



Tuesday, 11 October 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held on Wednesday, 19 October 2022 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Foster Avenue, Beeston, NG9 1AB, commencing at 7.00 pm.

Should you require advice on declaring an interest in any item on the agenda, please contact the Monitoring Officer at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

To Councillors: J C Patrick (Chair)  
D K Watts (Vice-Chair)  
S Easom (Vice-Chair)  
M J Crow  
S Dannheimer  
L Fletcher  
J C Goold

M Hannah  
E Kerry  
P J Owen  
R S Robinson  
C M Tideswell  
I L Tyler

## A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies and to be notified of the attendance of substitutes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest in any item on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

(Pages 5 - 6)

The Committee is asked to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting on 7 July 2022 as a correct record.

Council Offices, Foster Avenue, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 1AB

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4. CONSIDERATION OF CALL - IN

To consider any matter referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to the call in of a decision.

5. MINUTES FROM WORKING GROUPS

(Pages 7 - 12)

To receive minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group meetings held on 11 July 2022, 25 July 2022 and 29 September 2022.

6. HOUSING REPAIRS UPDATE

The meeting will receive a verbal update from the Head of Housing.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP - REVIEW OF TELEPHONE ANSWERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

(Pages 13 - 28)

To receive the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group's report into Telephone Answering and Customer Services which is contained within the agenda.

**The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to CONSIDER the recommendations contained within the report and RECOMMEND to Cabinet accordingly.**

8. AGILE WORKING

(Pages 29 - 32)

Members are asked to conduct a scrutiny review of Agile Working and will receive a presentation from the Executive Director.

9. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages 33 - 34)

To inform the Committee of items on the Cabinet's work programme, from which items for scrutiny may be identified.

10. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages 35 - 38)

The Committee is asked to approve its Work Programme, including identifying topics for scrutiny, that will help to achieve the Council's key priorities and associated objectives.

11. SCOPING TOPIC REVIEW

(Pages 39 - 40)

Members are asked to scope a topic for the Committee to review at the next meeting.

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 7 JULY 2022

Present: Councillor J C Patrick, Chair

Councillors: S Easom (Vice-Chair)  
M J Crow  
S Dannheimer  
L Fletcher  
M Hannah  
E Kerry  
P Lally (substitute)  
H Land (substitute)  
J M Owen (substitute)  
P J Owen  
I L Tyler

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D K Watts, J C Goold, R S Robinson and C M Tideswell;

### 7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 8 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### 9 CONSIDERATION OF CALL IN

Members noted the items for consideration for call in.

### 10 RESPONSES OF THE CABINET OR DECISION MAKER TO REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

Members noted the responses of Cabinet.

### 11 UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUP ON TELEPHONE ANSWERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

Members discussed the Update from the Working Group on Telephone Answering and Customer Services.

It was noted that the Working Group had yet to meet and preparation was being undertaken to inform the Working Group of telephone answering statistics.

12 SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF HOUSING REPAIRS

Overview and Scrutiny received a presentation on the function of the Housing Repairs service and the findings of the external consultants reviewing the service.

It was noted that the review of the Housing Repairs service was to increase the level of customer service experience by improving communication, record keeping and completing repairs in the first visit.

It was noted that there was a need to adopt the National Housing Federation's (NHF) list of works and times in which the works require to be complete. members noted that this would allow the Council to adopt a widely used and maintained database that would bring the Council in line with other authorities.

13 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Cabinet Work Programme. It was noted that the Environment Strategy, Child Poverty, Budget Consultation and Houses in Multiple Occupation were suitable topics for scrutiny reviews.

14 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme. It was requested that items on Housing Repairs, Bin Collections, Kimberley Leisure Centre, Broxtowe Lottery and Disabled Facilities Grants be added to the Work Programme.

**RESOLVED that the Work Programme, including the additional topics for scrutiny, be approved.**

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

**MONDAY, 11 JULY 2022**

Present: Councillor P J Owen, Chair

Councillors: M Hannah  
I L Tyler

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J C Goold.

### 1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2 **SCRUTINY OF TELEPHONE ANSWERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES**

The Working Group received information from the Council's Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services in relation to Key Performance Indicators, Customer Service Standards and the workflow of the phone system, in relation to the front and back office.

