

HOMES & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

15 MARCH 2021

REVIEW OF CUSTOMER ACCESS SERVICE OPENING HOURS

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To review the opening hours of the Customer Access Service (CAS) contact centre and recommend alignment with the opening times of the main council contact centre.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The move to Castle House provided the Council with a perfect opportunity to review the times it opened to the public. Now, the return of the housing management to the Council together with the proposed merger of the two customer service teams provides a further opportunity for alignment.

2.3 The original Council opening times were the same as the CAS contact centre – Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5.15pm and Friday 8.30am – 4.45pm. These were revised to Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm.

2.4 The CAS contact centre remained with the original opening times of Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5.15pm and Friday 8.30am – 4.45pm.

2.5 The table below details the number of calls received during specific period since the new telephone system was installed on 16 December 2020 up till 31 January 2021. It clearly shows that the busiest times for telephone calls are between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

Time period	Calls received during this period	Average number of calls per time period per day (30 days)	Average number of calls per 15 minute time period per day
8.30am – 9.00am	110	3.6	1.8
9.00am- 1.00pm	2978	99.3	6.2
1.00pm – 5.00pm	2083	69.4	4.33
5.00pm – 5.15pm	19	0.6	0.6

3.0 Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that the CAS contact centre operating hours aligns with the Councils contact centre opening hours. This will provide our tenants and customers with a service which has simplified opening hours and does not cause any confusion as to when the service is open.

3.4 Out of hours, there will be no change as tenants who need to report an emergency will transfer through to Careline as they currently do.

3.5 The alignment of the opening hours brings the additional benefit of providing increased stability to the service. There is no requirement for the advisors to have an early start or late finish which means there is an increase in the availability of staff to provide a service during the busier times.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 The proposed alignment of the opening hours do not present any specific equality issues.

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 The ICT business unit will need to make a small one off amendment to the telephony system to align the opening times.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications to this proposal.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

7.1 No direct links to the Community Plan directly but contributes to the alignment of services.

8.0 Comments of Director/Housing Advisory Group

Tenants Forum on 10/2/21 - Agreed unanimously that the times should be altered in line with recommendations. They felt that tenants needed to have uniformity across all council services.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

a) **The Committee approve the alignment of the opening hours.**

Reason for Recommendations

To update Members on the small change in service delivery.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Jill Baker on ext. 5810

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