

**CUSTOMER SERVICES TRANSFORMATION:
OPERATIONAL DESIGN: REVENUES & BENEFITS**

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1 Management Summary

1.1 Background

As part of the 'One Barnet' Programme, the Council's Customer Services Transformation Programme is seeking to deliver major business benefits in terms of operational efficiency and customer satisfaction across a number of Council functions. This transformation is being delivered through a number of transformation projects, as follows:

1. Contact Centre Optimisation
2. Assisted Travel/Parking/Electoral Registration
3. Revenues & Benefits
4. Adults Social Care & Health/Children's Services
5. Housing Advice/Barnet Homes
6. Face to Face

The scope of each of these projects has been defined and agreed with service areas, and they will be implemented in two phases:

1. Detailed operational design, Implementation Plan and Business Case
2. Execution of Implementation Plan

In January 2012, Revenues and Benefits was absorbed into the Customer Services organisational structure, and this document has been developed in the context of a service that is closely integrated into Customer Services operations.

This document is the Future Operational design for Revenues and Benefits. It provides a detailed design snapshot of how the service will appear at a fixed point in time – early 2013. It will be accompanied by an Implementation Plan and Business Case that will detail the implementation costs of, and benefits from, delivering the Operational design.

1.2 Design Process

This document has been developed by the project team in conjunction with managers in the Revenues and Benefits service. Inputs have been made by others in the service, plus Customer Services, IT and Accommodation.

1.3 Key findings – current state

The Current State Analysis, conducted during 2011, identified the following features of the current Revenues and Benefits service:

- Customer service and PI performance is generally around the average for outer London Boroughs, with Benefits performance towards upper quartile performance
- Business processes conform to widely deployed standards for Revenues and Benefits operations
- Little or no integration between the Revenues and Benefits sides of the operation
- Some continued operational fallout continues in Revenues from the system conversion carried out in early 2011, but Benefits is now in steady state operation
- Significant systems functionality issues, particularly in Revenues
- Specialist work is carried out across the organisation as part of the 'day job'
- Low managerial spans of control in Revenues, with one more layer of management between Head of Service and Officer level in Revenues compared with Benefits

- Limited management information exists around the reasons for contact and corresponding handling times, leading to limited understanding of the extent of avoidable contacts
- Some cultural differences and disconnects exist between Customer Services and Revs & Bens in the F2F channel, potentially giving customers a confusing message
- No co-ordinated view is taken of end to end processes, with limited coherent performance management insight into end-to-end process performance
- No explicit plans exist for shift of customer contacts to lower-cost channels

1.4 Revenues & Benefits vision

The Council's vision for Revenues and Benefits is to provide better service to its customers by delivering services in a 'right first time' fashion, whilst continuing to maximise Council Tax collection rates and Benefits subsidy. It will achieve this by adopting the following design principles:

- Moving specialist expertise to the front of key business processes, thereby reducing downstream failure activity and shortening end-to-end process cycle times
- Transferring appropriate level work (L1 and L2) into the contact centre
- Pushing work down the structure to the lowest level capable of undertaking the relevant task
- Centralising support functions within the service, and staffing them with the people with the right skills
- Reducing the number of management layers between the Head of Revenues and Benefits and officers
- Increasing the spans of control of line managers

1.5 Future Operational Design

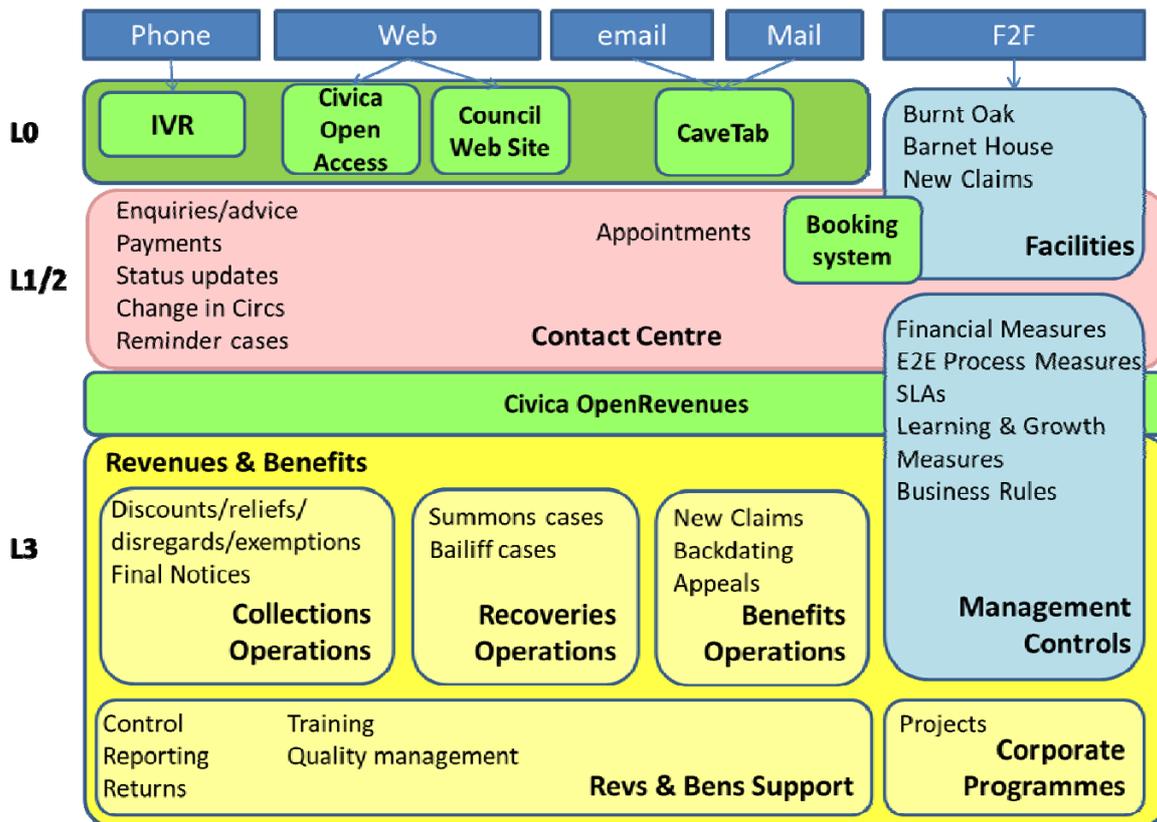
A diagrammatic representation of the future operational design for Revenues and Benefits is shown below. This diagram identifies different types of transaction at one of four levels:

Level 0 – Self-service or automated processes

Level 1 - Simple information enquiries or processes that do not require deep service specific knowledge or access to systems and can be dealt with by general Customer Services Team

Level 2 - Service specific enquiries or transactions that require more complex information capture and/or access to relevant systems and can be dealt with by a specialist Customer Services team

Level 3 - Specialist enquiries or processes that should be dealt with by the service



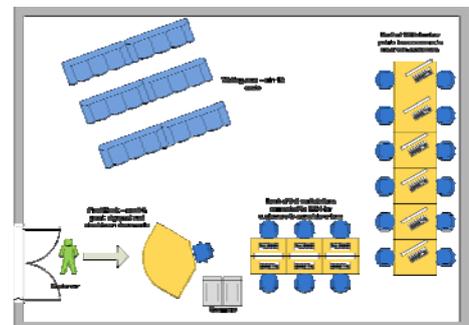
This Future Operational Design includes the following key features:

Customer Contact

- Around 85% of calls are expected to be taken in the Contact Centre (compared with 0% at present), with only complex calls being routed through to the back office.
- The use of both white mail and email will be discouraged. The Contact Centre will deal with around 36% of the residual total volume of mail and email.
- The ‘back office’ in Revenues and Benefits will focus on the most complex and sensitive transactions, including recoveries work, discounts and exemptions, new benefits claims, backdating decisions and appeals. They will also undertake all the specialist non-customer-facing activities that are required, including statutory returns and reviews, quality management and systems updates.
- In the short- to medium-term, the web channel will not be exploited significantly since without a Citizen Portal it is expected that take-up will be very low

Process

- A ‘right first time’ new benefits claim process will be implemented in which all claimants will apply via an electronic claim form followed by a face-to-face interview (by appointment) with a benefits assessor. If the claim is successful the Council will guarantee payment of benefit within 24 hours in most cases. This will require a new face-to-face public access facility, ideally at Barnet House (conceptual plan illustrated).
- Benefits staff will update the Council Tax records of benefits claimants as necessary, thereby eliminating unnecessary internal process steps



Organisation

- Support functions will be consolidated into a central Revs & Bens Support function, along with responsibility for training, continuous improvement and other service-wide activities
- Projects such as system upgrades and other major improvement initiatives outside 'business as usual' will be resourced via Corporate Programmes with the requisite number of relevantly skilled people.

Management

- Work will be pushed down to the lowest organisational level that is capable of undertaking it. Managers will focus on exercising their judgement, managing staff and managing the flow of work through the process rather than taking on the most complex transactions from more junior staff
- Management Controls will be implemented using a balanced scorecard approach that encompasses financial, customer, internal and learning/growth measures.

Systems

- Civica's OpenRevenues and Records Management (CRM) systems will continue to be used, both in the service and in the Contact Centre
- Civica OpenAccess will be implemented in a limited way to enable citizens to view their Revenues and Benefits account status on line

The features of this design and associated changes that will be made are summarised in the table overleaf.

It is expected that 20-25 FTE of resources at Officer level and 2-3 FTE at Team Manager level will transfer to the contact centre to deliver the work transferred. Over time, it is expected that this resource pool will reduce by a further 1-2 FTE through multiskilling and improved contact handling in the contact centre. Overall, a reduction in work (volumes x average handling time) of 11% is expected across the whole service (front and back office), which together with management restructuring and other organisational changes will deliver a net reduction in the workforce of around 14-16 FTE, giving a financial saving of the order of £500-600K pa.

The changes above can be achieved with minimal investment in new systems but implementation will fully occupy the project team and the service over the next 4-5 months. A number of further transformation opportunities have been identified that would need significant investment in new systems and input from the service. Given the finite resources available in the service, these have been given a lower implementation priority than the items above. They include:

- IEG4 Change in Circumstances e-form
- Implementation of the full functionality of Civica's OpenAccess product (take-up of which is likely to be very low unless and until a citizen portal is implemented)
- Risk-based verification of benefits claims

These items are included in the Business Case and, since they show a positive NPV over 4 years, they should be considered for inclusion in the specifications for the next round of the NCSO competitive dialogue process.

1.6 Next steps

This document forms a key input to the Implementation Plan, which will detail how each of the changes above will be developed and implemented, as well as defining how and when the expected benefits will be realised. The timescales for incurring implementation costs and realising benefits will flow through to the Business Case.