Concern was raised over the use of voicemail messages and whether there was an agreed standard. The group stated that there should be an agreed standard for voicemail which could be part of the Customer Service Standards.

It was stated that the rate of abandonment of calls in the Contact Centre had shown a slight increase after recent decreases. Peak times could often be predicted; these were of around Council Tax bills being despatched in the new financial year and now with energy rebates. It was stated that contingency be put in place to deal with the short peak time periods in order to counter call abandonment.

Further information was requested regarding monitoring of back office calls, hunt groups, answerphone greetings, telephone answering specific to the Planning and Environment departments, customer services contingencies, online usage and call transfers.

### 3 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members were informed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 25 July at 5.30pm on Microsoft Teams.

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## **SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

**MONDAY, 25 JULY 2022**

Present: Councillor P J Owen, Chair

Councillors: M Hannah  
S Easom  
J C Goold  
I L Tyler

### **4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **5 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **6 SCRUTINY OF TELEPHONE ANSWERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES**

The Working Group was provided with an update on Customer Services from the Council's Head of Revenues, Benefits, and Customer Services in relation to the hunt group calls, answerphone greeting, back office calls, Planning and Environment, Customer Service contingencies, phone messages, online usage and call transfers.

Members were happy to wait for the data in relation to the back office staff answering calls and the workflow of the hunt group. Concern had been raised how Outlook and Microsoft Teams worked together and a query was raised if staff was using the integrated app Headspace within Microsoft Teams and if Managers were auditing staff, that diaries should be checked in addition for Meetings.

It was suggested that the answerphone greeting should be updated to the Officer's voice and a consistent greeting message across the Authority should be applied. The standards of best Customer Practice and what should be expected should be available on the website and communicated. The Head of Revenues, Benefits, and Customer Services confirmed that the possibility of creating a standard answerphone greeting would form part of the Customer Service Strategy including identifying the name and department of the Officer contacted, the answerphone greeting would be conducted by the individual Officer, and when the Officer was going to be absent for more than 24 hours, then their call would be forward to another Officer within their group.

It was agreed to ask the Head of Planning and Economic Development to provide further information to the next meeting on the service provided by the Duty Planners. Queries raised included, why the Duty Planner was only available between the hours of 10.30am -12.30pm, how much time was being spent out of the office, and could

additional resources resolve the issues experienced by Members of the Public and Councillors trying to contact the Officer. There was also an issue raised about the Environment department and service requests relating to missed bins. There was a need to have a better understanding of how the responses to emails and phone calls were responded to in the event of a service request. A review of the phone navigation system had taken place and some further improvements had been made to the routing of calls to improve the customer experience. Feedback should be provided to ensure the change had not reflected on more calls being generated or complaints. It was agreed that Missed bins was a separate scrutiny issue.

It was discussed that the phone message that reminds customers of the possibility of resolving issues on the Council's website, and was played during the process of waiting to be connected was not acceptable and should be removed. A recommendation to remove the phone message was put forward and agreed.

Further questions were raised of whether the data would be available from the Executive Director for the next meeting, how many staff are using CISCO and what is the timeline for transition to Microsoft teams.

**RECOMMEND to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that:**

- 1. The answerphone greeting should be standardised across the Authority and be conducted by the Individual Officer. For all Officers to follow a set process of answering calls across the Authority.**
- 2. The phone message that reminds Customers of the possibility of resolving issues by visiting the Council's website should be removed from the process of waiting to be connected.**

**7 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 17 August 2022 at 5.30pm

**SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**  
**THURSDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Present: Councillor P J Owen, Chair

Councillors: M Hannah  
S Easom  
J C Goold  
I L Tyler

12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

14 **CUSTOMER SERVICES REPORT**

Members of the Working Group was presented with the draft report for Telephone Answering and Customer Services. The report covered the background information and how the investigation focussed on customer services standards across the workforce, especially the back office calls and answerphone greetings. Consideration was given to hunt group calls, customer services contingencies and the approach that were being developed by the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services to manage demand at peak times. A separate scrutiny topic of the Service Provided by the Duty Planning Team and Acknowledgment of Calls was to be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a further review of the subject.

