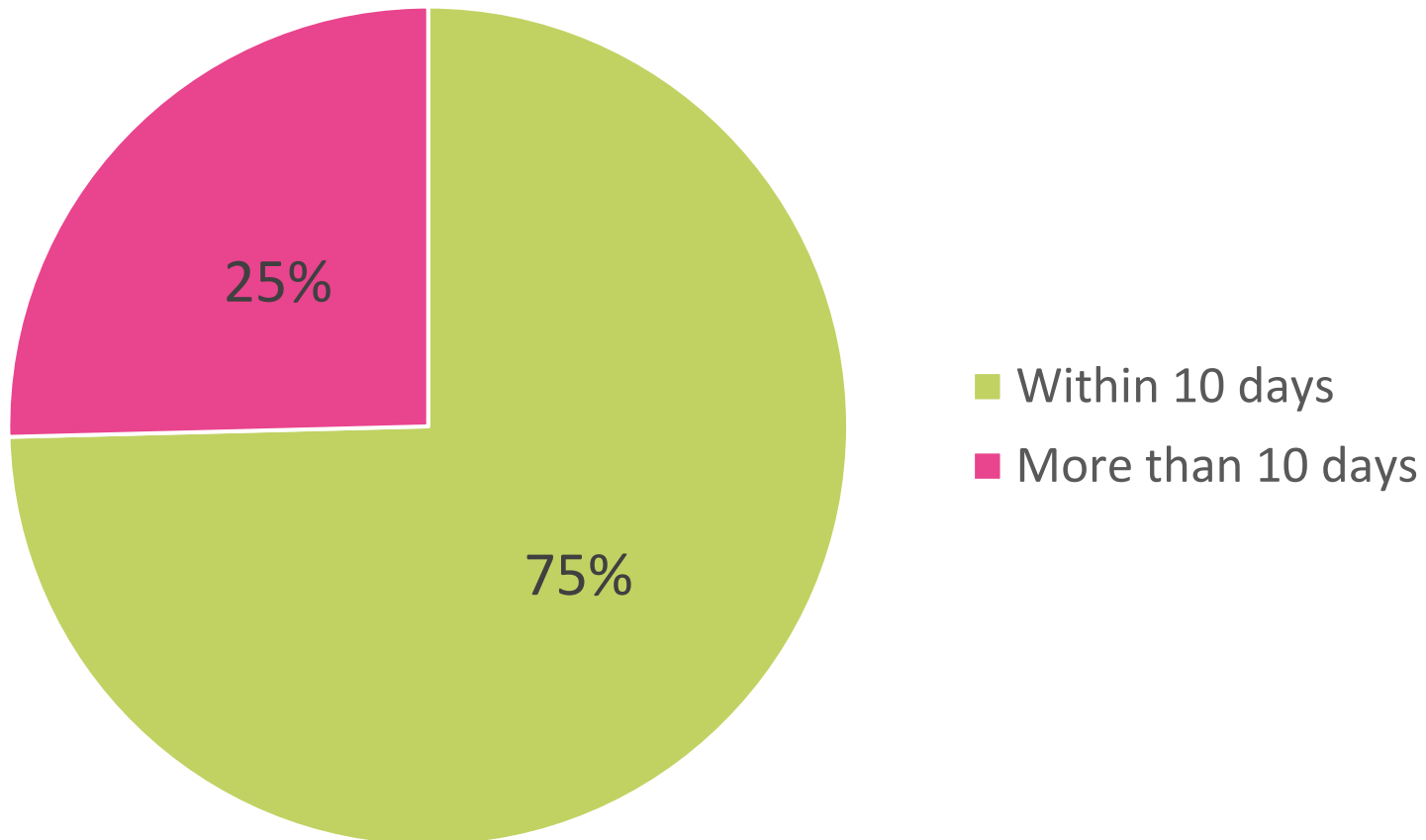
# Complaints

## Causes of Complaints (Corporate Services)



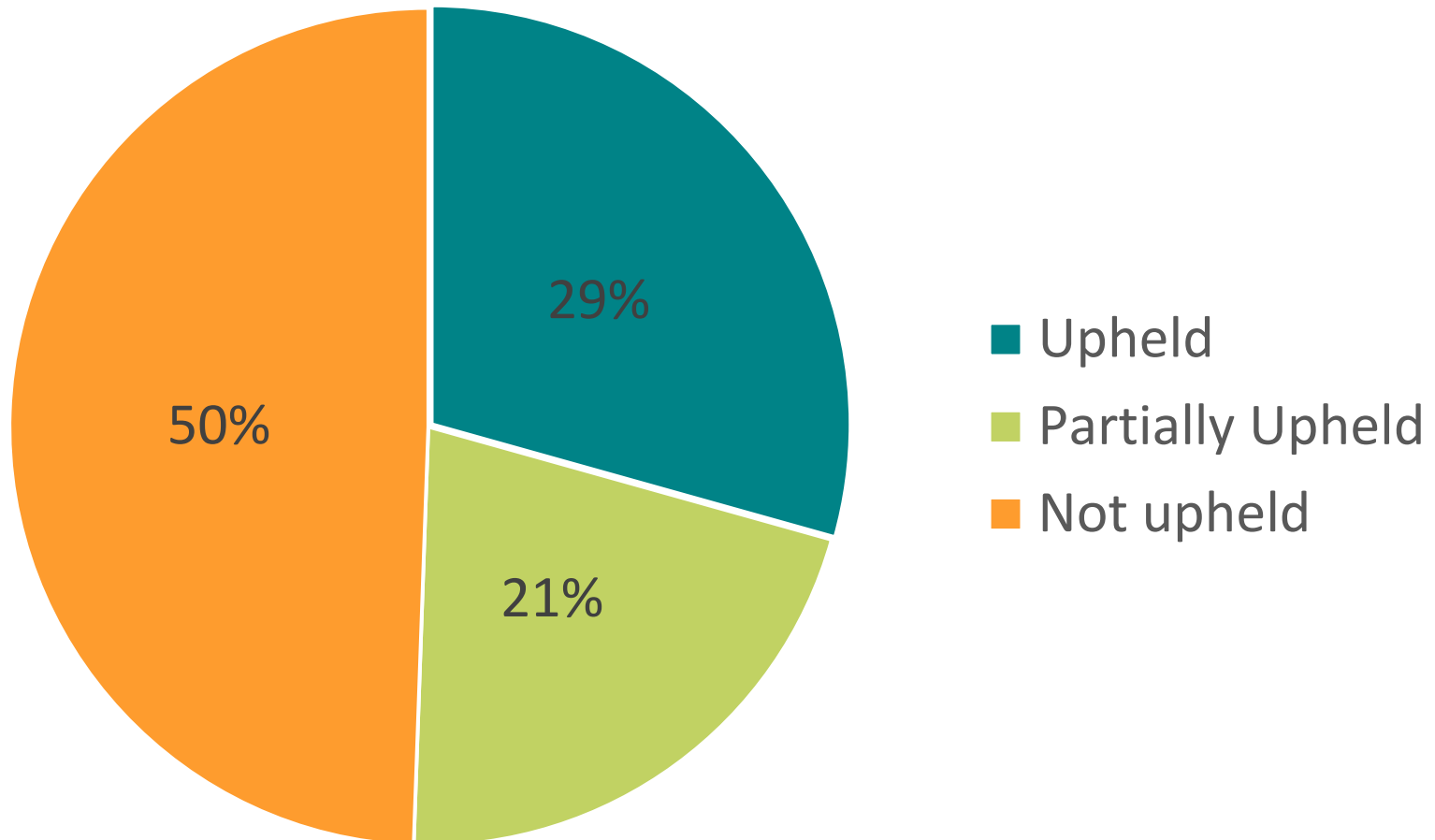
# Complaints

Response Times – target is 10 working days



# Complaints

## Outcomes



# Complaints - the future

- AI will bring into scope those customer interactions such as Direct Service contacts and more efficiently manage the administration
- Align with emerging legislation – LGO consultation



# AI Feedback

## Feedback sources



We actively gather feedback from various stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- Customer Complaints,
- staff members,
- media coverage,
- testing and continuous learning,
- customer and focus groups,
- Members (the feedback channel will soon be live on the Cllr Portal) and partners



- We take all feedback and complaints seriously
- We investigate each case or article thoroughly by reviewing the conversation transcript

# AI Feedback

## Learning from Feedback



- Use it to feed into development roadmap
- Raise learning with AI Supplier
- Continuous service improvement regime of checking and reviewing
- Feeds into the AI self-learning
- Shared learning applied from other councils e.g. Cost of Living



- Working with reference groups
- Understanding wider customer language
- Verify false claims of service failure e.g. claim to have been waiting an hour, when the call was only couple of minutes long and caller was abusive

# Implemented change highlights:

## Reduced unnecessary steps

We found that a high amount of data was being copied over to our internal systems from the Department for Transport portal. Whilst this is not necessarily incorrect, it is also not necessary to hold it as part of our record-keeping.

We have also stopped uploading further information to Livelink, which saves time and ensures that the data is never inaccessible due to application issues.