Key Design Features and Changes

Topic	Design features	Changes to be made
Customer Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 85% of calls to be taken in the Contact Centre, with only complex calls being routed through to the back office. • Discourage the use of both white mail and email, with Contact Centre dealing with around at least one third of the residual total volume of mail and email. • Web channel not exploited significantly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of 20-25 FTE from the Revenues and Benefits service into the Contact Centre, with associated call handling training and cross-service training being carried out by Customer Services to enable further savings post-transfer
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Right first time' new benefits claim process with all claimants applying via an electronic claim form followed by a face-to-face interview. • Elimination of substantial quantities of downstream work from end to end process • Elimination of redundant process steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New face-to-face public access facility, ideally at Barnet House. • Transfer of some assessment staff into face to face facilities • Benefits to update Council Tax records – upgraded training for Benefits staff
Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'back office' in Revenues and Benefits to focus on the most complex and sensitive transactions. • Work to be pushed down to the lowest organisational level that is capable of undertaking it. • Projects to be resourced via Corporate Programmes with the requisite number of relevantly skilled people. • Support functions consolidated into a central Support function for the whole of Revs & Bens, along with responsibility for training, continuous improvement and other service-wide activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved MI, particularly in reasons for customer contact and performance of end-to-end processes • Review of need to perform as many checks and audits as are currently performed • Improve training of officers to enable work to be pushed down to the lowest level possible, thereby freeing up managers to undertake managerial work rather than specialist work • Develop the skills in Support, and the culture in the service, to efficiently and effectively undertake analysis, reports etc and to improve the way that high-volume activities are undertaken • Implications for current homeworking arrangements in Benefits which will be reflected in the detailed organisational arrangements
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationalisation of management structure to limit the number of levels between Head of Service and Officers to 3, and to target spans of control at 1:10 at Team Manager:Officer level and at least 1:5 at higher levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationalise the management levels in line with the reduction in officer-level resources flowing from the changes above and best practice spans of control, resulting in an overall reduction in management staff of 11 FTE • Change in managerial culture towards supporting staff to adopt a 'right first time' approach, reducing the number and scope of checks and audits
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civica's OpenRevenues and Records Management (CRM) services will continue to be used, both in the service and in the Contact Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEG4 on-line claim form • Implementation of an on-line account viewing capability (OpenAccess) • Procurement of OR compatible scanners for use at F2F

2 Introduction

2.1 Background to the Project

As part of the 'One Barnet' Programme, the Council's Customer Services Transformation Programme is seeking to deliver major business benefits in terms of operational efficiency and customer satisfaction across a number of Council functions. This transformation is being delivered through a number of transformation projects, as follows:

1. Contact Centre Optimisation
2. Assisted Travel/Parking/Electoral Registration
3. Revenues & Benefits
4. Adults Social Care & Health/Children's Services
5. Housing Advice/Barnet Homes
6. Face to Face

The scope and high level operational design of each of these projects has been defined and agreed with service areas, and a business case for the programme has been agreed by the CST Programme Board. The next phases of each project are:

1. Detailed Operational Design, Implementation Plan and Business Case, to be completed in early March 2012
2. Execution of Implementation Plan, to be completed by end July 2012

This document is the Future Operational design for Revenues and Benefits. Its purpose is to define, in sufficient detail to enable its implementation, the design of the future operation in terms of its:

- Customers, and how they will be served
- Business processes
- People skills, roles, organisation structure and culture
- Management controls, including KPIs and business rules
- Enabling systems requirements

It assumes that this future operational design will be fully implemented prior to the outsourcing of a range of services to the selected NSCSO partner in early 2013. It is therefore pragmatic and does not assume any significant short-term investment in IT systems. It will be accompanied by an Implementation Plan and Business Case that will detail the implementation costs of, and benefits from, delivering the Operational design.

The principal objectives of the transformation projects are, through the process of implementing this Future Operational design, to deliver the business benefits as set out in the Customer Services Transformation Business Case, i.e.:

- Improved service performance and customer satisfaction
- Reduced costs of customer service activity
- Support the efficient delivery of core council services

2.2 Objectives of the Project

The main objectives of the project are to:

- Validate as-is volumes and resource requirement for in scope activity

- Deliver a detailed specification of the future operational design for Revenues and Benefits that will reduce the total costs of operation without adversely affecting the customer experience. This will include customer access channels, business processes and organisation, together with a detailed specification of those activities and resources that will be transferred to the Contact Centre
- Mitigate any operational risk
- Produce a business case for the implementation of the operational design
- Plan the implementation of the operational design (including what this means for staff affected)
- Ensure engagement of staff and managers in the change process and vision for Customer Services

2.3 Scope of Service

Revenues and Benefits are two fundamentally different services that have a number of linkages, as described below.

Revenues deals with the collection of property-based taxes from all householders and businesses in the borough. As such its customer base is wide and covers all geographic and demographic segments. Its principal objective is to recover as much Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates revenue as possible as early as possible. For citizens and businesses who pay their taxes on time the internal process is a simple one of issuing bills and administering the collection of monies. This is undertaken by the Collections section of Revenues. The complications come in dealing with those who fall behind with their payments – in this case the internal processes become rather more complex, involving reminders, court hearings and bailiffs, and are largely dictated by statute. This is undertaken by the Recoveries section. In addition, there is an ongoing administrative burden generated by citizens' changes in circumstance (moves into, with and out of the borough, number of people living in a property etc), and the consequential changes in tax liability.

Benefits is concerned with the administration of the distribution of government funds to those citizens who qualify for support from local authorities. Such support takes the form of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit and is means-tested. The principal objectives of the Benefits service are to pay the right amount of money to those who qualify in the minimum timescale, to maximise the take-up of benefits from those who qualify and to minimise the amount of overpayments by processing changes in circumstances as promptly as possible. The customer base comprises the least affluent citizens in the borough – approximately 11% of adult citizens in Barnet qualify for Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit.

Control deals with a wide range of functions including reconciliations, systems and database maintenance and updates, batch runs, IT supplier management, system access, document control, errors and exceptions, and management reports.

The services undertake a substantial amount of work in system updates, reviews, audits, reporting, subsidy claims and other non-customer activities, much of which is carried out by managers (from Team Manager upwards) across the service as part of their role.

The **links** between Revenues and Benefits are:

- Citizens who qualify for Council Tax Benefit have this benefit deducted from their Council Tax liability at source – this requires a link between Benefits Officers and Revenues Officers
- The same system is normally used by local authorities to support the administration of Revenues and Benefits – in Barnet's case this is Civica OpenRevenues, which is used by more than 60 local authorities
- They often come under the same management structure. Whilst this is currently the case in Barnet, it has not always been so – until 6 years ago Benefits and Revenues were part of different directorates

Fraud relating to Revenues and Benefits is dealt with centrally by the Council's corporate fraud team and is out of the scope of the Revenues and Benefits service and of this project.

Barnet's Revenues and Benefits service has recently implemented a complete replacement of its main processing system. The previous system, Pericles, became unsupported by its vendor at short notice and a replacement had to be procured, with implementation taking place on a short timescale from early- to mid-2011. The short notice forced a compressed planning and testing timescale which impacted on the main billing cycle for 2011/12 and resulted in some work backlogs building up. Whilst these have now mainly been eliminated, issues arising from the conversion to Civica are still being found, and on the Revenues side the functionality of the system appears to be poorer than that of Pericles. All these factors caused some disruption to steady state operation which for the Benefits service lasted from January 2011 to October 2011, when steady state performance was restored. Similar disruption was experienced in Revenues, the impact of which is still being felt to some extent in early 2012.

The Pericles and Anite@work systems were hosted locally by Logica. That contract was terminated at the time when OPENRevenues went live, and now only provides a read only service of Pericles. Logica provided 24/7 DBA support, which included responding to alerts and resolution of issues overnight to ensure that core hours transaction processing was not affected. This was not included in the specification for the new hosting provider, and as such is now provided for within the service. Terms and conditions of current staff do not include this out of hours support, yet goodwill of the manager and seniors ensure that this objective is met.

Some features of the organisation structure and working practices have historic origins. Benefits were until 2006 part of the Housing Directorate, and prior to that had been located under Social Exclusion and Finance Directorates. Revenues were part of Borough Treasurer's Department prior to their reunion with Benefits in 2007. A large number of temporary staff were brought in during 2011 to deal with the additional work generated by the conversion from Pericles to Civica – most of these have now left, and there remain a disproportionate number of supervisors in Revenues for the number of working-level staff who remain.

As part of the Customer Services Transformation Programme a scoping exercise was undertaken that recommended that the entire Revenues and Benefits service should transfer to the Customer Services Organisation (CSO), rather than being split between front- and back-office functions. This recommendation was accepted by the Council and the service transferred into Customer Services in its current 'as is' state on 3rd January 2012. The scope of this project therefore encompasses the whole Revenues and Benefits Service, including systems and facilities used.

2.4 Design Development Approach

The approach to producing the Future Operational Design has followed the stages shown in Figure 1 below:

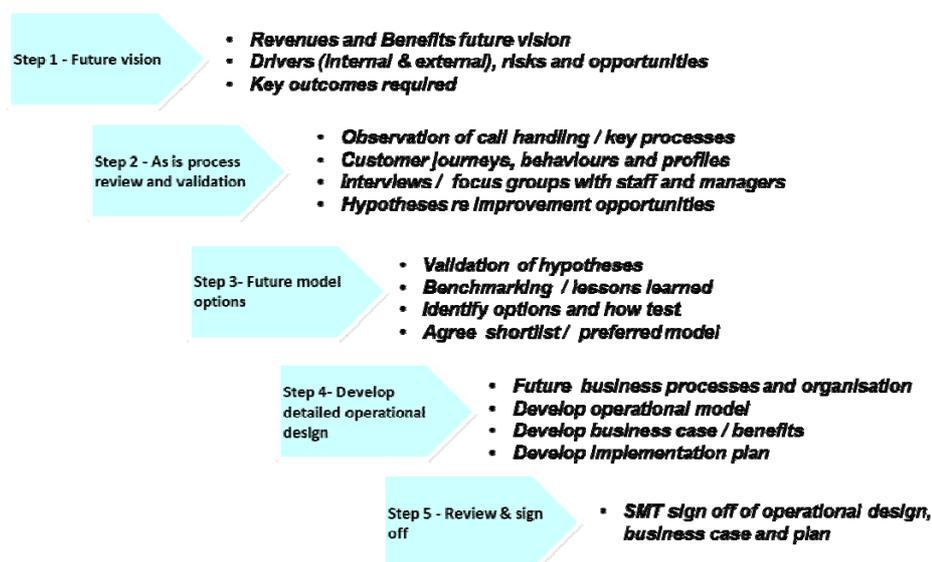


Figure 1: Approach to developing the Future Operational Design

The first stage established the overall vision and outcomes for the service in the context of the Corporate vision for customer access.

During the second stage, information about the existing business operation and customer interactions at the directorate or service level was analysed to understand how it works and what the associated issues were. Information about the existing Revenues and Benefits operations was gathered and analysed to understand how it works and what the associated issues were. Wherever possible the perspective of the customer (citizen) was taken to understand where issues and opportunities for improvement lie. Hypotheses were then developed around improvement opportunities to focus analysis on a manageable number of improvement options. This was followed by further data gathering and analysis to prove or disprove the hypotheses.

The third stage involved identifying and recommending options for change to take the service towards its objectives of improving customer service and reducing end-to-end costs. Once the options were identified, they were researched further to provide enough detail to evaluate and prioritise them objectively. The options were then evaluated against agreed criteria to identify which would deliver most benefit for least cost in the short term (prior to outsourcing) to identify which were the best fit to the business.

Once the key improvement options were decided upon, a logical definition was constructed of the target operation in Step 4. This definition forms the major part of this document.

2.5 Purpose of this Future Operational Design Document

The scoping document offered a description ‘what’ services will be delivered in the future. This Future Operational design describes ‘how’ they will be delivered. It provides a detailed design snapshot of how the service will appear at a fixed point in time – early 2013, just before the service is outsourced, and a definition of the changes that will need to be made to the current state. It will be accompanied by an Implementation Plan that identifies the tasks and timescales for implementing the Future Operational Design and a Full Business Case that will detail the implementation costs and incremental operating costs.

The Future Operational design also takes the project scope down to a detailed level including:

- Target customer experience
- Operating model to deliver that experience
- Detailed business processes
- Organisation structure including skills, job roles, FTE, terms and conditions
- Supporting behaviours
- Management controls, eg PIs, business rules
- Technical architecture and business requirements for systems
- Data to support channel shift

The Future Operational design is put in place to ensure successful project delivery.

The review, validation and sign-off procedures for this document will be in line with Programme standards. Review will be by service management and other key stakeholders, with sign-offs from the Project Board, the Customer Services Programme Board and CMT.

3 Current State Analysis

3.1 Current service provision

The following sections summarise the findings of the current state analysis against the following headings:

- Customer
- Process
- Organisation
- Management Controls
- Systems

Further details are provided where relevant in appendices.

3.2 Customer

Revenues:

Revenues customers can be divided between:

- All domestic householders living or owning a property within the borough of Barnet – these are liable for Council Tax at a level in one of a number of bands determined by the size and value of their property
- All businesses occupying property within the borough – liable for business rates based on the rateable value of the property

As such they are geographically dispersed across the whole borough and demographically spread across all social strata.