Discussions ensued with the recommendations from the review to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Additional information was to be provided to the first recommendation to ensure staffing levels were maintained and recruitment and retention of staff was addressed, including market supplements and temporary solutions of using internal staff to back fill posts. Concern was raised from the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services that removing the phone message reminding customers of the possibility of resolving issues by visiting the Council website would increase the calls coming into Customer Services and this would impact the service further. In line with the Council's ICT and Digital Strategy the message should remain to signpost customers and to support the strategy. As a compromise the length, timing, and wording of the message would be reviewed and updated regularly. A suggestion that on a quarterly basis an updated telephone list of Senior Officers be circulated to all Members.

**Recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee that:**

- 1. Staffing contingency arrangements be considered for the Contact Centre during peak times in order for residents' calls to be answered and to look at the Market Supplements Policy to address staffing issues.**
- 2 Key Performance Indicators be introduced in relation to departmental call answering data to monitor performance and provide feedback.**
- 3. The answerphone greeting should be standardised across the Authority and be conducted by the Individual Officer. For all Officers to follow a set process of answering calls across the Authority. Officers should only use answerphone messages if they are away for no more than 24 hours and messages should be replies to the following working day. If Officers are to be away for longer, the call would enter a hunt group to be answered by a colleague. This should be included in the Customer Services Strategy.**
- 4. The phone message that reminds customers of the possibility of resolving issues by visiting the Council's website to be reviewed, the length of the message reduced and repetition of the message reduced.**
- 5. That a scrutiny topic be recommended to the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Service Provided by the Duty Planning team and Acknowledgment of calls.**



Broxtowe  
Borough  
COUNCIL



Report of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee Working Group

## **Review of Telephone Answering and Customer Services**

October 2022

# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Service Data</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Customer Services Standards</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Telephone Workflow</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Planning and Environment</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	
1. List of witnesses	
2. Scoping report	

## Summary

1. Broxtowe Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a review of Telephone Answering and Customer Services, to be carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group at its meeting 8 June 2022. The review was requested by Councillor P J Owen who suggested that there needed to be a focus on Key Performance Indicators, Customer Service Standards and the workflow of the telephone system in relation to the front and back office. The review is in accordance with the Council's Always Improving value providing continuous improvement and delivering value for money.
2. The review concluded on 29 September 2022 after collecting information from a range of sources and witnesses<sup>1</sup>. Over the course of the review the group met three times, on 11 July 2022, 25 July 2022 and 8 September 2022.
3. The purpose of the review was to achieve the outcomes outlined in the scoping report<sup>2</sup>. The review sought the following outcomes:
  - To answer calls within an agreed amount of time.
  - Functionality of online Customer skills.
4. This report sets out the review process that was adopted, options considered and the conclusions and recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> The list of appendices is attached at appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> The scoping report is attached at appendix 2.

## **Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group**

1. The Working Group was chaired by Councillor P J Owen, with Councillor M Hannah as the vice chair.
2. Three other councillors were part of the Working Group:
  - Councillor S Easom
  - Councillor I L Tyler
  - Councillor J C Goold.
3. The Working Group was assisted by Philip Sudlow, Head of Revenues and Benefits, Lisa Evans, Democratic Services Manager, and Jeremy Ward, Head of Governance.



## Recommendations

It is recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the following recommendations be forwarded to Cabinet:

