



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Resources Commission
19 July 2010

ITEM 9

Report of the Strategic Director of Resources

Customer Services Update Report

RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the progress in the performance of Derby Direct in managing customer contacts.
2. To note the future development of Customer Services through the delivery of the One Derby One council programme and the move of Customer Services to the One Stop Shop in Albion Street.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3. Derby Direct helps to deliver 26 Council services by managing customer contact over the telephone, when customers visit the Council House and increasingly over the web. A list of these services can be found in Appendix 2.
4. Over the last 12 months Derby Direct has been implementing the following strategy to help improve both performance and the customer experience when customers contact the Council:
 - a. Helping Council services put action plans in place to reduce avoidable customer contact. For example the Benefits service now process Benefits applications with customers when they visit the Council House and although this lengthens the appointment time it does remove the need for customers to contact the service again with queries or further information.

- b. Automating transactions where appropriate. For example customers can make a service request for a Streetpride service by leaving a message on the 24 Hour Telephone services – 0333 200 6981 - and since April 1st 5728 service requests have been made with 99% processed the same day.
- c. Making it easier for customers to contact Derby Direct. For example customers now use the 24 Hour Telephone service and the web to contact Derby Direct 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

5. These actions have reduced the volume of work our Customer Service Advisors manage which means they have more of their time available for more complex queries or vulnerable customers. As a result an increased percentage of customers have been able to speak to an advisor whilst waiting times have reduced. This can be seen in the table below which compares the performance of Derby Direct in answering telephone calls for the period between April and June in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Generic Team				
Apr-Jun	Calls Offered	Calls Taken	%	Average Waiting Time
2010	59417	57214	96.3%	00:00:21
2009	75680	62242	82.2%	00:01:28
2008	86269	68904	79.9%	00:01:27

- 6. Of particular note is the performance in answering telephone calls for the Streetpride service. Since the launch of Streetpride on May 17th Derby Direct has answered 99.1% of calls with an average waiting time of 12 seconds. Of the calls that were abandoned 51% hung up in less than 10 seconds.
- 7. More customers are contacting Derby Direct by email using the customer services email address – customerservices@derby.gov.uk – and the Streetpride email address – Streetpride@derby.gov.uk . Derby Direct managed 1660 emails in June, a rise of 25% since the beginning of the year. The current Council Service Standard for responding to emails is five days and in June Derby Direct responded

to 90% of all emails the same day and 100% within the five days. Wherever possible we are promoting email as a method to contact Derby Direct.

8. The One Derby one council programme and the decant of Customer Services to the One Stop Shop in Albion Street are two exciting opportunities to further improve and extend the service Derby Direct offers.
9. The One Derby one council programme is a three year that will standardise, simplify and centralise how we manage customer contact for services across the Council. Specifically the Customer Management theme of this programme will focus on enquiries, requests, appointments, eligibility, assessment and approval processes. The ambition is to realise significant efficiencies as well as further improving the customer experience for all customers contacting or visiting the Council.
10. As part of this programme a new telephone system will be implemented in Derby Direct which will give us the opportunity to further improve performance within Derby Direct. For example automating how calls are distributed to advisors will increase the number of calls an advisor can manage as well as further reducing waiting times. The facility to record telephone calls will give us valuable material to develop training which will in time further improve the customer experience.
11. The One Derby one council programme also includes the development of a web site that focuses on customer outcomes that is easy to use, in a similar way to the Amazon web site. The programme will also look to extend the use of automated telephony across other Council services for those transactions that can be automated. The ambition is to offer customers an automated choice that is viable and easy to use.
12. The decant of Customer Services into the One Stop Shop in Albion Street is a fantastic opportunity to create a customer service environment that is open, safe and conducive for good customer service whilst remaining affordable. The opportunity will be taken to introduce new ways of working such an appointment system alongside the drop in service that will enable customers to book

13. There are a number of smaller changes that have been made to the service Derby Direct offers over the last 12 months and more are intended for the One Stop Shop. If you want to arrange a visit to Derby Direct or want further information about these changes please contact me using the details below.

For more information contact:	Bernard Fenton 01332 255132 email Bernard.Fenton@derby.gov.uk
List of Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – List of services

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. Equality impact assessments will be completed for all changes to the delivery of service by Derby Direct

Corporate Priorities

5. This report links to the Council's priorities for 2010-11

LIST OF SERVICE DERBY DIRECT HELPS TO DELIVER
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Housing Benefit, Council Tax, Business Rates, Free School Meals, Housing Options Right to Buy, Waste Management, Street Cleansing, Main switchboard, Registrar, Pest Control, Dog Wardens, Abandoned Vehicles, Anti Social Behaviour, Parks, Grounds Maintenance, Street Lighting, Parking, Trees, Highways, Traffic Management, Cashiers, Housing Options Homelessness, Family Information Service, Fostering and Adoption