Landlords are a further important customer segment with particular needs relating to the number of properties that they may own and the number of tenants occupying the properties – although the tenant is liable for Council Tax the landlord is liable during voids (periods when the property is not let to a tenant).

Key service statistics are given in Appendix 1.

Benefits

Benefits claimants are by definition from the less affluent social strata in the borough and can be divided between:

- Claimants who are in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) – these customers receive incapacity-related benefit from DWP, given to people who are too ill to be expected to find work. Split between ESAC (contribution-based) and ESAIR (income related)
- Claimants who are in receipt of Income Support (IS) from the DWP because, whilst they may be physically able to work, they are nevertheless not expected to find full time work.
- Claimants in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) – paid by DWP for people who are fit for work and seeking a job. Split between JSAC (contribution-based) and JSAIR (income related)
- Claimants in receipt of Pension Credit from DWP. Split between Guarantee Credit (GC) and Savings Credit (SVC)

- Claimants not in receipt of any DWP benefits but are nevertheless on a level of income which qualifies them for Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit, subject to a means test

Full Housing and Council Tax benefits are awarded (subject to non-dependent deductions and maximum rent levels) to claimants on IS, JSAIB, ESAIR and GC – these are ‘passport’ from DWP and require less work to be done by the Council. All other claimants (classified as ‘Standard’ claims) are subjected to a means test, taking their savings and any other incomes into account. The level of benefit paid takes into account a wide range of factors, including the number of dependants for whom the claimant is responsible.

Key service statistics are given in Appendix 1.

Benefits claimants of different types are not evenly dispersed across the borough. The highest concentration of claimants live along the ‘Edgware Road Corridor’ in the West of the borough, but there are significant pockets of claimants in all parts of the borough.

There are some differences in the geographic distribution of different categories of claimants, as shown in Appendix 2. The split between claimants living in council accommodation and those living in privately rented accommodation is significant since the latter have a much higher churn rate and therefore will tend to generate more new claims.

Landlords are again an important customer segment. In some cases a tenant’s Housing Benefit is paid directly to the landlord, and the service must keep track of such arrangements.

3.3 Process

The high level functional hierarchy and major business processes in Revenues and Benefits are shown in Figures 2 and 3 below. The former shows the following main functions:

- Revenues, divided between:
 - Council Tax, and
 - National Non-Domestic Rates
- Benefits

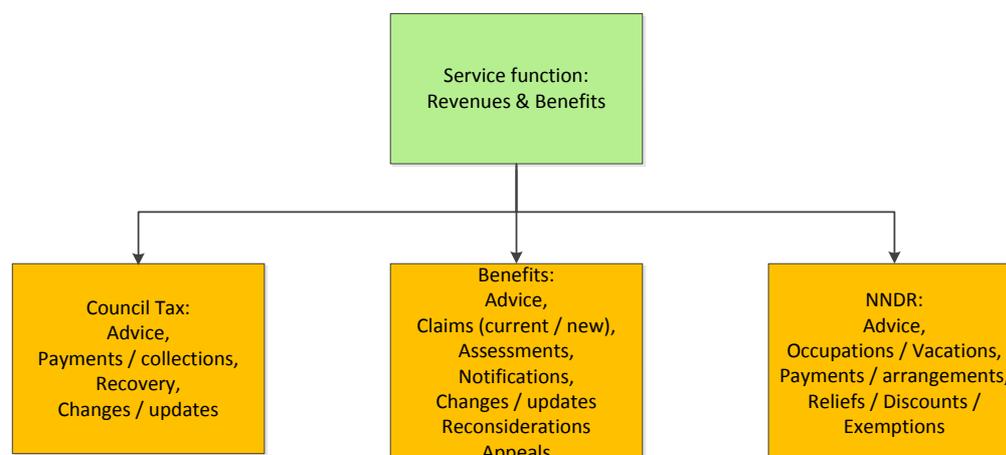


Figure 2: Functional Hierarchy

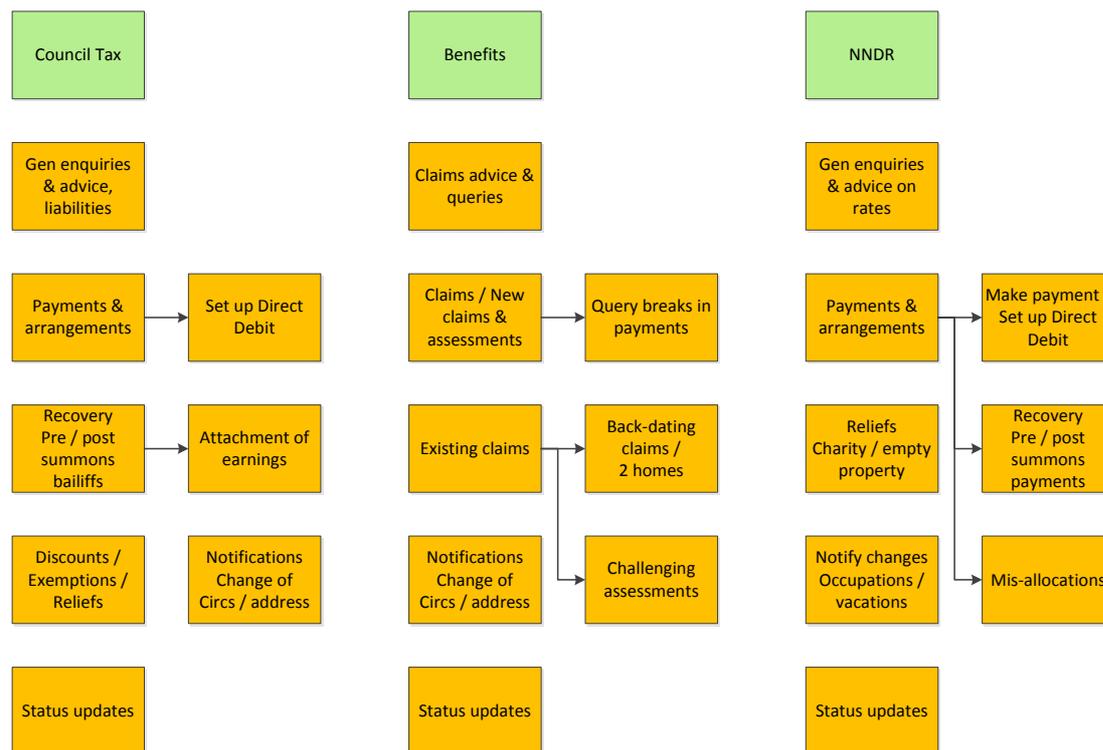


Figure 3: Major processes

A customer interaction grid showing how transaction types map on to business processes is provided in Appendix 4.

Current work volumes, expressed as full-time equivalent staff, are shown in the table below.

	Revenues		Benefits	
	Work (FTE)	%	Work (FTE)	%
Phone	15.3	45	14.5	20
Face to Face	0	0	5.8	8
Email	11.9	35	5.8	8
Mail	4.8	14	24.7	34
Web	0	0	0	0
Other/systems transfer (DWP)	0	0	19.8	27
Non-customer driven	2.2	6	1.2	2
Total	34.3	100	73.4	100

Table 1: Current Work Volumes

3.4 Organisation

The current organisation structure for Revenues and Benefits is shown overleaf in Figure 4. This represents the resources deployed in the service as at February 2012 and therefore includes temporary staff but not vacancies – it is intended to represent the starting point for any savings made in this project.

The structure contains the numbers of resources shown in the following table, which also includes all-up costs including overheads etc:

Role	Heads	FTE	Cost
Head of Revs & Bens*	0	0	£0
Head of service	1	1	£79K
Area Manager/Principal Officer	6	6	£368K
Team Manager/Senior Officer	21.5	21	£979K
Officer	141.5	130.7	£4,419K
Total	171	159.3	£5,846K

Table 2: Current staff numbers and costs

*This post is vacant and has been excluded from the 2012/13 budget

3.5 Management Controls

Management controls in the current state include the following:

- National performance indicators, eg average time taken to process new benefits claims, % of Council Tax collected within the financial year
- Internal productivity measures by team and individual
- Screens showing current call handling status, ie calls waiting and average waiting time etc
- System faults raised with Civica
- Checks and audits, both internal and external, eg discount and exemption reviews, FOI/DPA compliance
- Limits of authority, eg for backdating claims and writeoffs

Further findings in the current state analysis include:

- Limited management information exists around the reasons for contact and corresponding handling times, leading to limited understanding of the extent of avoidable contacts
- Some cultural differences and disconnects exist between Customer Services and Revs & Bens in the F2F channel, potentially giving customers a confusing message
- No co-ordinated view is taken of end to end processes, with limited coherent performance management insight into end-to-end process performance
- No explicit plans exist for shift of customer contacts to lower-cost channels
- Whilst service, team and individual performance statistics are available to managers, the Revenues and Benefits offices are almost completely devoid of any visible performance indicators – the only visible indicators are the screens showing current call handling status and there are no signs of service performance on walls or notice boards.

3.6 Systems

The following systems are currently used by the service:

System	Purpose	Access	Current Issues
Civica OPENRevenues	Main line of business system which stores all Revenues and Benefits customer and property details and calculates tax liabilities and benefits entitlements.	Hosted remotely by Civica and accessed via Citrix through both the Barnet network and the internet	Long login times and in the system dropping out – both these issues may be network-related but it has often proved difficult to apportion responsibility between Barnet ICT and Civica. Intermittent
Civica OPENQuery	Reporting tool for interrogation of database	Hosted by civica	Poor response times
Civica OPENVision	Web version of OPENRevenues	Hosted by Civica	
Civica CRM (formerly CaveTab) and their FileTrail systems	Scanning and indexing	Hosted service from Civica in Northampton	Some mis-indexing issues, resulting in documents apparently going missing. Also some documents returned to the wrong customer.
DWP system	LAI/D/LACI ETD/CIS/TUO	Interface with DWP over which claimant's details are transmitted into OpenRevenues	
Axis Income management	Cash income from various sources; cash ,paye.net, CO-OP bank, Giro, Bailiffs, DWP and internet/touchtone. Reports define the various holding funds	Local server hosting	
Paye.net, Internet/touchtone	Telephone and internet payments	website, Phone line hosted by Capita-epay	Current issues at Capita director's level as there are BT issues and payments are being directed to wrong council
SAP self service	Record of staff leave, absence and performance reviews	Local server	
SAP	General ledger, credits and debits. Reconciliation, daily, monthly and year end between SAP, AXIS and OpenRevenues for HB, CTAX and NDR	Local server	
MAG:Net LoCTA	Data sharing between Local authorities	website	
Valuation Office Agency web	LHA and BRMA monthly updates. To download	website, hosted by Valuation Office	Issues with website and logging in. cannot

portals and interfaces	update schedules and reports, certificates, full list of properties for CTAX & NDR. Upload reports to the VOA to amend the list	Agency	always see if uploads have worked
Victor	52 week referrals for HB and new referrals. All need to be loaded as new	Web interface	SRR (single room rate) . Civica investigating
ColumbusR	Archiving reports from OpenRevenues	Local server	
Experian CitizenView	Used by overpayments to trace sundry debtors	website	
BACS payment systems	Downloading of BACS reports for onward processing	Website	
Civica Saffron	Barnet Homes system for council tenants , B & B and temporary accommodation	Local server	
Land Registry Portal	Access to title register to establish ownership	website	
LBB GIS systems	Mapping information based on Ordnance survey	Barnet intranet	
Pericles	Archived history for years not converted	Local server	
PTC Scheduler	Scheduling and Alerting of overnight batch process	Hosted by Civica	
PTC Consolidation	Consolidation of outputs for reporting	Hosted by Civica	
IRRV Euclidian	Training tool	Website	
Business Objects Crystal Reports	Reporting tool for interrogation of database	Local server	

Table 3: Currently used systems

4 A Vision for Revenues and Benefits

4.1 Customer Service vision

The Council's vision for the Customer Services Transformation programme is:

To create an excellent customer experience that is satisfying for customers, cheaper for the council and simpler for staff, where services are designed, developed and delivered around the needs of customers.