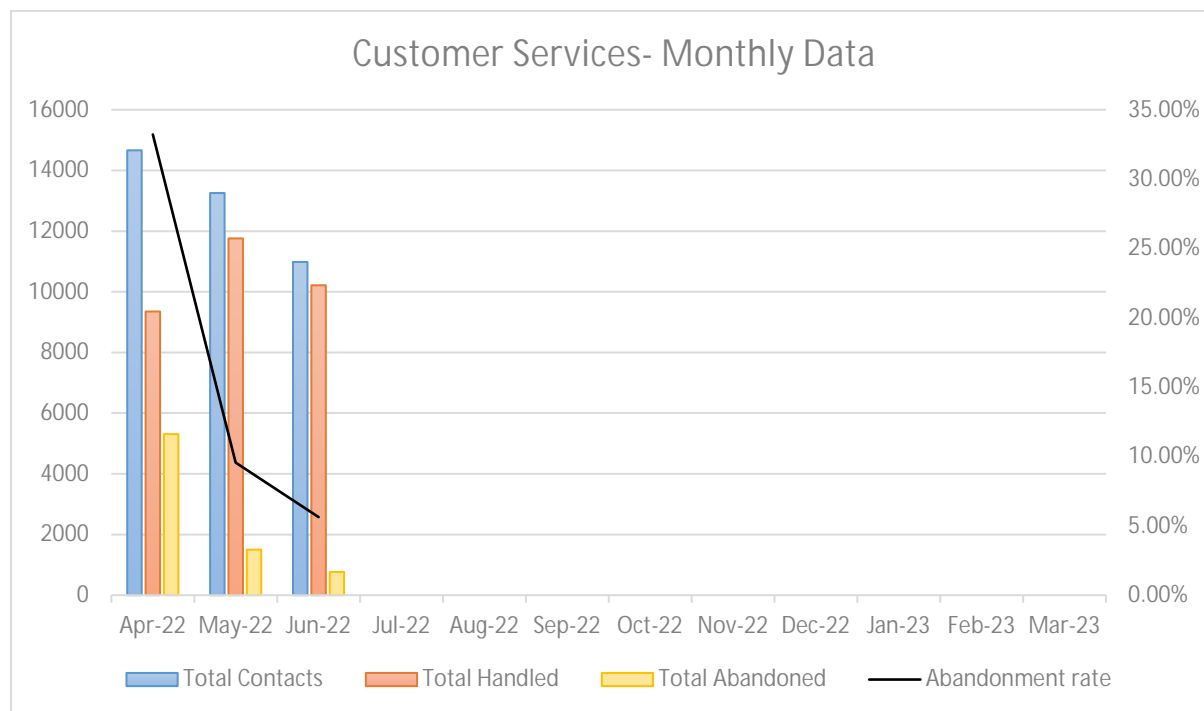
1. Staffing contingency arrangements be considered for the Contact Centre during peak times in order for residents' calls to be answered, in addition to the use of market supplements to address staffing issues.
2. Key Performance Indicators be introduced in relation to departmental call answering data to monitor performance and provide feedback.
3. The answerphone greeting should be standardised across the Authority and be conducted by the Individual Officer. For all Officers to follow a set process of answering calls across the Authority. Officers should only use answerphone messages if they are away for no more than 24 hours and messages should be replied to the following working day. If Officers are to be away for longer the call would enter a hunt group to be answered by a colleague. This should be included in the Customer Services' Strategy.
4. The phone message that reminds customers of the possibility of resolving issues by visiting the Council's website to be reviewed, the length of the message reduced and repetition of the message reduced.
5. That a Scrutiny topic be added to the Work Programme: Service Provided by the Duty Planning Team and Acknowledgement of Calls.

## Background

1. The topic was suggested by Councillor P J Owen to consider telephone answering and customer services.
2. The review was scoped at the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2022 where the Scrutiny Working Group was allocated the review, which sought to provide an update on Customer Services, with a particular focus on call abandonment rates and the functioning of the Customer Services Centre.
3. During the investigation the focus expanded to include the application of customer services standards across the workforce, especially the monitoring of back office calls and answerphone greetings. Consideration was also given to hunt group calls, customer services contingencies and the approaches being developed by the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services to manage demand at peak times.
4. Consideration was also given to particular issues within the Planning and Environment services. The Working Group queried whether the Duty Planning Service should be free and was it part of the Planner's job description. It was suggested that this could be a separate scrutiny topic to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, namely the Service Provided by the Duty Planning Team and Acknowledgement of Calls.

## Service Data

1. The Customer Services department is monitored on a number of Performance Indicators, ranging from Telephone Abandonment Rates through to Number of Calls received. These are represented below in respect of quarter 1 of 2022/23 financial year.



2. The graph provides an improving level of service for the first three months of the year. There were a number of contributing factors to this improvement which include a greater presence of Customer Services Officers within the Council Building, a higher level of scrutiny from the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services, regular 1-2-1's with the team, working with the ICT services to resolve issues quicker and a reduction in the number of queries received in relation to initiatives such as Council Tax Energy Rebate.
3. Further data was provided on abandonment numbers across departments. The data provider was new to the Council and the data available was for the month of August only. The information had indicated sizeable call abandonment within Housing Operations and Housing Income, this was mainly due to the high calls in the first instance and areas where staffing was remote at times. Work was being undertaken to look at arrangements with Customer Services to support the call handling. Monthly reports on call abandonment would be sent to Heads of Services for greater scrutiny with individual staff and service delivery.

