

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 22 June 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: CUSTOMER SERVICES CONTRACT MONITORING REPORT

Contact Officer: Duncan Bridgewater, Assistant Director - Customer Services
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Chief Officer: Director of Human Resources, Customer Services and Public Affairs

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for decision/report and options

This report provides information on the performance of the Customer Service Contract provided by Liberata for the period 1st December 2021 to 30th April 2022.

A letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Contract Director for Liberata, provides her update on each individual element and is attached at Appendix 1.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Committee is requested to note and comment on the information contained within the report and the letter provided by Liberata detailed in Appendix 1.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: An Equality Impact Assessment indicates that ongoing support for vulnerable adults and children will be provided by Customer Services by phone and face to face for those unable to access digital services. For those unable to visit or phone us, the service supports the enhancement of self-service options.

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate):

(5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
3. Budget head/performance centre: Customer Services Contract
4. Total current budget for this head: £945k
5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1
2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
2. Call-in: Not Applicable

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: The Customer Services contract forms part of the Exchequer Services contract

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: None

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications:
The contractor's initiatives are detailed in section 11 of this report.

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): 1,500 visitors, 410,000 phone calls, 22,000 e-mails and 9 million web visits annually

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Customer Services contract covers four key areas: Corporate Contact Centre, Reception Services, Web Team (Bromley Knowledge) and Blue Badge/Freedom Pass processing. The Corporate Contact Centre deals with telephone enquiries regarding environmental services, electoral, registrars, parking, blue badges, disabled freedom passes as well as the switchboard.
- 3.2 Reception deals with face to face enquiries from main reception, for most areas of the council with the exception of registrars and children services, who manage their own reception points.
- 3.3 The Web Team (Bromley Knowledge) maintain the corporate website (www.bromley.gov.uk) in terms of its technical functionality, performance and accuracy of the content as provided by service experts, as well as working on the recent software upgrade. Administration of Blue Badge and Discretionary Disabled Freedom Passes applications and renewals is also carried out within the contract.
- 3.4 Overall the contractor has performed well throughout this monitoring period, with one occurrence of under-performance outlined in the report. Volumes of calls fluctuated as a result of the normal seasonal changes. Since the pandemic began there has been a consistent demand in customer contact via the website as customers were asked to use online services instead of traditional contact channels. Many web transactional services remain high over the reporting period with overall traffic to the website remaining increased compared to pre-covid volumes. Contractor performance is reviewed at monthly meetings.
- 3.5 Call Monitoring is completed every month. The contractor provides a sample of call recordings and feedback is given to the contractor at monthly review meetings.
- 3.6 Reception is an appointment only service, except for emergencies and vulnerable customers. Demand has been stable over the reporting period, with demand slightly increasing recently.
- 3.7 The top Key Performance Indicators for this contract are listed in the table below and referenced in appendix 2; they measure the headline activities within the contract in order that our customers get a quick response and access to our services efficiently and effectively.

	Measure	Definition	Target
1	Call Management	Number of calls answered by the agents within the specified timescales compared to total number of calls received	50% Calls answered within 1 minute
2	Call Management	Number of days that the service dropped below 40%	Daily service level does not drop below 40% of call answered within 1 minute
3	Email Management	Number of emails responded to within 5 working days compared to total number of emails received	100% responded to within 5 working day
4	Face to Face Management	Number of customers entering the reception areas must be seen within 5 minutes of their arrival compared to total number of customers, remainder within 15 minutes	80% of customers seen within 5 minutes of arrival
5	Switchboard Management	% of calls bailed to operator or requesting operator	50% Calls answered within 1 minute
6	Customer Satisfaction	% of randomly selected customers, across different channels are either satisfied or very satisfied	90%

3.8 **Customer Services – Contact Centre:** This area performed well and within service level. The monthly service level target answering 50% of calls within 60 seconds was met for all of the months in the reporting period. Call volumes have reduced compared with the same months from 2021-22.

Contact Centre Target – 50% within 60 secs	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Answered	5773	7644	7895	9334	8743
% of calls ans. in 60 secs	82.80%	89.00%	76.10%	76.09%	66.20%
Average wait time (secs)	00:00:32	00:00:24	00:00:46	00:00:46	00:01:12
Number of day's service fell below 40%.	0	0	0	0	0

3.9 **Switchboard:** Performance was within service level. Call volumes have reduced compared with the same months from 2021-22, with 9% less calls received this year. The majority of calls received through the switchboard are handled via automated technology and the table below shows the volumes requiring manual transfer.

Switchboard Target – 50% within 60 secs	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Answered	4587	6081	5203	6685	5361
% of calls ans. in 60 secs	95%	97%	95%	95%	94%
Average wait time (secs)	00:00:12	00:00:09	00:00:46	00:00:12	00:00:15
Number of day's service fell below 40%.	0	0	0	0	0

3.10 **Reception:** Reception is an appointment only service. Emergencies and vulnerable customers are seen without an appointment. Demand has slightly increased over the reporting period as national restrictions eased.

Reception	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Number of customers seen	96	167	160	208	192
80% within 5 minutes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
100% within 15 minutes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.11 **E-mail:** E-mail handling targets were met for the reporting period. Email volumes are down on the same period in the previous year as customers have switched to other digital service options.

