

APPENDIX 3

New Customer Service Centre Delivery Model Update – Data analysis

1. Prior to and since Covid, the number of customers accessing the service has reduced significantly over time. Recently, this has been in part due to the service being suspended for two years due to the pandemic and no face to face service offered during that time. Instead, people had to access the service mainly by telephone and through on-line methods. During that period, customer service officers supported contact centre in handling customer enquiries by telephone, web chat and on-line as well as Blue Badge administration. Officers also assisted customers to complete housing benefit/council tax support applications by telephone.
2. The total number of issues dealt with by customer services, broken down into Level 1 and Level 2 contact can be found in **Table 1** below. Customers often present with more than one issue and therefore the total number of issues reported is higher than the number of unique visitors to the service.

Table 1

Year	Level 1	Level 2	Number of issues
2019/20	11,037	21,322	32,359
2020/21	513	33,221	33,734 (officers mainly supporting contact centre)
2021/22	821	22,684	23,505 (officers mainly supporting contact centre)
2022/23	3,569	5,674	9,243

3. The figures show that there has been a significant drop in the total number of issues dealt with when comparing the year prior to Covid with the year post Covid. This could be in part due to customers having to serve by other channels including telephone, web chat, on-line etc. whilst the service was closed for two years and this then becoming the preferred method of accessing services in the future.
4. At the start of the new delivery model, the demand for appointments was low; however, this has changed over the last few months with more referrals now being made into the service. This may be due to the increased communications that have taken place, as well as the rise in customer footfall in Tameside One as more services are offered as part of the level one relaunch. Libraries have also dealt with significantly more Level 2 enquiries as referred to in Section 3.5, which previously would have been dealt with by customer services. The reception offer has also led to more effective triage of enquiries, better signposting and the booking of appropriate referrals.
5. The success of the new model was dependant on Level 2 enquiries being dealt with in libraries wherever possible. Analysis of Level 2 enquires dealt with in libraries is shown in **Table 2** below. There has been a significant increase in Level 2 contact in libraries since the new model was introduced, in particular Ashton library which is also based in Tameside One on the ground floor.

Table 2

Year	Ashton library – Level 2 enquiries	All libraries – Level 2 enquiries
2019/20	343	6,709
2020/21	1,299	2,006
2021/22	3,714	6,741
2022/23	5,224	10,502

6. A high number of referrals come from the Councils Exchequer Service. This department deals with housing benefit and council tax enquiries and refers customers who need help to

make a claim or complete an application form. **Table 3** below provides a breakdown of all referrals received between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

Table 3

Referred from:	Number of referrals:
Partner organisations	10
Customer via telephone/email	184
Customer Services reception	1,374
Exchequer	1,325
Library	249
Welfare Rights	196
Total	3,338

7. Since Tameside One relaunched the service offer on level one in September 2022 there has been a notable increase in customers visiting the council offices to make an appointment. The Meet and Greet Officer is responsible for booking of appointments and will offer a same day appointment if one is available. Those customers who do drop in to make an appointment are provided with the telephone and email details so that they can book in advance the next time they need help from the service.
8. The majority of requests for appointments are in respect of Housing Benefit and Council Tax matters. Appointment times vary depending on the appointment type. **Table 4** below details the contact type and denotes whether the contact is categorised as Level 1 or Level 2 contact.

Table 4

April 2022 – March 2023 - appointments			
Type of enquiry	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Housing Benefit	952	6	958
Council Tax	2,046	15	2,061
Adult Services – financial assessment form	138		138
Blue Badges		132	132
Parking		16	16
Environmental Health		6	6
Education		2	2
Other enquiries		25	25
Total	3,136	202	3,338

9. At the start of the new delivery model, the majority of customers opted for a telephone appointment. This appears to have changed over the last few months with more customers now requesting an appointment face to face. The breakdown of appointment type is shown in **Table 5** below:

Table 5

Appointment type:	Number
Face to face	2,174
Telephone	1,164
Total	3,338