



## SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION - 1 July 2008

### Report of the Resources Directorate

## Derby Direct Performance

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1	To note the context and set up arrangements for Derby Direct as detailed in the section Derby Direct Model, points 2.1 to 2.7
1.2	To note the highlights of the Derby Direct performance in May 2008 described in 2.8
1.3	To note the programme of activities identified in 2.9 to further improve the performance of Derby Direct
1.4	To support the further actions being taken to develop Derby Direct as a professional contact centre and valuable source of customer insight as detailed in 2.10

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

	<b>Derby Direct Model</b>
2.1	Derby Direct helps to deliver 19 different Council services including those that attract high volumes of customer contacts such as Benefits, Council Tax, Waste Management and the main switchboard – 01332 29311. The full list of services is in Appendix 2.
2.2	Derby Direct manages telephone calls, emails and visitors and delivers the first stage of a service that service managers are responsible for delivering.
2.3	The budget to deliver this first stage is created by a budget transfer when each service is transferred into Derby Direct. There is no additional Derby Direct budget or corporate budget for Derby Direct to draw on.
2.4	The telephone system reports on telephone usage and these reports are produced each day for each of the services. These statistics are used to measure the performance from the customer's perspective, the efficiency of Derby Direct staff and the number of staff needed to answer all customer calls.
2.5	Using the telephone statistics for May the average number of calls offered to Derby Direct each day ranged between 1046 calls and 3021 calls and from 357 visitors to 1261 per day.
2.6	Each of the 19 services is different in terms of the volume of calls, the length of conversations and the drivers of customer demand. Some services including Waste Management peak at the beginning of the week whilst others such as Council Tax are event driven, for example, sending out reminder notices.
2.7	The reason for the customer call is recorded and this gives Derby Direct the unique

	<p>position of being able to provide service managers with insight as to how the service is experienced by the customer. This information helps identify the number of customer calls which could be avoided, for example, - service not received or delivered incorrectly. Derby Direct discusses this information in weekly meetings to service managers who can choose how to use this to shape how their service is delivered.</p>
2.8	<p><b>Derby Direct Performance</b></p> <p>The performance of Derby Direct is reported monthly and distributed to each of the service managers. The following is a summary of the Derby Direct performance in May 2008 for four of the busiest services.</p> <p><b>Waste Management</b></p> <p>When the service was transferred into Derby Direct 3.5FTEs were transferred based on the information on call volumes available at that time. Over the last 12 months the effect of new technology, staff training and process changes has seen the number of calls each advisor can handle rise to 80 per day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On average 8.25 full time employees – FTEs - were needed to answer all customer calls on Mondays, falling by one FTE per day as the week progressed to 4.25 FTEs on Fridays.</li> <li>▪ On average Derby Direct received 419 calls per day in May and has capacity to answer 280 calls. This meant 33% of calls were unanswered.</li> <li>▪ 40% of the calls to this service could be avoided if service had been delivered correctly first time.</li> <li>▪ The average waiting time on the telephone was 3 minutes and 40 seconds.</li> <li>▪ On the one day in the month – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May – when Derby Direct had sufficient people to handle the number of calls the waiting time was 1 minute and 1 second.</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits</b></p> <p>Over the last 12 months Derby Direct and the Benefits service have increasingly moved staff between the two services to handle increases in customer calls as well as meeting processing targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In May the service received a daily average of 232 calls and 168 visitors, of which 72% of calls were answered and 81.1% of visitors were seen.</li> <li>▪ 30% of calls were from customer's progress chasing their claim and 15% were questions about the information they had received.</li> <li>▪ To answer all customer calls and see all visitors on Mondays an average 14.7 FTEs would be needed. This reduces steadily through the week to a daily average of 12.6 FTEs.</li> <li>▪ With current establishment and holiday entitlements Derby Direct had on average 10 FTEs available each day.</li> <li>▪ With the staffing levels available Derby Direct was able to answer all calls and visitors on 3 days out of 20.</li> <li>▪ The average waiting time on the telephone was 3 minutes and 36 seconds.</li> <li>▪ On two of the three days when Derby Direct had sufficient staff the waiting times were 43 seconds and 1 minute on 33 seconds respectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Council Tax</b></p> <p>Derby Direct and the Council Tax service meet each week to allocate resources across the service to handle the anticipated volumes of customer calls as well as maintaining collection targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The average number of calls received increased to 545 per day from 471, and visitors increased to 72 per day from 61.</li> <li>▪ These increases are expected at this time because the early months of the financial year are the busiest in terms of collections.</li> <li>▪ The Council Tax service manager was able to reallocate staff from processing into Derby Direct on 17 out of the 20 days.</li> <li>▪ To answer all customer calls and see all visitors an average 13.3 FTEs would be needed. Despite moves into Derby Direct from back office processing the available resource was limited to 7.2 FTEs</li> </ul>