- Reduction in redundant data: better GDPR compliance
- Reduced steps: faster data entry
- Reduced technical support calls to fix upload issues
- Government site is faster so saves time reviewing applications

## Better use of resources

The Revenue Protection team have a wealth of experience processing and chasing payments, and now order hundreds of Blue Badges per week after receipt of payment.

The Blue Badge team are now wholly focused on the application process, such as non-automatic assessments, data entry, direct enquiries and other stages that directly reduce the backlog

- RPOs now order all badges
- Badges ordered quicker, independently of the rest of the team
- Blue Badge assessment team can now focus mainly on approval process. They all have their own set tasks
- Backlog cleared faster

## Streamlining processes

We assessed the letters used for contact with payments and tweaked them to avoid confusion around the payment portal.

We created Outlook letter templates for payment requests and application receipt requests to speed up assessment and finalisation of applications, and to reduce the possibility of sending personalised letters to the wrong people

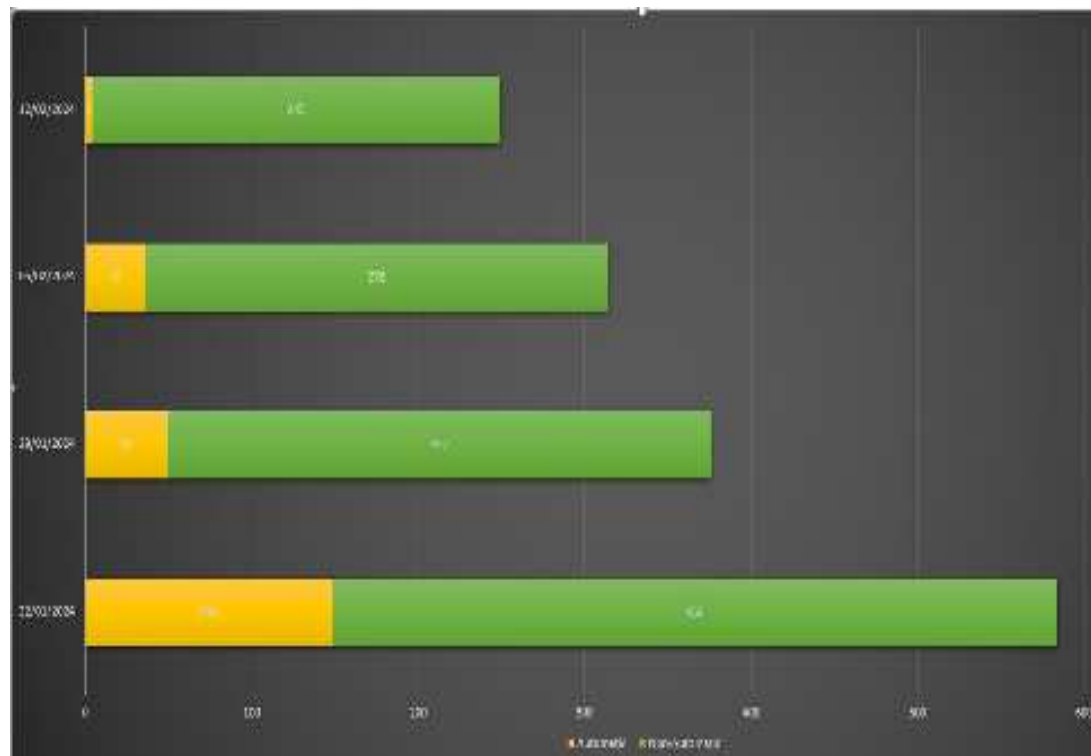
- Far quicker completion of payment request and confirmation emails
- Reduced chance of incorrect names being used on payment requests and confirmations.
- Fewer calls relating to applicants paying the wrong Local Authority
- Reduction in time taken to complete an assessment once further information is received.



# Blue Badge figures

Since the middle of December, the general backlog has reduced from around 20 weeks to 4 weeks for non-automatic assessments, and automatic assessments are now being processed without any backlog at all. The chart on the right shows the difference in backlog for auto and non-auto over just one month.

- Eligible new automatic applicants using the Government portal can expect a new badge within a month
- Eligible new non-automatic applicants using the Government portal (who submit all the correct information) can expect a badge within 8 weeks
- Blue Badge email inbox has gone from a backlog of two months to being current for general responses
- Further information emails dealt with between 20 and 40 cases per day
- Government 'to do' list for new online applications has gone from over 1000 requiring data entry to just 173 as of 13/02/2024
- Over 200 online applications submitted after Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, have already been processed



# Thank you



Derby City Council