The Customer Services Transformation programme will develop Customer Services that:

- Provide a more efficient customer experience
- Deliver more customer contact through those channels which are most cost effective, ensuring good service to customers
- Act as an advocate to ensure customers receive services that respond effectively to their needs
- Provide the information and insight needed to work with service providers inside and outside of the council to enable them to reposition services around the customer and through life events

This will be achieved by moving from the current fragmented service delivery model to an integrated front office which seeks to address all initial customer enquiries as efficiently as possible, while providing detailed insight about customer needs and preferences.

4.2 Revenues & Benefits vision

The Council's vision for Revenues and Benefits is to provide better service to its customers by delivering services in a 'right first time' fashion, whilst continuing to maximise Council Tax collection rates and benefits subsidy. It will achieve this by adopting the following design principles:

- Moving specialist expertise to the front of key business processes, thereby reducing downstream failure activity and shortening end-to-end process cycle times
- Transferring appropriate level work (L1 and L2) into the contact centre
- Pushing work down the structure to the lowest level capable of undertaking the relevant task, freeing up managers to manage the service
- Centralising support functions within the service, and staffing them with the people with the right skills
- Reducing the number of management layers between the Head of Revenues and Benefits and officers
- Increasing the spans of control of line managers

5 Translating the vision into Operations

5.1 Future operating model

A diagrammatic representation of the future design is shown in Figure 5 below. This diagram identifies different types of transaction at one of four levels:

Level 0 – Self-service or automated processes

Level 1 - Simple information enquiries or processes that do not require deep service specific knowledge or access to systems and can be dealt with by general Customer Services Team

Level 2 - Service specific enquiries or transactions that require more complex information capture and/or access to relevant systems and can be dealt with by a specialist Customer Services team

Level 3 - Specialist enquiries or processes that should be dealt with by the service

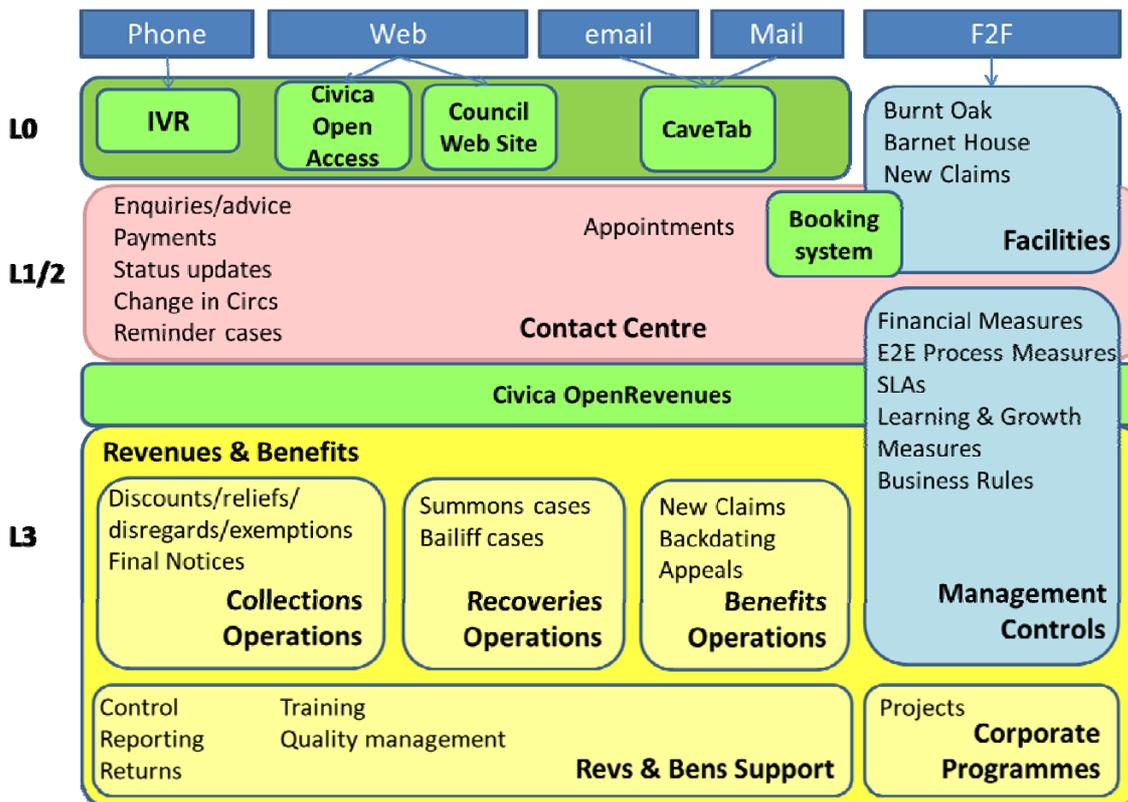


Figure 5: Future Operational design: Overview

This Future Operational Design has the following features:

- **Phone:** All calls, to both Revenues and Benefits, will be routed through the contact centre, with initial greetings and messages being played before calls are routed by IVR. Around 85% of calls are expected to be taken in the Contact Centre, with only complex calls (in particular those relating to Council Tax Recoveries, non-domestic rates and disputes) being routed through to the back office
- **Web:** Via the Council’s web site, the web channel will enable customers (and contact centre agents at L1) to find the answers to factual questions that do not require access to customer account details in the Revs & Bens system. In addition, subject to the

establishment of an account and login details in Civica OpenAccess, customers will also be able to view their account status on line. (The longer-term solution of a customer portal giving self-setup access to all council services is expected to be implemented by the NSCSO partner). Replacements for the existing moving in/out web forms are being implemented as part of the near-term upgrade to the Barnet web site.

- **Mail and email:** The use of both white mail and email will be discouraged. In the short term, the elimination of the paper new claims form will reduce the volume of scanning by around 50%. Processing of L1 and L2 correspondence will be undertaken in the contact centre. In the longer term, following the introduction of web forms through Civica OpenAccess, all email traffic will be transferred to the web.
- **Face to Face:** In future the only route by which citizens will be able to make a new claim for Housing and Council Tax Benefit will be by completing an on-line claim form (at home or in the Face to Face facility) and then having a face to face interview with a benefits assessor¹. An appointments booking system will enable claimants to make interview appointments via the contact centre. Subject to the claimant presenting the correct documentation, the Council will be able to guarantee that the claimant will have his/her claim determined on the same day and paid within 3 days. Subject to the assessment of risk and feasibility, we will work towards claimants receiving their benefit payment within 24 hours of determination. This process will take out a large proportion of downstream failure demand and will reduce overall costs as well as radically improving customer service.
- **Contact Centre:** The Contact Centre will deal with all L1 and L2 phone, mail and email contacts, as well as providing staff for dealing with face to face enquiries at L1/2. Mail, email and completed webforms will be viewed using the scanning and indexing system, Civica OpenRevenues workflow module. Authorised staff in the Contact Centre will have full access to the main Revs & Bens system, Civica OpenRevenues and, through a suitable system, will also be able to book appointments with Benefits assessors to support the revised 'right first time' new claims process.
- **Revenues & Benefits Operations:** The 'back office' in Revenues and Benefits will focus on the most complex and sensitive transactions, including all recoveries work, discounts and exemptions, new benefits claims, backdating decisions and appeals. They will also undertake all the specialist non-customer-facing activities that are required, including exception handling, statutory returns and reviews, quality management and systems updates.
- **Revenues & Benefits Support:** All support activities will be consolidated with Control into an expanded single Support function for the whole service. The existing Control functions (including property control, reconciliations, resolution of interface exceptions, software testing, partner liaison/contract monitoring, user creation, system support, out of hours support and disaster recovery), will be consolidated with training, continuous improvement, subsidy claims, information management support, benefits liaison, support services coordination and other service-wide activities. This will release service managers and team managers to focus on the management of people and the flow of work through the process. In general, work will be pushed down to the lowest organisational level that is capable of undertaking it.
- **Facilities:** In order to support the revised new benefits claims process, a new Face to Face facility for benefits will be opened, probably at Barnet House. This will require some investment to provide the necessary interview facilities and on-line form access, together with scanning equipment connected directly to Civica's OpenRevenues workflow system
- **Management Controls:** Will be implemented using a balanced scorecard approach that encompasses financial, customer, internal and learning/growth measures. These will be integrated across both the Contact Centre and Revenues and Benefits to ensure

¹ Special arrangements will be made for home visits for those who are housebound

consistency. A key focus will be on understanding the nature of customer demand, by for example capturing the volumes and work undertaken for various types of customer contacts and other work.

- **Projects:** In future, projects such as system replacements and other major improvement initiatives outside 'business as usual' will be resourced via Corporate Programmes with the requisite number of relevantly skilled people. In this way the service will avoid carrying the overhead of project work and projects can be properly resourced and managed.

5.2 Customer Management and Channels

Revenues:

The approach to customer management for Revenues will address the needs of a broad range of customer segments but at the same time will focus on maximising channel shift towards lower-cost channels. In particular, every opportunity to reduce the volume of paper in the process will be taken. Within the timeframe of the proposals made in this document it may not be possible or financially viable to implement a complete web-enabled transactional solution but some steps in that direction are possible, for example the viewing of CTax, NNDR and Benefits accounts on line.

Whilst some customers still prefer to pay by cash and/or cheque, the costs and security implications of these means of payment mean that they are gradually being phased out across the whole economy. Whilst it is not proposed that the Council stops accepting cash and cheques as a means of payment for Council Tax these modes will not be encouraged and Direct Debit will be promoted even more strongly as a mode that is convenient to customers and that reduces the risk of arrears.

Customers will therefore see evolutionary changes to the current approach, featuring the continuation of:

- Paper-based billing (both annual bill and amended bills),
- A large proportion of transactions handled by phone, but also with large numbers of email and postal contacts (in the short term – longer term to be replaced by web forms),
- Existing recovery processes, which are laid down in statute,

Plus:

- Implementation of limited web capability, allowing account balances to be viewed on line for both householders and landlords
- Migration of the handling of non-specialist queries to the contact centre, enabling faster response times to calls
- A more proactive approach to encouraging customers to pay CTax and NNDR by direct debit
- Continuation of the phasing out of cash (and cheque) payments

Benefits:

The existing process for the assessment of benefits claims is not designed to meet the customer need to minimise the elapsed time between an applicant making a claim and his/her receipt of the correct sum of money. The design of the process inherently introduces delays through the physical separation of the customer from those who undertake the processing (both scanning and assessment). The future 'right first time' design for new claims will bring all parts of the process together, both physically and in time. Customers will see a radical difference in the process, which will be based on 'right first time' principles and have the following features:

- All claimants will have to visit a face to face facility to make a claim

- The claimant will complete a quick assessment form on line to confirm potential eligibility, and then an on-line version of the full benefits application form
- The claimant will have an interview with an assessor to validate the details entered on the (electronic) claim form
- The claimant will (ideally) present his/her proofs at the same time as having an interview with the assessor
- If the claimant qualifies for benefit and all the details are validated, the assessor approves the claim and the system will pay the appropriate benefit within 3 days

From the customer's point of view the new process will:

- Cut down the average time to process new claims from 18 days to less than 5 days (nb this is the average across all new claims – many will take less than 24 hours)
- Provide an explanation of how the claimant's entitlement to benefit has been calculated at the point the application is submitted
- Eliminate written requests for information from the service
- Reduce the chance that the claimant will wish to appeal against the assessment

However, the claimant will have to travel to a face to face location and spend a total of around 2-3 hours there while the claim is submitted, validated and assessed.

The changes above can be achieved with minimal investment in new systems but implementation will fully occupy the project team and the service over the next 4-5 months. A number of further transformation opportunities have been identified that would need some investment in new systems – of the order of £175K, plus ongoing maintenance of £22K pa. These have been given a lower implementation priority than the items above since, whilst they may show a positive NPV over 4 years, they are unlikely to pay back before the NSCSO partner starts operations. They include:

- IEG4 Change in Circumstances e-form
- Implementation of the full functionality of Civica's OpenAccess product (take-up of which is likely to be very low unless and until a citizen portal is implemented)
- Risk-based verification of benefits claims

These items are included in the Business Case and should be considered for inclusion in the specifications for the next round of the NSCSO competitive dialogue process.

