

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Tuesday, 2nd January, 2024 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr K. Dibble (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr S. Trussler

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Jessica Auton, Cllr D.E. Clifford, Cllr Jules Crossley and Cllr Mara Makunura.

Cllrs Peter Cullum and Gareth Williams attended the meeting as standing deputies.

21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 9th November, 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

22. APPOINTMENTS

The Committee **NOTED** the appointment of Cllr D.E. Clifford as a Member of the Committee in place of Cllr Ade Adeola for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

23. CUSTOMER SERVICE CONTACT INDICATORS

The Committee welcomed Marybeth Quaintmere, Service Manager – Customer Services, Mary Timmins, Customer Services Team Leader, and Cllr Ade Adeola, Digital First & Corporate Portfolio Holder, who were in attendance to update the Committee on customer contact data, in particular around customer feedback, reception arrangements, automated messaging and the introduction of the dedicated Nepali speaking phone line.

A presentation was provided which covered the following key areas:

- Call data – it was noted that abandoned call rates had dropped since the previous report in June, 2023 by 1%, as had call waiting times by 17 seconds.
- Service levels – the industry standard for call answering was to answer 80% of calls within 20 seconds. It was noted that currently, an average of 40% of

calls were being answered within 20 seconds. It was hoped that as digital services expanded and improved allowing more self-service options to customers this rate would increase.

- Response levels – it was noted that response levels were being met within all SLA's for services such as, Customer Services (within one working day), Love Rushmoor (within one working day), Parking Charge Notice's (PCN) (within 14 days) and Council Tax (within 10 working days).
- Customer contact – it was noted that Council tax had been the main reason why customers contacted the Council via phone, via the Love Rushmoor App it was for fly-tipping and via front of house it was primarily for other, non Rushmoor, services.
- Additional team activity – it was advised that the team got involved in a number of different areas to enhance their knowledge and skill for assisting the customer. Some of the activities the team engaged with included, emergency planning training, shadowing the recycling crew, understanding homelessness, the warmer homes scheme etc.
- Improving customer experience – it was advised that since the last update in June, 2023 a number of changes had been made to the phone scripts and call waiting messaging to improve the service. A Nepali speaking phone line had also been introduced with the option to leave a voicemail after two minutes to allow a Nepali speaking operative to call back. It was planned that a “pause” facility would be introduced to allow an operative working on an email to pause to answer an incoming call. It was also noted that the facilities team would be trained to undertake the post role freeing up an operative to deal with customer enquiries.
- Customer feedback – during October, 2023 a survey of customer feedback was undertaken. During this period the system had been affected by eight consecutive working days of intermittent service, during which time there had been issues hearing the customer and vice versa. The average score given by the customer during October had been 2.85/5, however, if you removed the eight consecutive working days of intermittent service, the score would be 4.48/5.
- Areas of focus for the future – these had been identified as follows:
 - To expand the triage for Housing to all access channels
 - Continue to push transformation and service improvements
 - Response times to keeping the Borough clean should improve through the recruitment of the new Place Protection Officers – this would be monitored
 - Investigation into the frequency of issues with the telephony system with the account manager – meeting scheduled
 - Resilience within the team

The Committee discussed the presentation and in particular the resource and resilience within the team. It was advised that with resource, it wasn't just about getting additional resource but also about how digital services were utilised to best serve the customer. It was noted that consideration could be given to how the customer could be educated to use digital services, through use of the messaging system and online. The option to add a "number in the queue" message was discussed, however at this time it was felt that that could cause customers more issues as the number could increase due to the way the system currently operated.

Resilience within the team was monitored and it was noted that the "tight knit team" used a chat facility to communicate and look out for each other, in particular after having dealt with difficult calls.

ACTION:

What	Who	When
Request to see a copy of the Business Continuity Plan for when the phones are affected by system issues	Marybeth Quintmere	January 2024
Data Request: During October 2023, how many calls were received in comparison to the 87 responses to the survey	Mary Timmins	January 2024
Provide comparison details on wait and abandoned call times	Mary Timmins	January 2024

A watching brief would be maintained on the service and consideration be given to when the Committee would next review its work.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Ade Adeola, Marybeth and Mary for the contribution to the meeting.

24. COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Committee welcomed Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive who was in attendance to report on delivery against the Council's Business Plan at the end of Quarter 2.

It was noted that the Q2 monitoring was in three parts, as set out below:

- Quarterly monitoring - 10 key activities and projects which aimed to deliver the Council's priorities within the themes of People and Place
- Business Performance - key indicators and service measures used by the Council to monitor how the Council runs
- Corporate Risk Register - factors identified in the Risk Register that could affect the future delivery of the Council Plan and impact on the Council's Business Performance

In the Q2 monitoring data, it was noted that 90% of the key activities were highlighted as green - on course, and 10% were highlighted as amber – achievement was in question. It was noted that the activity highlighted as amber was:

- People 5 - supporting key business sectors and help people to access the opportunities that they offer. Due to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) at the Farnborough College of Technology, the rooms and facilities at Aerospace Research and Innovation Centre (ARIC) are currently being used as teaching space.

As a result the project had been delayed. No projects were showing as red – unable to achieve, or blue – completed, at this time.

The following areas were noted, within the Business Performance section :

- A reduction in the number of website sessions in comparison to the same quarter in 2022/23, this was mainly due to less views of the lido page (down by more than 90%). Southwood Country Park and the car boot sales had large increases in page views in comparison to 2022/23's Q2.
- Q1 2023/24 recycle rate was 44.1% (the same as Q1 in 2022/23), this information is one quarter behind.

Moving forward into Q3, it was proposed that fly-tipping data would be included in the data. In Q4, parking income data would replace PCN data, and cremations data would be included, due to the considerable service changes being undertaken during 2024.

Under the Corporate Risk Register section, the Committee noted that:

- The Council's key strategic and standing corporate risks had remained relatively unchanged.
- An additional risk of significance had been added to the standing corporate register for the Leisure and Cultural Hub Major Project.
- The addition of risks relating directly to the UK economy, in particular high interest rates.
- The risk register now included trend arrows against each risk score to assist in tracking risk changes in the short term.

It was noted that plans were in place to further update/strengthen the Corporate Risk Management Policy later in 2023/24, particularly on the matter of risk appetite. As part of the longer-term updates to the policy and arrangements, consideration was also being given to tracking longer term trends for each risk

In response to a query it was noted that the Corporate Risk Register did not include all risks to the Council and each service had its own individual Risk Register.

ACTION:

What	Who	When
Provision of detailed information on how risk is scored to be provided at the next Progress Group	Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive	18 January 2024

Deeper look at how projects are RAG rated at the next Progress Group	Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive	18 January 2024
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The Chairman thanked Ms Barker for her report and the actions would be picked up at the Progress Group later in the month.

25. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current work plan.

Following a discussion regarding the invitation to the five County Councillors to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss engagement on relevant Borough matters, and the subsequent response from the Leader of Hampshire County Council (HCC), it was agreed that a further letter would be sent from the Chairman to the Leader of HCC.

It was noted that a request had been made for a replacement for Cllr Ade Adeola on the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

The meeting closed at 8.52 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