## Conclusions

4. It was positive that there had been improving levels of call answering but a fluctuation caused further concern. It was considered that peak times could often be predicted, usually around Council Tax bills being despatched in the new financial year, and currently around contacting residents. It was agreed that contingency be considered for staffing arrangements during peak times in order for residents' calls to be answered.
5. Key Performance Indicators should be introduced for departmental call answering to monitor performance and provide feedback.

## Customer Services Standards

1. The Working Group identified a generic standard for customer services that all employees of the Council would work towards. It was proposed that this should include this within the Customer Services Standards and ensure that it is communicated throughout the Council. The recommended standards are as follows:
    - Clear greeting explaining the department they have called and who they are talking to.
    - Calls returned within one working day.
    - A telephone interpreting service for people with disabilities or those who speak other languages.
    - Clear written communications which follows the 'Communications For All Principles'

**Focused** – clear, concise and jargon free.

**Open** – communications should be factual, accurate, reflect the position of the council and be approved by relevant Senior Managers.

**Relevant** – Communicated to the right people, at the right time, in the right way and be informative and useful.

**Accessible** – easy to access through appropriate channels and in a variety of formats suitable for those with disabilities and inclusion needs.

**Listening** – provides opportunities for feedback and two-way conversations wherever appropriate.

**Linked up** – internal stakeholders and partners should hear about changes or issues before they reported by a third party or in the media.
  - Accessible services.
  - Waiting times are kept to a minimum.
  - To be treated fairly and with respect.
  - Requests resolved at the first point of contact in 80% of enquiries.
2. It was considered that standards currently varied across the Council in relation to telephone answering and also the use of voicemails. Members often considered

that messages were either not responded to by the individual officer or messages were not passed to colleagues for a response.

## **Conclusions**

3. A standard for answering telephones should be introduced into the Customer Services Strategy and by reinforcing set standards this should ensure levels are raised.
4. The use of answerphone messages should be standardised and checked regularly by the relevant Head of Service. This will form part of the Customer Service Strategy but will include the following:
  - Answerphone greeting conducted by the individual officer
  - Identify the name of the officer contacted
  - Identify the department contacted
  - Where the officer is going to be away for a period exceeding 24 hours, then calls should be forwarded to another officer or hunt group.

## Telephone workflow

1. The Customer Services Team is currently responsible for answering calls in relation to eight Council Services as well as switchboard, these are:
  - Council Tax
  - Business Rates
  - Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support
  - Housing Rents
  - Housing Repairs
  - Street Cleansing
  - Grounds Maintenance
  - Refuse
2. When contacting the Council using the 0115 9177777 telephone number, you will be provided a number of options, which will be in line with the above services and handled by multi-skilled Customer Services Officers. Recently, a few additional services have been included to these options, such as Housing Allocations, but these calls are direct to the Back Office Team.
3. Each of the eight services represents a queue within the Council's Cisco Contact Centre telephone system. Each of these queues has customisable number lengths. This allows the Customer Services Team to determine the number of calls in the queue before any other calls received are transferred to the back office, and follow the same process as detailed below. These queue lengths are varied based on a number of factors, including service need, staffing levels etc.
4. Where a call is for a service not dealt with by Customer Services, they will go through to the switchboard and redirected from there. Once transferred from switchboard, the call is no longer in the control of Customer Services and will be handled by the relevant back office Team.
5. The Back Office Teams have been set up, using the Microsoft Team platform, on the basis of their request but most will have a set telephone number that is contacted and this acts as a hunt group and directs between the individuals within the specified team until the call is answered. An example of this is in appendix 1 showing the flow of calls going in to the Quality and Control Team. Other examples can be provided during the meeting.
6. Each service area will be set up slightly different but the main basis will be the same. If contacting a telephone number directly, such as calling 0115 9173236 to speak to the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services, then this will be configured by the individual in question. All will have the facility to redirect their calls to the hunt group in question for their department and have an answer phone with a customisable greeting.

## **Conclusion**

7. Members highlighted the message that is played during the process of being connected that reminds customers of the possibility of using the Council's website to interact, should be regularly reviewed.