Customers will access services as shown in Figure 6 below and explained in subsequent paragraphs:

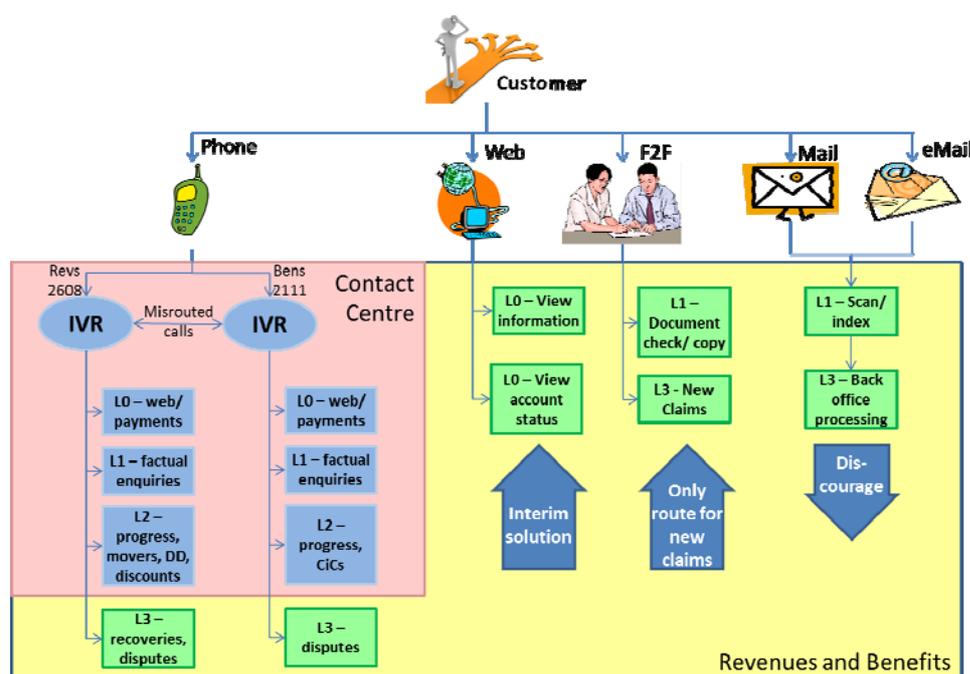


Figure 6: Access Channel Overview

By Phone: On calling either of the existing contact numbers (0208 359 2608 for Revenues, 0208 359 2111 for Benefits), customers will be greeted by an automated IVR system which will route calls to the relevant automatic service, the contact centre or the Revenues/Benefits service as appropriate. In order to reduce call volumes, IVR messages will encourage customers to use the web to find answers to simple questions – this will reduce the volume of avoidable contacts.

Calls will be routed as follows:

- Level 0: (Automated): Payments, web self-service
- Level 1 (Contact Centre): Factual enquiries not requiring system access
- Level 2: (Contact Centre): Enquiries requiring system access, eg progress chasing, setting up direct debits and payment plans, applications for CTax discounts, changes in circumstances
- Level 3: (Service): More complex enquiries requiring the application of professional judgement, eg recoveries, disputes

It is expected that, over time, calls handled by the Contact Centre will benefit from improved call management (through training of agents), reducing average handling times.

Face to Face: As described above, for Benefits, the Face to Face channel will be the only channel for citizens to make new claims, resulting in a substantial increase in the use of this channel but a large reduction in the volume of downstream work, eg RFIs, queries, appeals. Revenues contacts do not form a significant portion of existing F2F contacts and are expected to continue at their current level.

Web: The updating of the web site provides the opportunity to tailor the customer's experience to better meet their needs, in particular to allow them to find out the answers to simple enquiries themselves. As indicated above, IVR will be used to encourage this channel shift. In addition, customers will be able to view their Revenues and Benefits account statuses on line, although the process for securing a customer account will initially

be rather cumbersome, involving as it will an application to be made and logon details being posted to the citizen. Take-up of this on-line account viewing facility is therefore expected to be slow, and limited mainly to landlords, for whom the benefits of being able to view the account status of a number of properties may outweigh the cumbersome account creation process.

In addition, customers (and contact centre agents at L1) will be able via the Council's web site to find the answers to factual questions that do not require access to customer account details

The longer-term solution of a customer portal giving self-setup access to all council services is expected to be implemented by the NSCSO partner and has not been included in this Future Operational Design.

Post: The transfer of new claims to the F2F channel will remove substantial volumes of paper from the system, both directly from the elimination of paper forms and indirectly through a reduction on the number of requests for information to be sent in, and their responses. In the short term, no other reductions in the use of post are expected, although over time written correspondence will gradually be discouraged as the capability of the web site increases.

eMail: Customers will continue to be able to use email to contact the service, although over time this channel will be discouraged in favour of web forms as this capability becomes available on the web site.

The use of both white mail and email will be discouraged. In the short term, the elimination of the paper new claims form will reduce the volume of scanning by around 50%.

Anticipated contact volumes per channel, and changes from the current state, are shown in Table 4 below:

Service	Channel	Current volume pa	Anticipated future volume pa	Change %
Revenues	Phone	116,527	116,527	0
	Face to Face	0	0	0
	Post	34,403	34,403	0
	eMail	49,650	49,650	0
	Internal memos	31,296	0	-∞%
	Web	0	0	0
	Total	156,979	125,682	-20%
Benefits	Phone	113,776	105,942	-7%
	Face to Face	35,256	48,463	+37%
	Post	60,874	32,592	-46%
	eMail	15,024	15,024	0
	Web	0	0	-
	Other/systems (DWP)	142,536	139,836	-2%
	Total	367,466	344,557	-6%

Table 4: Current and Future contact volumes

5.3 Business Processes

Overview

The principal change to business processes in Revenues and Benefits is that the new claims process in Benefits will be completely re-engineered along 'right first time' principles to bring expertise to the front of the process in a face-to-face interaction with the claimant, resulting in a substantial reduction in failure-related activity later in the end-to-end process. This re-engineering will include the following features:

- On-line quick assessment form to filter out non-qualifying claimants
- Full on-line form to be filled in by claimant, either in his/her own home or in a face to face facility
- Checking of relevant evidence by L1/2 customer service staff in F2F facility
- Appointments to be seen by an assessment officer made by phone or face-to-face
- Assessment of claim done at same time as interview with claimant, enabling the basis of the assessment to be explained
- Immediate authorisation of payment following assessment, enabling monies to be in claimant's bank account within 24 hours of interview, subject to the introduction of Faster Payments and daily payment runs

Other process changes are:

- Allowing Benefits staff to update the Council Tax records of CTax Benefit claimants rather than sending a memo to CTax staff to request such an update
- IVR routing of calls
- Call centre being responsible for L1/2 work, including system updates

Otherwise, future processes will be the same as at present, although in some cases (eg where work is transferred to the contact centre) may be performed by a different function.

Process maps and descriptions

To Be process maps for the IVR structure (referred to in section 5.2) are illustrated in Figures 7 and 8 overleaf. The new structure is designed to reduce the total volume of calls reaching human agents, and to accurately route calls at the first point of contact to the correct level of agent with the appropriate skills. Compared with the existing IVR structures, the new structures include a more complex routing of calls to agents and automated systems, based on the categorisation of calls by L0/1/2/3. In addition, messages are included to encourage citizens to self-serve via the web and to discourage unnecessary progress-chasing calls.

The breakdown of items to be transferred to the Contact Centre (L1/2) and retained within the service (L3) is shown in Table 5 below.

	Transferred to Contact Centre	Retained within the service
Revenues – Collections	Move in/out of borough Change in circumstances Make a payment Request to pay by/change Direct Debit Enquiries re discounts, exemptions etc Reminders & Final notices - payment arrangements Status updates	Approval of applications for discounts, exemptions etc Memos from HB re: Ctax accounts

	General Enquiry' - inc billing & banding etc	
Revenues – Recoveries	None	All enquiries, CiC's, applications, status updates and requests to pay for accounts at post-final reminder stage Reminders & Final notices - payment arrangements Summons - payment arrangements Bailiff cases
Benefits	Enquiries re change of circs, new claims etc processes Break / change in payments Query correspondence / notifications Status update requests General enquiry (calls & F2F only) Explanation of assessment letters	New claims applications Requests for information Processing changes of circs Backdating claims Break / change in payments Challenge decision / reconsiderations Appeals Overpayments

