

## **TELEPHONE SYSTEM UPDATE**

Report of the Head of Income Management & Advice

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 At the Operational Board on 23 October, concerns were raised regarding the length of the introductory message on the telephone system when customers contact the Customer Service Team along with concerns about contacting 'back office' staff within the organisation.
- 1.2 This report intends to provide a progress update report in actions being taken to resolve these issues.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Operational Board accepts the progress to date and agrees to receive a further update in February 2015.

### **3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The current message when calling the Customer Service Team explains to customers the alternative ways in which transactions can be carried out supporting our Strategy to give more ways in which to access the services we offer. This message is 1 min 22 seconds long and customers then have to choose one of two options. The second option then provides a list of choices, mostly relating to Derby City Council services; this list lasts a further 33 seconds before customers are transferred to Derby City Council. We are aware that accessing Derby City Council services can take a considerable time and have shared this information with them.
- 3.2 It is proposed to amend the message and options so that the Customer Service Team can be accessed directly from option 1 and the Derby City Council services from option 2. We aim to shorten the message at the beginning of the call and will look at how we can explain other means of accessing our services in other ways in line with the Customer Services Strategy. This will be completed by the end of December 2014.
- 3.3 We are currently working with Derby City Council to have out of hours calls transferred without the need for re-dialling.
- 3.4 We are writing new procedures on responding to calls and messages and transferring of calls when on leave or out on site and this piece of work is due to be completed by the end of January 2015, this will then be rolled out to teams and monitored for compliance.

- 3.5 The Customer Services Strategy supports first point of contact resolution of customer contact through our Customer Services Team. For the Income Team this has been successfully completed with on average 90% of customer contact being dealt with this way without the need to transfer calls to the 'back office'. We are currently working with the ASB team to replicate this and identifying others areas where this working practice can be explored.
- 3.6 We have already put new processes in place within the Income and Housing Office teams to have a Duty Officer who can deal with queries from the Customer Service Team and customers where calls cannot be managed at first point of contact, Duty Officers are available from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm; this ensures that customers do not have to make repeat calls. Is intended that this is rolled out wider across the organisation during Q4.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Consultation  
Financial and Business Plan  
Legal and Confidentiality  
Council  
Personnel  
Environmental  
Equalities Impact Assessment  
Health & Safety  
Risk  
Policy Review

If Board Members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact:

Mary Holmes / Customer Experience Manager / 01332 888439 / [Mary.holmes@derbyhomes.org](mailto:Mary.holmes@derbyhomes.org)

Background Information: None

Supporting Information: None