## **Planning and Environment**

1. The Working Group requested information from the Head of Planning and Economic Development and the Head of Environment for feedback in the way in which their teams are set up to deal with telephone calls.

### **Planning**

2. "In planning, we have a duty call system that operates between the hours of 1030-1230, where a duty planner is available to answer planning queries. This system works well, and indeed we have the lowest call drop off rate in the Council and we have worked very hard to ensure this service is delivered successfully. If, for any reason, customers cannot get through to an officer, messages are taken and emailed to the relevant officer, who calls back later that day.
3. This system works well in planning, and enables planners to focus their main efforts on planning applications and other paid planning work at other times of the day. It is unfortunate that we cannot have this call system operating for longer periods of time, but workloads have increased by 20% and due to current work pressures this is not possible."

### **Questions from the Group to the Head of Planning and Economic Development**

4. How much time are your planners out of the office?  
  
At least one full day a week officers are out on site visits, but this can vary immensely based on workload and the complexity and number of sites. Often they are on site meeting people/ public/ agents at pre-determined times.
5. Can greater clarity be provided on why the hours of contact for the Duty Planner is 10:30 to 12:30?  
  
Workload. The Duty planner service, is a free service where we give generic planning advice to members of the public. The majority of our work relating to 'Core Planning' which is making and establishing planning policy or assessing and determining planning applications and/ or enquiries. Applications and enquiries all

require a fee, and have to be determined within in certain time frames. This work obviously therefore takes priority.

6. What would the duty planner be doing when not on the phone?

Their case load of planning applications or enquiries, writing reports, assessing information, out on site, discussing amendments, etc...

7. Could a planner have a mobile phone that they take out on site with them to answer calls outside of the 10:30 to 12:30.

No. When they are out on site they are dealing with other areas of work, and often meeting people on site, and or making notes on planning applications. It is not practical or reasonable.

8. What levels of additional resources would be needed to be able to extend the hours of 10:30 to 12:30?

More planners. We are really struggling to keep up with the workload currently, which was up 20% in 2021. We have to prioritise the paid applications and core work over the 'free service' we provide. Many Councils both regionally and nationally do not have any duty planning system at all. Several others have one or two mornings a week or similar, and indeed these are often 'manned' by back office or administrative staff, not planning officers, as is the case here. Indeed, if workload continues in the current vein, the current duty rota will be reduced further. This is not a favourable route, or one we wish to take, though it may get that far. Everybody has an opportunity to write into the Council and pay for planning advice as a pre application enquiry. Whilst not binding, this service does provide members of the public with more comprehensive responses than can ever be given over the phone. This route also reduces the level of error or misinterpretation, as advice is in writing, rather than verbally.

## **Environment**

9. The Head of Environment provided information as follows:

10. "The calls at Kimberley Depot are primarily based on service areas with appropriate pick up and diversion on phone lines being in place. A review of the phone navigation system has recently taken place and some further improvements have been made to the routing of calls to improve the customer experience. The phones are open from 8.30am to 17.00pm Monday to Thursday (16.30pm on Friday)."
11. Where we receive a request for a service, we aim to deal with these as quickly as possible. However, we have to acknowledge that the length of time taken with vary significantly depending on the service request. A simple request may take a matter



of hours to resolve where a more complex one might take several weeks. All formal complaints are managed within the Council's Complaint procedure and timelines.

12. I am aware that the Council has recently purchased additional telephone reporting software that will provide my service areas with greater clarity of what calls are received. Once we are able to obtain this data on a regular basis, we will be able to identify potential service improvements.”

### **Conclusion**

13. It was considered that the responses around the Planning service did not resolve issues around duty planners. There would be a request to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a further review into this subject.

## Conclusions

1. It was positive that there had been improving levels of call answering but a fluctuation caused further concern. It was considered that peak times could often be predicted, usually around Council Tax bills being despatched in the new financial year, and currently around contacting residents. It was agreed that contingency be considered for staffing arrangements during peak times in order for residents' calls to be answered.
2. Key Performance Indicators should be introduced for departmental call answering to monitor performance and provide feedback.
3. A standard for answering telephones should be included in the Customer Services Strategy and by reinforcing set standards this should ensure levels are raised.
4. The use of answerphone messages should be standardised and checked regularly by the relevant Head of Service. This will form part of the Customer Service Strategy but will include the following:
  - Answerphone greeting conducted by the individual officer
  - Identify the name of the officer contacted
  - Identify the department contacted
  - Where the officer is going to be away for a period exceeding 24 hours, then calls should be forwarded to another officer or hunt group.
5. Members highlighted the message that is played during the process of being connected that reminds customers of the possibility of using the Council's website to interact. It was suggested that this message should be reviewed regularly.
6. It was considered that the responses around the Planning service did not resolve issues around duty planners. There would be a request to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a further review into this subject.