Table 5 Transfers to Contact Centre and retained within the service

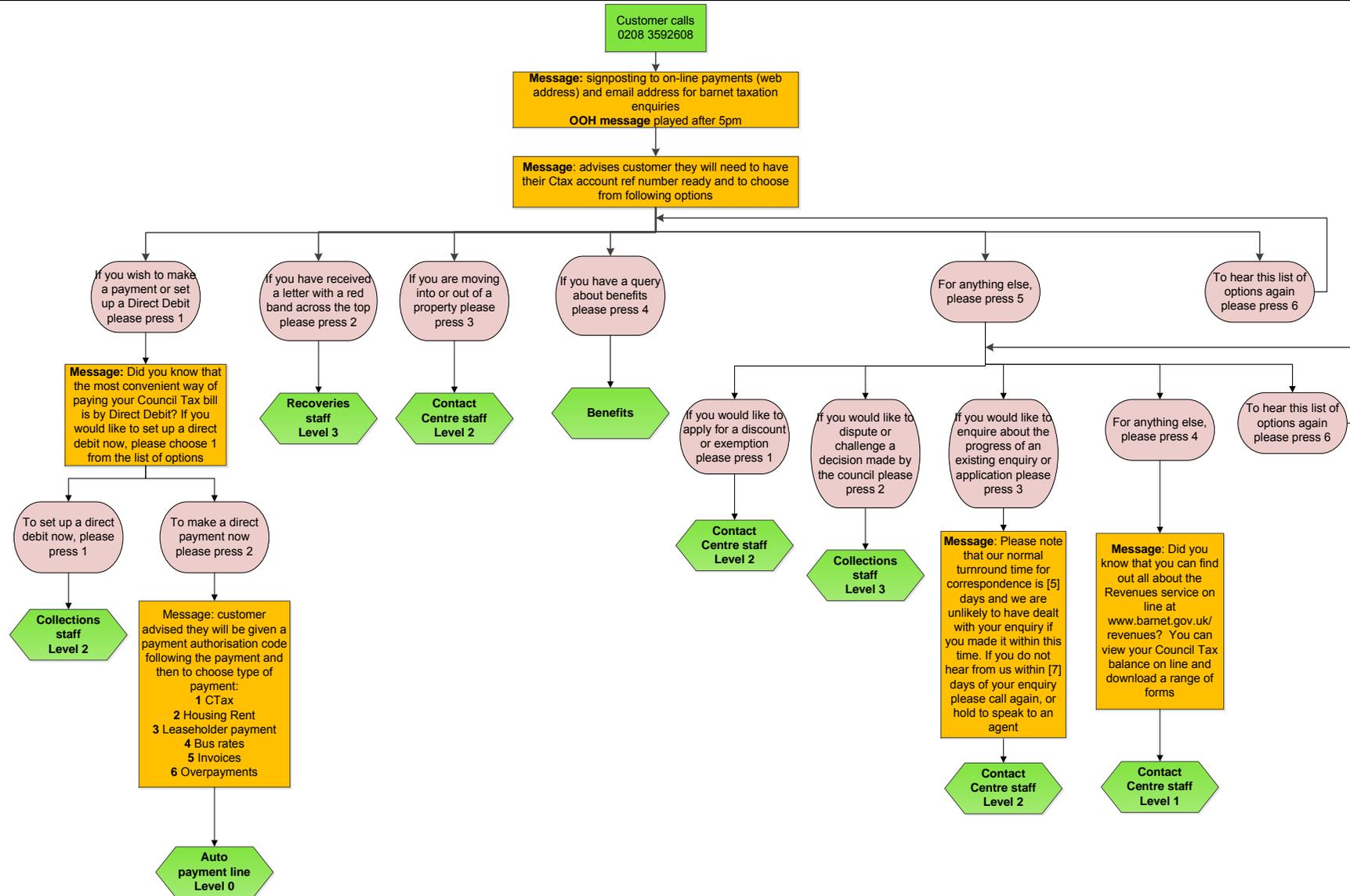


Figure 7: IVR Design: Revenues

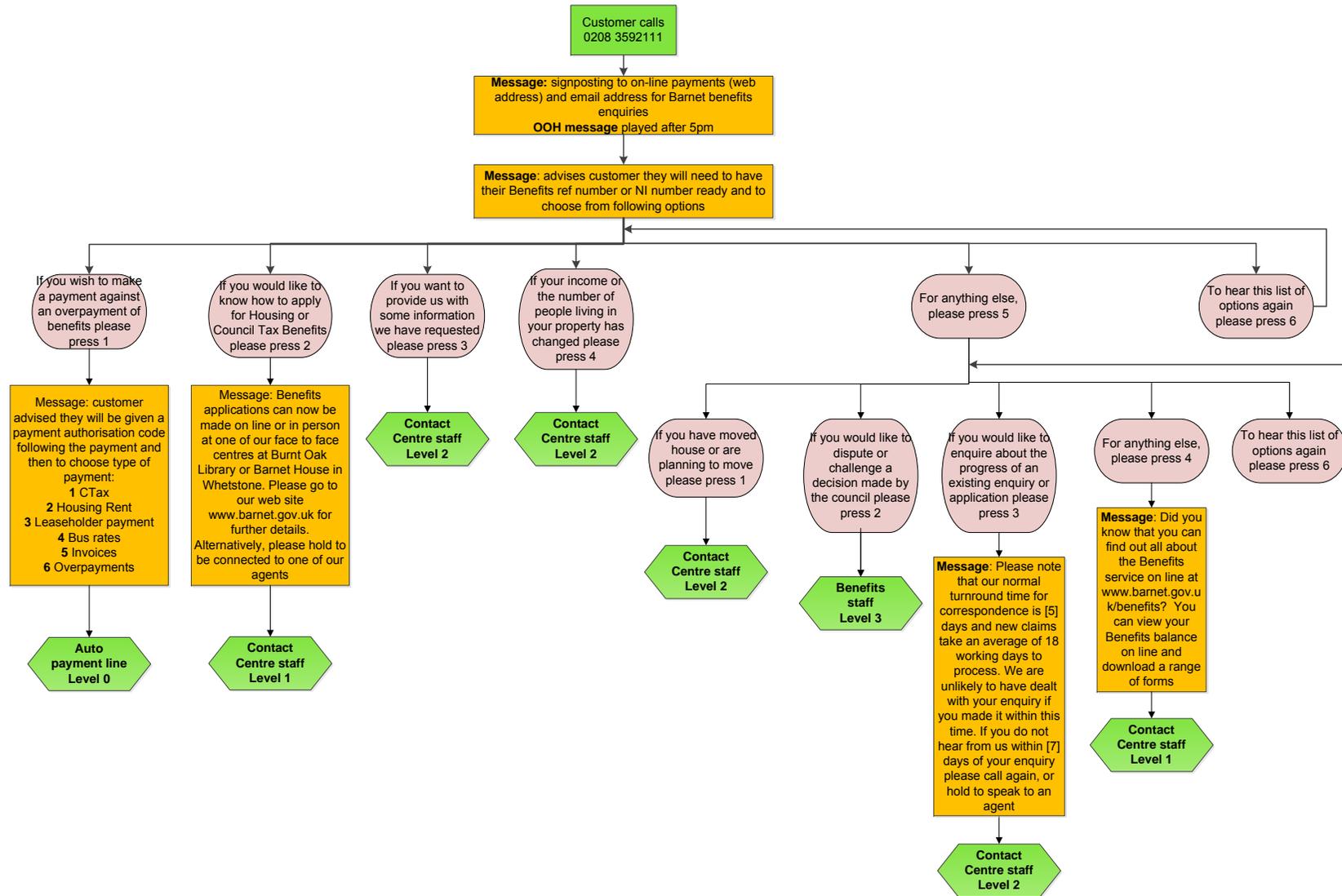


Figure 8: IVR Design - Benefits

- Appeals – 33% reduction

In total these are expected to reduce the volume of work involved in processing new claims by the equivalent of 9.7 FTE.

The other process change that is proposed is for the records of Council Tax Benefit claimants to be updated by Benefits staff rather than Revenues staff. Currently Benefits staff send a memo to Revenues Collections requesting such updates, which result from a claimant’s liability for Council Tax being reduced by the amount of Council Tax Benefit they have been awarded. The time taken to write the memo is comparable to the time that would be taken to update the record directly. It is proposed to train Benefits staff to undertake this (relatively simple) update themselves, taking out this unnecessary process step and saving 4.2 FTE of work in Revenues. The As Is and To Be processes are shown in Figure 8 below.

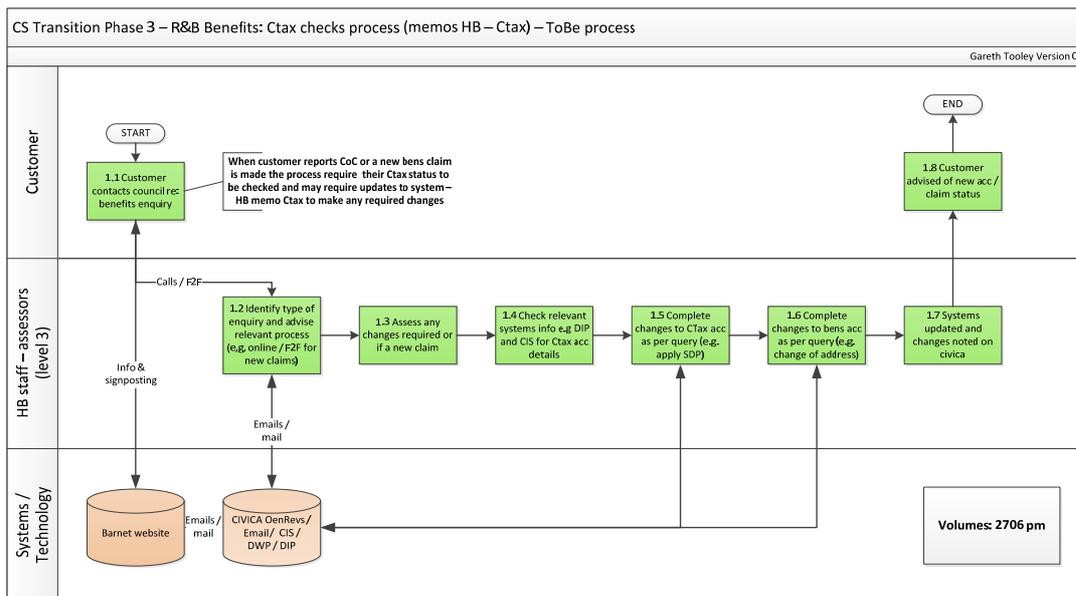
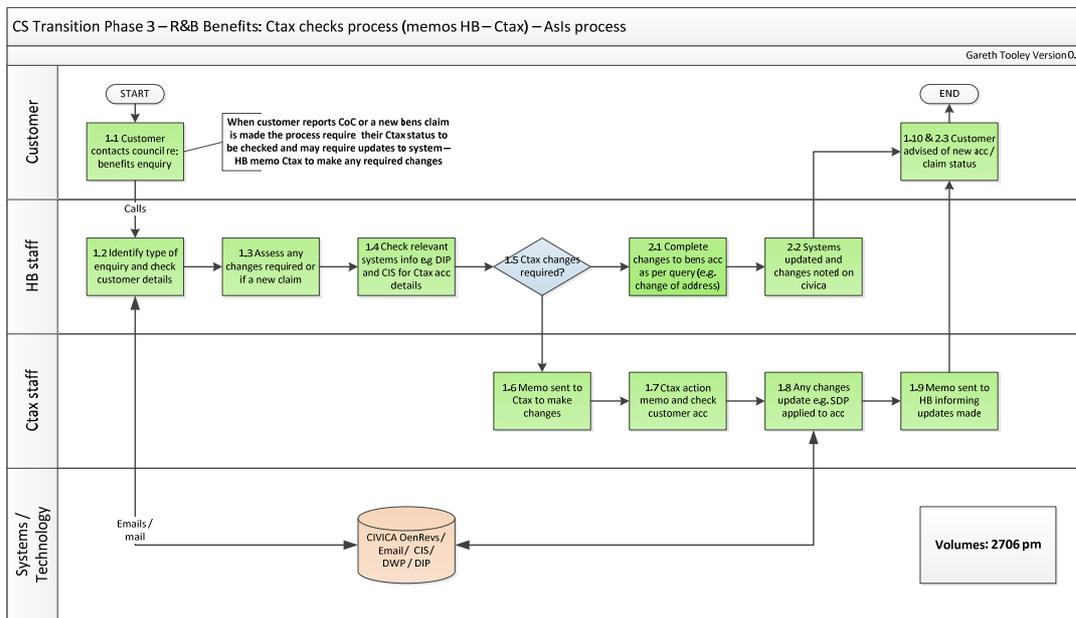


Figure 8: As Is and To Be processes for updating Ctax records following award of Ctax benefit

Other business processes in the service will remain substantially as at present, with the main difference being that L0, L1 and L2 activities will be undertaken by the Contact Centre rather than the Revs & Bens service – process maps are shown in Appendix 3.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

The future process design is constrained by a range of legislation and guidance, the principal items being:

- The rules for eligibility for Housing and Council Tax benefits are laid down in the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 and the Social Security Administration Act 1992. The main regulations governing Benefits are the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006, SI 2006 No 213, the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for pension credit) Regulations 2006, SI 2006 No 214, the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 SI 2006 No 215, and the Council Tax Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for pension credit) Regulations 2006 Si 2006 No 216
- The primary legislation governing Council Tax is the Local Government Finance Act 1992, supported by secondary legislation in the form of numerous Statutory Instruments, the main one being The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992.
- The primary legislation governing non-domestic rates (NNDR) is the Local Government Finance Act 1988, supported by secondary legislation in the form of numerous Statutory Instruments, the main one being The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989.
- Regulations for both Revenues and Benefits are frequently changed by central government, and these may impact on process design

Cross-Project Interdependencies

This project is closely linked with the Contact Centre Project as described above.