Emails Target – 80% within 1 day and 100% within 5 days	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Number of emails received	1223	1429	1339	1611	1376
% emails processed within 1 day	88%	97%	98%	100%	96%
% emails processed within 5 days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- 3.12 **Out of Hours Emergency Call Centre:** Performance was within service level for 4 of the 5 months in the reporting period. The out of hours service during February was affected by Covid related staffing issues.

Out of Hours (Appello) Target – 80% within 30 secs	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Answered	1073	1056	989	1213	1445
% of calls ans. in 30 secs	83.71%	86.44%	78.54%	87.41%	81.84%
Average wait time (secs)	00:00:16	00:00:13	00:00:26	00:00:10	00:00:38

- 3.13 **Web – Bromley Knowledge:** The web team achieved 100% against all targets during this reporting period.

Web site – Target 100%	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Critical updates within 1 working hour	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Urgent updates within 1 working day	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Important updates within 2 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Regular updates within 5 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Following executive approval in September 2021, the upgrade to the corporate website successfully went live on the 9th June. The new design conveys our distinct brand identity and places us in a better position for future developments, as well as being a more robust, reliable and accessible platform. The project team will now look at future development opportunities which will be brought to future meetings for consideration.

- 3.14 **Blue Badge and Discretionary Freedom Pass:**

This area performed well and within service level. Technical developments continue to enable the contractor to deploy Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to be used within the assessment process. It is expected that this will save processing time.

The Council aims to process applications within 6-8 weeks of receipt of all requested information. The KPI and contractor performance is measured against the time taken for the activities required of the contractor. Time taken for any face to face assessments or further information requirements are not included in this calculation.

Blue Badges – target 80% within 4 weeks	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Volume	325	310	465	479	402
% processed within 4 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Freedom Pass – Target 100% within 4 weeks	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Volume	60	59	44	45	88
% processed within 4 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- 3.15 **MyBromley Account:** The table below outlines the volume usage for the services currently available to registered users, and volume of customers registering in this monitoring period. MyBromley Account continues to grow and as of the end of April 2022 the number of registrations had risen to 107,604.

MyBromley registrations	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Volume	1,431	1,652	1,511	2,246	1,821
Cumulative Volume	100,494	102,095	103,580	105,802	107,604

- 3.16 **Customer Satisfaction:** The number of customers surveyed, and responses are outlined below, satisfaction is above target for this service.

Customer Satisfaction Target – 90% Customer Satisfaction	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Number of surveys sent	7,910	10,231	7,907	10,256	8,539
Number of responses	24	28	15	23	25
% Customer Satisfaction	96%	97%	90%	100%	92%

- 3.17 **Compliments and Complaints:** During this period, nine customers made contact to thank the staff regarding the service that was provided by Customer Services. The contractor also received five complaints during this reporting period which were associated to Blue Badge and Freedom Pass applications and delays with the face to face assessments and clerical errors by the contractor.

Compliments & Complaints	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22
Complaints	0	0	0	3	2
Compliments	3	3	0	2	1

4 IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment indicates that ongoing support for vulnerable adults and children will be provided by Customer Service by phone and face to face for those unable to access digital services. For those unable to visit or phone us, the service supports the enhancement of self-service options.

5 TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is currently projected the contract expenditure in 2022/23 will be to budget at £945k.

- 6.2 For information, the actual spend for the contract in 2021/22 was £906k.

7 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This Committee is requested to note and comment on the information contained within this report as to the performance of the Customer Service Contract provided by Liberata for the period 1st December 2021 to 30th April 2022.
- 8.2 The Council's Constitution, at Part 4 – Rules of Procedure, provides the terms of reference for the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee as it relates to the Executive and the Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management Portfolio. Under these terms of reference, this Committee is responsible for receiving reports and making recommendations on performance monitoring of services falling within the remit of this portfolio.
- 8.3 Contract Procedure Rule 23.2 provides that for all Contracts with a value higher than £500,000, or which are High Risk, an annual report must be submitted to the Portfolio Holder, the responsible Officers having submitted for consideration a formal Gateway Review, covering, as appropriate, the matters identified in the Council's standard Gateway Review Template for consideration as part of Contract Monitoring/Management requirements.

9 PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Customer Services contract forms part of the Exchequer Services contract

10 PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None

11 CARBON REDUCTION/SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 As part of the initiative to achieve greener ICT Liberata moved their systems to data centres compliant with ISO 14001 standards, an internationally agreed standard that sets out the requirements for an environmental management system. This helps organisations improve their environmental performance through more efficient use of resources and reduction of waste.
- 11.2 The My Bromley account software supports 7268 subscribers to e-billing, reducing paper production and postal service reliance. Officers continue to work with Liberata on projects to increase back-office automation and further reduce paper volumes.
- 11.3 Liberata also supports staff to volunteer for local organisations, such as Age Concern befriending scheme.

12 CUSTOMER IMPACT

Customers Services potentially impacts all residents and visitors in the borough.

13 WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS

None

Non-Applicable Headings:	5, 7,10,13
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Appendix 1 – Letter from Liberata Appendix 2 – Key Performance Indicators