## APPENDIX 1

The following is a list of witnesses who gave evidence to the Working Group:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Witness</b>
25 July 2022	Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services*
8 September 2022	Executive Director
8 September 2022	Head of Planning and Economic Development, in writing
8 September 2022	Head of Environment, in writing

\* present at more than one meeting

### Scoping Report

<b>Title of review</b>	Telephone Answering and Customer Services		
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	To answer calls within an agreed amount of time. Functionality of online Customer skills		
<b>Terms of reference/Key lines of enquiry</b>	Are Key Performance Indicators being met? Cold calling to test the procedure How is data currently being collected. How many calls are unanswered? Look at the handover procedure to the back office. Look at complaints Staffing levels of customer services and volume of calls into customer services. Look at officer working times and peak call times Options on the telephone to the customer Update on the replacement telephony solution.		
<b>Possible sources of information</b>	Operating procedures Evidence from Officers-Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services, Manager of Customer Services, Councillor, Residents. Cold calling List of complaints Key Performance Indicators		
<b>How review could be publicised</b>	Email Me Social Media Comms channels speak to Comms Team Website		
<b>Specify site visits</b>	Visit to Contact Centre.		
<b>Possible witnesses</b>	Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services, Manager of Customer Services, Councillor, Residents. Data Controller Residents		
<b>Resource requirements</b>	Officers and Members		
<b>Projected start date</b>	08.06.2022	<b>Draft report deadline</b>	
<b>Projected completion date</b>	10.11.2022		

## Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### REVIEW OF AGILE WORKING

1. Purpose of Report

Members are asked to conduct a scrutiny review of Agile Working.

2. Recommendation

**The Committee is asked to consider the topic of Agile Working and RESOLVE accordingly.**

3. Further Information

At its meeting on 7 July 2022, the Committee conducted a review into Agile Working, a scoping report was completed as attached at appendix.1

To assist the Committee to review the item, the Executive Director will provide a presentation and information to Members. The Committee will be able to ask questions in order to scrutinise the topic.

Once having received all of the information, Members will be asked to conclude their thoughts and agree recommendations that will be collated into report which will be returned to this Committee for final agreement. Subsequently, the report will be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

4. Background Papers

Nil.

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## APPENDIX 1

**Scoping Report**

<b>Title of review</b>	Agile Working
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Residents getting the best service possible. Positive impact of services. Service Delivery expectation has not been reduced since agile working A better understanding of how agile working operates and how this is communicated to residents and Councillors.
<b>Terms of reference/Key lines of enquiry</b>	How many employees worked from home pre COVID-19 How many worked through COVID-19 and how many currently. Breakdown through MTWTF employees working from home (WFH) /back in the office how is this decided? Manager or left to own to manage. How many employees are working frontline/back in the office but Managers work from home. Degree of Fairness –between management and workers How many staff are happy working from home? Has WFH affected mental health. Seems unfair frontline staff would have to take sickness leave when back office staff can work from home. Does these affect sickness stats currently? How many staff find wfh difficult to work –anxiety problems Where has the decision come from not to return to the office. By who and why? Is it fair for residents of Broxtowe to have staff still working from home. Is there a difference between senior and junior manager roles with deciding who are able to decide to wfh and amongst their teams? Are the same principles applied throughout the Council?
<b>Possible sources of information</b>	Customer Satisfaction Complaints and Compliments Impact on service delivery Employee survey HR Manager Executive Director Random selection of staff Questionnaire Residents
<b>How review could be publicised</b>	Through Comms Team Email me Members Matters Social media
<b>Specify site visits</b>	Visit to Offices –Kimberley and Beeston.

