

EK Services Q1 Performance Report for TDC

Corporate Performance Review
Working Party

04 September 2017

Report Author

Dominic Whelan, Director of Shared Services

Portfolio Holder

**Cllr Derek Crow-Brown, Cabinet Member for
Corporate Governance**

Status

For Information

Classification:

Unrestricted

Key Decision

No

Ward:

N/A

Executive Summary:

This report will provide a summary of key performance indicators for the services delivered by EK Services for Thanet District Council, which include ICT; Customer Delivery; Income (Revenues), Payments (Benefits) and Customer Services. It will also report on the services delivered by EKHR.

The report will cover service performance over the period April to June 2017 inclusive.

Recommendation(s):

Comments are invited from Members of the working party; Members are to note the report.

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 EK Services (EKS) and EK Human Resources (EKHR) have responsibility for certain delegated 'shared service' functions. These functions include the following services:

- ICT Services;
- Face to Face & Contact Centre Customer Services;
- Revenues (Council Tax and Business Rates)
- Benefits (administration of the Housing Benefit Scheme); and
- Human Resources.

1.2 EKS and EKHR monitor and report on performance monthly and meet with TDC Lead Client Officer (Tim Willis) to discuss service performance and specific issues each quarter or as required. Performance is measured against agreed Indicators that are contained within Service Level Agreements (SLA); these agreements are subject to annual review and agreement between each of the three partner councils and EK Services.

2.0 Performance

There are no significant concerns to flag up as we reach end of Q1, although there are three specific areas that are below expected levels and that we are monitoring closely. Details on these are covered in this report.

- 2.1 Benefits – Processing Time. Processing of new claims and changes to individual circumstances is slightly slower than target at an average of 9.3 days (target 8.5 days). This is partly due to resource pressure in the early period of the quarter where annual leave and election duties impacted. However, we also believe it is a symptom of overall pressure on staff in these key areas and we have introduced a new Team Leader to invigorate and assess the performance regime. In addition, the new Digital Benefits technical solution (see new initiatives) should help ease pressure on this service area.
- 2.2 Benefits – Accuracy. In the same service area and linked to the processing of claims, the percentage of correct benefit decisions is also slightly below target at 95.7% accuracy (target 96.5%). The quarter was impacted due to a lower than expected standard of performance in May and we introduced an improvement strategy under the new Team Leader since which the performance in June has climbed back up towards target.
- 2.3 Customer Services – Average Call Waiting Time. The performance within the Customer Services Contact Centre is below target at an average wait time of 74 secs (target 50 secs). This is due to significant pressure within Customer Services caused in part to the level of calls increasing in April due to end of year billing and changes to CTS scheme; impact of elections on call volumes and staffing levels in May and June and an increased level of more difficult calls. Additionally, the introduction of the new Telephony system meant the Call Centre had technical issues relating to the automated call management system temporarily being out of service (see new initiatives below).
- 2.4 Collection Rates. Collection of Council Tax and Business Rates is broadly in line with the year on year comparison and we have no concerns at this stage.
- 2.5 HR. HR performance was on target throughout the period. However, a new set of performance measurement is proposed that is more relevant and measurable than the existing indicators. HR have presented a new Service Delivery approach to each of the Council Corporate Leadership Teams and this will be implemented shortly.

3.0 Key Initiatives/Outcomes

- 3.1 The new Telephony system has now gone live; this was a successful and fairly smooth implementation although not without some disruption and teething problems which is not unexpected for such a large scale and complex change programme. Some of the initial technical issues, that have now been addressed, resulted in disruption to the Customer Services Centre as the automated call management system needed additional system work, which in turn impacted performance for a week or so.

3.2 The new Digital Benefits solution is now close to the final contract stage. This will deliver an improved customer experience and create a better digital 'end to end' process, saving time and effort which will create efficiency savings.

4.0 Concerns/Risks

4.1 Continuing pressure as vacancies are removed and cost is taken out of the service areas (overtime being tightened up) and asking staff to do more with less time is starting to impact on services provision. This has been expected and we continue to work on options to address this and to maintain a viable, high performing service.

Contact Officer:	Dominic Whelan, Director of Shared Services, (01227) 862 073
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer, Chief Executive

Annex List

Annex 1	EK Services Q1 Performance for TDC
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Background Papers

Title	Where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	N/A
Legal	N/A