5.4 Organisation

Current Organisation Structure

An overview of the current Organisation Structure for Revenues and Benefits was provided in Section 3.4 and a breakdown of this structure showing spans of control is shown in Figure 9 below. This structure has the following features:

- 4 levels of management from Head of Revenues to Revenues Officers, and 3 levels from the Head of Revenues and Benefits to Benefits Officers
- Average span of control at Team Manager: Officer level of 9.3 in Benefits operations but only 5.4 in Revenues operations
- Average span of control in Principal Officer/Area Manager:Team Manager level of 4.4 across both Revenues and Benefits
- Many specialist roles spread across the whole service rather than being concentrated in one team – for example, operational Team Managers spend up to one third of their time undertaking specialist tasks such as reviews and reporting (see Appendix 3), and a further up to 20% on operational matters

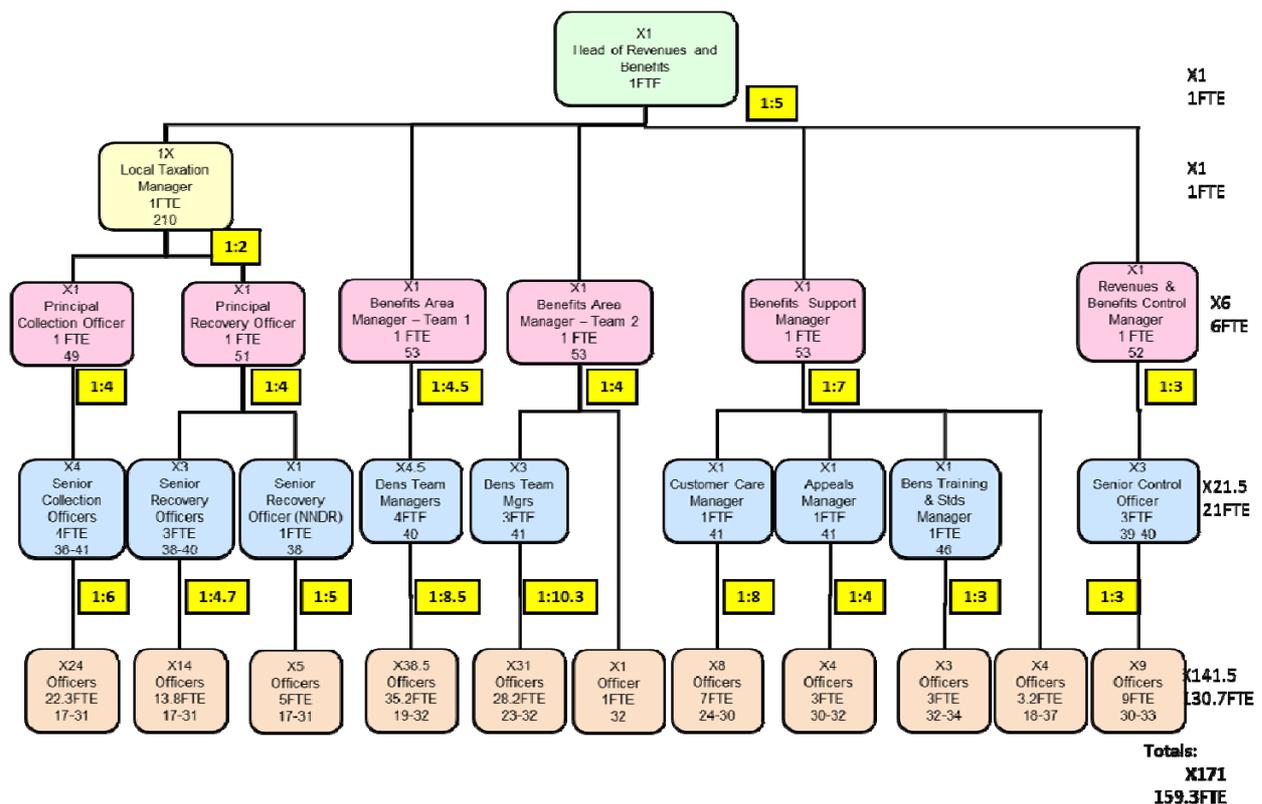


Figure 9: Current Structure showing spans of control

Future Organisation Structure

The future organisation structure in the Revenues and Benefits service has been developed by considering a number of factors, in line with best practice and experience of similar successful operations in other local authorities, in the order below:

- i. Impact of process changes on work volumes, ie change to new Benefits claims process, allowing Benefits officers to update CTax records, enabling citizens to view their account status on line
- ii. Transfer of L0/1/2 work into the Contact Centre
- iii. Reviewing need to undertake as many checks/audits and other non-value adding (from the customer point of view) process steps as at present
- iv. Centralising support functions and pushing down non-production work to the lowest practicable organisational level
- v. Consolidating project work into dedicated project teams within approved project budgets
- vi. Removing a layer of management in Revenues to provide no more than 3 levels between Head of Revs & Bens and Officers
- vii. Increasing spans of control to at least 10 at Team Manager level and at least 5 at higher levels

Process changes: The net impact of the process changes described in Section 4 is to reduce the number of FTE at officer level by 13.9 FTE. This is a clear reduction in the work that the service will need to undertake, achieved by taking out a substantial amount of failure demand.

Transfer of work to the Contact Centre: Analysis of the future workload shows that a significant portion of work in Benefits, and most work in Collections, is Level 1 or Level 2 and should therefore be transferred into the Contact Centre. The initial split of work is as follows:

Work initiated by:	Revenues	Benefits	Total
Calls FTE	7.5	7.8	15.3
Mail/email FTE	4.1	-	4.1
Face to Face FTE	-	3.0	3.0
Total FTE	11.6	10.8	22.4

Table 6: Transfer of work to Contact Centre

An initial transfer from Revenues and Benefits to the Contact Centre of 22.4 FTE at officer level is therefore proposed. At a span of control of around 1:10, a further 2-3 FTE at Team Manager level could be transferred, although this would be dependent on the requisite skills being available in the Revs & Bens Team Manager population.

Over time, it is to be expected that the Contact Centre would reduce the need for resources through economies of scale (as other services are migrated into the Contact Centre), improved call handling training and multiskilling. These savings have not yet been calculated - it is expected that a reduction of around 1-2 FTE could be achieved, but this has not been included in the savings included in this paper. This reduction could either be taken as a cash saving or could be used to increase capacity to improve service performance, eg increase in-year CTax collection rate.

Review of checks and audits: Analysis of staff time in Revenues Collections reveals that 43% of this time (equivalent to over 6FTE in Collections alone) is spent on checks and audits. The extent to which the checks and audits are:

- a) necessary,
- b) being performed at the most cost-effective organisational level, and
- c) providing value for money

is open to challenge, as is the way the necessary checks are handled – many of these should be automatically generated by the system. Civica has an existing application, PQMA, which may facilitate this process and this will be investigated in the implementation phase of the project.

In line with the 'right first time' approach adopted elsewhere in this document, it is recommended that staff should be trained in the skills required to undertake their job and should be expected to achieve a high degree of accuracy in their work, thereby reducing the need for checking of work. This may involve a change in culture within the service. It is assumed that the work volume associated with checks and audits in Collections could be reduced by 10% by challenging the need for and/or frequency of such checks. It is further assumed that the remaining 90% of checks could be performed more efficiently, either by automation or by undertaking them by lower-cost staff – a 10% efficiency gain is assumed. In total, this would reduce the workload in Collections by the equivalent of 1.2 FTE. It has been assumed that proportional savings can be made in Recoveries and Benefits resulting in a further saving of 3.4 FTE (4.6 FTE in total across the service, mainly at managerial levels). These savings support the increase in spans of control identified below.

Centralising support functions and pushing work down: The data collected from the service shows that managers spend some 10-20% of their time generating ad hoc reports and undertaking other data analysis that could be undertaken more efficiently either by automation or by specialist data analysis in a centralised support function. On the basis that efficiencies of 10% could be made by centralising such activities (currently undertaken by Team Managers and above), some 4 FTE of management resource could be released, to be substituted by 4 FTE of lower-cost specialist resource in a centralised support function.

Project work: In recent years a substantial amount of project work has been undertaken within the service by Revenues and Benefits staff as part of their day-to-day roles. In future, project work will be undertaken within the Corporate Programme Management framework with dedicated resources (from both within and outside the service) for the project duration, funded from an approved project budget. Resources from within the service will be seconded into the project team and backfilled if necessary with temporary staff.

Restructuring management layers: At present there are 4 layers of management between the Head of Revenues and Benefits and Officers in Revenues, but only 3 layers in Benefits. It is difficult to justify the extra layer of management in Revenues, particularly since the number of staff in Benefits is more than double that in Revenues. It is therefore proposed to remove one management layer in Revenues.

Increasing spans of control: Starting with the number of officers remaining after all the factors above have been addressed, and applying spans of control of 1:10 at Team Manager: Officer level and 1:5 at higher levels, results in a reduction in management of 11 FTE in Revs & Bens, offset by an increase at Team Manager level of 2 FTE in the Contact Centre, leaving a net reduction of 9 FTE.

The expected FTE changes in the Revenues and Benefits structure from these factors are summarised in the table below:

Role	Current Structure FTE	Process changes FTE	Centralise support functions FTE	Review Mgt workload FTE	Senior Management Restructure FTE	Future Structure FTE	Transfers to Contact Centre FTE	Residual service structure
Officers - Operations	110.8	-13.1				97.7	-22.4	75.3
Officers - Support	19.2		4			23.2		23.2
Team Managers	21			-5		16	-2	14
Senior Mangers	7				-3	4		4
Total	158	-13.1	4	-5	-3	140.9	-24.4	116.5

Table 7: Changes in FTE in Revenues and Benefits structure

The resulting structure is shown in Figure 10, which maintains a single structure covering both Revenues and Benefits, in order to exploit further synergies and economies of scale. This structure has also been designed around the principles that a NSCSO provider is likely to implement – in particular in the centralisation of support functions and the spans of control used. The FTE equivalent of officer- and team manager-level work transferred to the contact centre is illustrated in Figure 11.

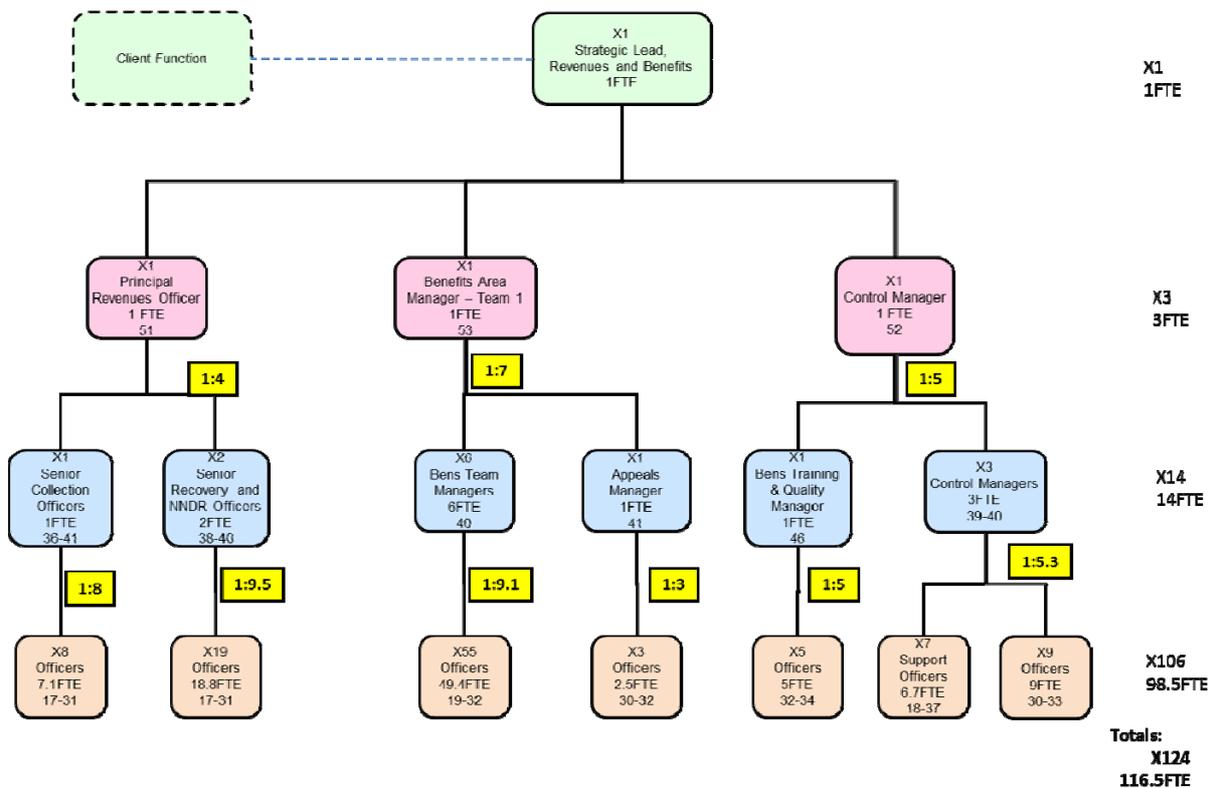


Figure 10: Proposed Future Structure – Revs & Bens only

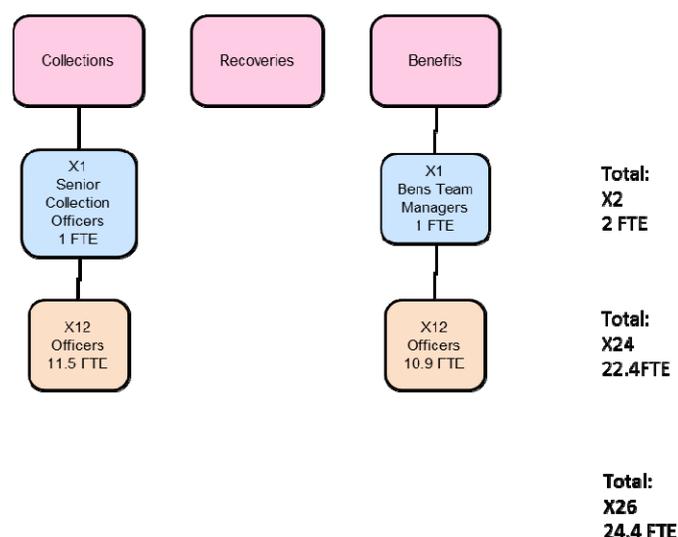


Figure 11: Roles and FTE proposed to be transferred to Contact Centre

5.5 Resource Profile

In summary, the changes described above result in the target FTE and cost changes shown in Table 8 below. The identified savings are equivalent to an annualised saving in the region of £500,000 – further details will be provided in the business case.