<b>Possible witnesses</b>			
<b>Resource requirements</b>	Data for staff questionnaire		
<b>Projected start date</b>		<b>Draft report deadline</b>	
<b>Projected completion date</b>			



## Report of the Leader of the Council

### CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

#### 1. Purpose of Report

Cabinet is asked to approve its Work Programme, including potential key decisions that will help to achieve the Council's key priorities and associated objectives.

#### 2. Recommendation

**Cabinet is asked, that the Work Programme, including key decisions, be approved.**

#### 3. Detail

The Work Programme for future meetings is set out below. Key decisions are marked with an asterisk\*.

4 October 2022	<u>Resources and Personnel Policy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrecoverable Arrears</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy and Business Strategy</li> <li>• Budget Consultation 2022/23</li> <li>• Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations</li> <li>• Capital Programme Update 2022/23</li> <li>• Revenue Budget variations 2022/23</li> <li>• Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>• Workforce Profile</li> <li>• Review of Activity Coordinator Structure</li> </ul>
1 November 2022	<u>Housing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations Policy</li> <li>• Housing Furniture Scheme</li> <li>• House Building Delivery Plan</li> <li>• Review of Activity Coordinator Structure</li> </ul> <u>Economic Development and Asset Management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cremator Review*</li> </ul> <u>Environment and Climate Change</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog Policy Review</li> </ul>

4. Legal Implications

The terms of reference are set out in the Council's constitution. It is good practice to include a work programme to help the Council manage the portfolios.

5. Background Papers

Nil.

REFERENCED

### Report of the Executive Director

#### SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

##### 1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to make members aware of matters proposed for and undergoing scrutiny. This is in accordance with all of the Council's priorities.

##### 2. Recommendation

**The Committee is asked to CONSIDER the report and RESOLVE to agree subjects to be considered for review.**

##### 3. Detail

Details of the reviews currently

In addition to aligning with corporate priorities members may wish to consider the criteria for topic selection as:

- Issues identified by members as a key issue for the public
- Issue has a significant local impact
- Significant public dissatisfaction (e.g. through complaints)
- Issue raised by auditors
- New government guidance/legislation
- New evidence provided by external organisation
- Poor performance (e.g. evidence from performance indicators)
- High level budgetary commitment
- Pattern of budgetary overspending.

##### 4. The work programme for the next five meetings is as follows

10 November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future Reviews to be set by Committee</li> </ul>
12 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future Reviews to be set by Committee</li> </ul>
30 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Review</li> </ul>
31 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget Review</li> </ul>
23 February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of a future work programme</li> </ul>

##### Background papers

Nil

## APPENDIX

## 1. Topics under review:

Topic	Committee/Group	Start date	Proposed cabinet submission
Telephone Answering and Customer Services	Overview and Scrutiny Working Group	11/07/22	01/11/22
Agile Working	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	19/10/22	29/11/22

## 2. Topics reserved for future consideration:

	Topic	Topic suggested by	Link to corporate priorities/values
1.	Missed Bin Collections	Councillor P J Owen	Continuous improvement and delivering value for money
2.	Broxtowe Lotto	Councillor S J Carr	A strong caring focus on the needs of all communities
3.	Disabled Facilities Grants	Councillor B C Carr	The Housing aim of a good quality home for everyone
4.	Kimberley Leisure Centre	Councillor S Easom	Continuous improvement and delivering value for money

## 3. Topics deferred:

	Topic	Topic suggested by	Notes	Link to corporate priorities/values
1.	To be confirmed			

**4. Topics suggested for Scrutiny since the last meeting:**

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Topic suggested by</b>	<b>Expected outcomes</b>	<b>Link to corporate priorities/values</b>
1.	Homes for Life	Cabinet	To ensure that future house designs in the borough considered adaptations for the future needs of residents.	The Housing aim of a good quality home for everyone
2.	Cost of Living	Jeremy Ward – Head of Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer	To escalate concerns of residents at a council-wide level to design and direct the appropriate support.	This links to all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

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**Scoping Report**

<b>Title of review</b>			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<b>Terms of reference/Key lines of enquiry</b>			
<b>Possible sources of information</b>			
<b>How review could be publicised</b>			
<b>Specify site visits</b>			
<b>Possible witnesses</b>			
<b>Resource requirements</b>			
<b>Projected start date</b>		<b>Draft report deadline</b>	
<b>Projected completion date</b>			

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