- Despite best efforts to distribute resources to Derby Direct whilst maintaining Revenues processing there were insufficient staff to fully answer all calls and visitors on any of the 20 days.

The average waiting time was six minutes and 31 seconds

### **Reception**

- This service answers calls to 01332 293111 and welcomes visitors to the Council in the Council House main reception.
- The national changes to the concessionary travel scheme were applied in May which generated more customer contacts.
- On average this service received 659 calls per day compared to a three month average of 595.
- In May 88.7% of calls were answered in an average of 30 seconds compared to a three month average of 92.8%.
- As a result of the concessionary travel scheme the number of visitors to the Council House increased to in excess of 1000 per day on several occasions over the month compared to an average of 400. As a result of regular discussions with the Transportation Team four additional temporary staff were made available for the last two weeks of May.
- The issuing of a temporary travel card meant each visit took four minutes on average compared to the average of 30 seconds.

2.9

### **Programme of Activities**

In the last six months a number of projects have been started to help improve the level of service that can be offered within current resource allocations, namely:

- The Benefits and Council Tax service are implementing a Customer Service Improvement Programme in the autumn which will redesign operational processes so they deliver a quicker and more effective customer experience
- In the autumn, to make the service more accessible and improve collection, the Council Tax service will implement multiple Direct Debit payment dates and introduce the facility to set up Direct Debit instructions over the telephone. This will reduce the number of customer calls and visits
- The Council Tax service has recently implemented a web based service where customers can check their own Council Tax details and this will be extended on a trusted basis to agencies who act for vulnerable customers.
- Later this year the Benefits service will implement an assisted claims process which will help customers complete new claims with a higher level of accuracy.
- Derby Direct is putting together a business case to provide a service that automatically direct calls to Council staff and give customers the option to leave a message instead of waiting in a queue. These services would be available 24 hours a day seven days a week.
- A bid for corporate funding has been made to the Transforming Derby Board to continue with the successful Mystery Shopping programme. This programme has raised the profile and value of the customer experience as well as delivering significant improvements to the management of emails across the Council giving customers a real alternative to making a telephone call.

2.10

### **Further Developments**

The following activities would further enhance the level of service Derby Direct could provide and build on the vital role of customer insight and advocate Derby Direct has begun to undertake:

- Continue to report and monitor Derby Direct performance in terms of staff efficiency and quality raising the profile of this approach to the Scrutiny committee every quarter
- In October this year a performance indicator will be implemented that aims to measure the number of avoidable contacts – NI14. Derby Direct will be able use the call type analysis to report each month in Performance Eye the number of avoidable contacts for each service Derby Direct helps to deliver
- Continue to work with Departmental Management Teams to incorporate measures of

	<p>the customer experience into each service Business Plan together with a method of that information could be used to shape the future delivery of service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seek Contact Centre accreditation status through the Institute of Customer Service – ICS.</li> </ul>
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**Background papers:** Appendix 1 – Implications  
**List of appendices:** Appendix 2 - List of service in Derby Direct

## Appendix 1

### IMPLICATIONS

#### Financial

1. None arising from this report.

#### Legal

2. None arising from this report.

#### Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

#### Equalities impact

4. None arising from this report

#### Corporate Objectives

5. This report links to the Council's Corporate Plan 2007-2010 by helping to meet its priorities of "Giving you excellent services and value for money".

## Appendix 2

### LIST OF SERVICES IN DERBY DIRECT

1	Main switchboard – 01332 293111	11	Blue Badges
2	Waste Management	12	Children's Information Service
3	Highways	13	Fostering
4	Housing Benefit	14	Adoption
5	Council Tax	15	Housing Options
6	NNDR	16	NEAT
7	Registrar Service	17	Parks
8	Pest Control	18	Grounds Maintenance
9	Dog Wardens	19	Street Cleaning
10	Anti-Social Behaviour		