Role	Current Structure	Future Revs & Bens	Future Contact Centre	Saving
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Head of Revs & Bens	0	1	0	-1
Head of Service	1	0	0	1
Principal Officer/Area Manager	6	3	0	3
Senior Officer/Team Manager	21	14	2	5
Officer	130	98.5	22.4	9.1
Total	158	116.5	24.4	17.1

Table 8: Total changes in FTE

It is not expected that these innovations will require many changes in the current job descriptions, but if any are found necessary they will be developed during the implementation phase through the Council's Managing Organisational Change policy.

A detailed breakdown of staff numbers, roles and grades is provided in Appendix 3.

Culture

The future organisational culture of the Revenues and Benefits service will be characterised by:

- Positive, 'can do' approach
- Close liaison and working with the Contact Centre:
 - No 'throw it over the wall' attitudes
 - No-blame culture
 - Do the best thing for the customer
- Sharing of resources between Revenues and Benefits, and within teams within Revenues or Benefits
- Standardisation of procedures across the service
- Getting it right first time:
 - Staff trained and trusted to do the job
 - Reduce checking and audit to the minimum
 - Push work down to those who are best able to do it
 - Managers manage, not do the 'difficult' cases
- Customer perspective – putting ourselves in the shoes of the customer and striving to improve the customer experience
- Performance-orientated:
 - Measuring what matters to both the customer and the council
 - Assessing staff performance, behaviours, attitudes and styles
 - Making performance against these measures visible to all in the service
- Continuous improvement culture – improvements actively sought and progressed in a structured fashion
- Recognition and reward linked to individual and team performance
- Supportive environment for staff, coaching them to deliver their best
- Enabled by effective, fit for purpose systems and information

Development of this culture in the service will require a concerted and consistent management approach, which will be further developed during the implementation phase. Fundamental changes in management style and approach will be needed, and will be supported by the CST Programme's Change Manager. These changes will include:

- Increased support and training of staff to undertake their roles
- Inculcation of a 'right first time' culture in the service
- Developing and maintaining a constructive relationship with the Contact Centre
- Focus on managing staff and the flow of work in the service
- Reduction in administrative tasks
- Reduction in checks and audits

Homeworking

Homeworking was introduced into the Benefits service in 2005 as a means of providing a more flexible work environment for staff and the expectation that it would deliver savings from improved productivity and office space. However, in practice these benefits have not materialised. It is currently estimated that the current complement of 17 homeworkers in Benefits cost an additional £75K pa in additional management and infrastructure costs compared with office working, with no compensating productivity or accommodation savings (see Appendix 6 for details). NB Revenues do not employ homeworkers.

In order to justify the continuation of homeworking in Benefits a revision of the current arrangements will be required and will be developed in the context of the organisational changes described above.

Service Delivery Vehicles

At present the only part of the service that is externalised is the provision of enabling IT from Civica – this is a hosted service covering Civica itself (both Revs and Bens) plus scanning and indexing. The Council has purchased licences via Civica for the IEG4 New Claim e-form, although it has not been implemented and further hosting charges will apply when it is implemented. The current service costs £504K pa in hosting and licence maintenance fees under a 5-year contract that runs until 2015.

In the future operational design the IEG4 New Claim form will be fully implemented, incurring additional hosting and support costs of £25Kpa. The volume of scanning will reduce by approximately 50% - while there is not explicit provision in the contract for securing a reduction in Civica's rate we will seek to offset the additional £25K against a notional credit for the reduction in scanning and indexing.

5.6 Management Controls

Performance Management

The Revenues and Benefits performance management system will be based on the Balanced Scorecard approach shown in Figure 13 below. This will support a change to a more performance-driven culture, focusing on what matters to both the customer and the council. The balanced scorecard will include the following types of measure:

- Financial, to ensure that the service delivers value for money and as a minimum keeps within its budget
- Customer, to ensure that the service delivers what its customers need
- Internal processes, to ensure that the service is operating efficiently and effectively
- Learning and Growth, to ensure that the service learns from experience and uses this learning to improve

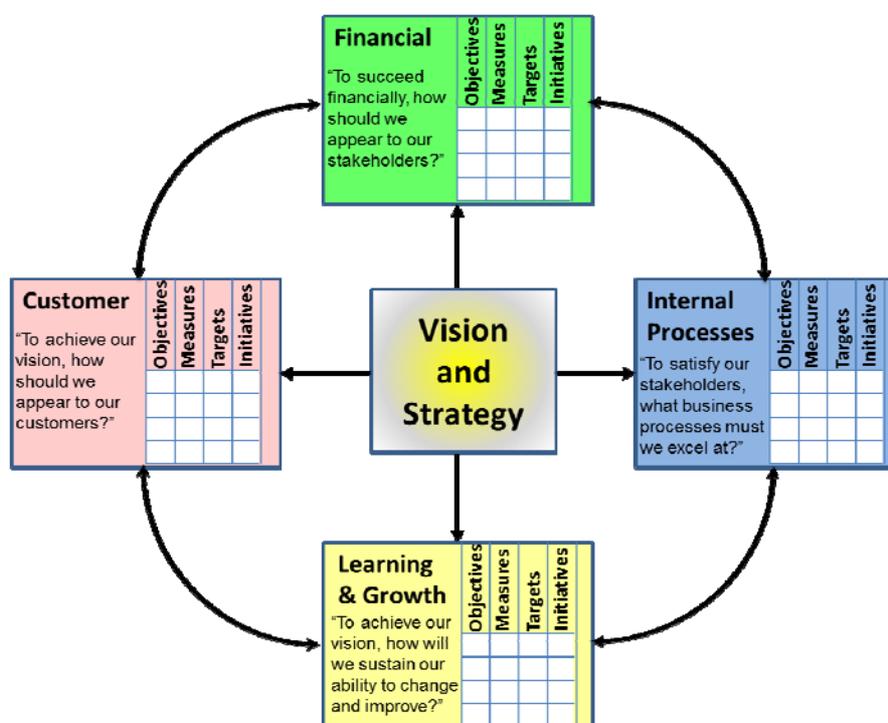


Figure 12: Balanced Scorecard

Further details are given below.

Key Financial measures will include factors such as:

- Spend against budget
- CTax in-year collection rate and level after 4 years
- NNDR in-year collection rate and level after 4 years
- CTax arrears
- NNDR arrears
- Collection of off-benefit overpayment debt
- Percentage of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit spend recouped via subsidy claim

Key Customer measures will include:

- Customer satisfaction
- Analysis of the reasons for customer contact, enabling an understanding of the causes of avoidable contact
- Average time from application to payment for new claims
- Average time to process CoC
- % of new claims/CoCs taking more than 20/10 days
- % calls answered within 20 sec
- Number of customer complaints pa
- Channel shift towards lower-cost access channels

Key Learning and Growth measures will include:

- Quality interventions derived through customer insight
- Number of new ideas suggested pa
- Improvements implemented pa
- Position in benchmarking tables

Key Internal Process measures will include:

- SLA performance between Revs & Bens and Contact Centre
- End-to-end process performance
- Accuracy of benefits assessments
- Accuracy and speed of processing – CTax
- Accuracy and speed of processing - NNDR
- Number of appeals
- Cost per new claim
- Cost per Change in Circumstance
- Staff performance, behaviours, attitudes and styles

These performance statistics will be generated at least monthly, and in many cases weekly, and will be made visible to all in the service on noticeboards and on the intranet.

In addition, the update of systems and the generation of service-specific reports and returns will continue as required by central government and Council management. These include:

- System updates,
- Discount and exemption reviews
- Subsidy claim
- Government returns on recovery rates etc

Generation of management reports will be undertaken by a central team within Revenues and Benefits, with the potential to merge in time with the similar team in the Contact Centre. Reporting will be standardised and automated as much as possible – close liaison between the central team and operations management will be needed to ensure that the latter's needs are met.

Business Rules

The following new business rules or management principles will be introduced in the future state:

- Work will be pushed down to the lowest level capable of undertaking it
- Quality will be built into the way staff work: checking of work by supervisors will be kept to a minimum, consistent with policy guidelines, improvement targets and training/development needs

5.7 Technology & Information

Background

In early 2011 Revenues and Benefits implemented Civica's OpenRevenues software. This product has been adopted by over 60 local authorities which range across all types and sizes of authority. It combines a single "core" database and a flexible, modular structure which provides a fully integrated suite for all aspects of council tax, non-domestic rates, housing and council tax benefits and sundry debtors. It has the following capabilities, not all of which have been fully implemented in Barnet:

- Administration of council tax, non-domestic rates and benefits
- Workflow and document management
- Fraud management – local and corporate
- Performance management analysis (OpenVision)
- On-line account viewing capability (OpenAccess – to be partially implemented in March 2012 as part of the Barnet web site upgrade)
- On-line forms capability (not implemented, although IEG4 on-line new benefit claim form licences have been purchased)
- Internet portal facilities for both internal and external users (not implemented)

The implementation status of the Civica modules purchased by Barnet is shown in Appendix 7.

The implementation timescale for OpenRevenues was necessarily short, being necessitated by the discontinuation at short notice of support for the Council's previous system. This resulted in significant problems being experienced in the cutover from the old to the new system, most of which have now been resolved on the Benefits side but some of which remain in Revenues. It is however expected (and assumed) that the majority of outstanding issues will be fully resolved across the whole service by the time that this Future Operational Design is implemented.

OpenAccess has extensive web forms capability, but this has not been included within the scope of this project since in order to access this application a citizen would have to apply to the Council for an account and be sent logon and password details through the post. This cumbersome process is likely to represent a significant barrier to migration to the web channel. The solution would be to implement a Citizen Portal across the whole Council, via which citizens could set up their own account (with appropriate automatic validation in real time) and be able then to access a range of council services on line. It has been assumed that the cost and timescales for implementing a citizen portal are outside the scope of this project and indeed of this phase of the Customer Services Transformation programme, and the OpenAccess option has therefore not been pursued.

Given the short period of time available before the outsourcing partner takes over operations, no major software procurement has been assumed in the future operational design. However, additional hosting and support costs for IEG4 of £25K pa will be incurred.

Solutions

The following existing systems and technology will be used to support the future operational design

Technology name and Supplier	Technology function	Specific function in future design
OpenRevenues – hosted service from Civica under 5 year contract from Jan 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of council tax, non-domestic rates and benefits Workflow and document management (scanning & indexing) 	Ongoing support of main Revenues and Benefits production processes
OpenVision – Civica (as above)	Reporting	Development of enhanced reports to support balanced scorecard approach
OpenAccess – Civica (as above)	Access by citizens to view account status	Provide access by citizens, subject to setup of online account and subsequent authentication at logon, to view CTax and Benefits account status
eClaim form and on-line benefit calculator - IEG4, provided via Civica under hosted service contract	On-line Housing and Council Tax Benefits application form and quick calculator – integrated with Civica OpenRevenues system	Key enablers of future F2F new claim process – benefits calculator will enable non-qualifiers to be filtered out and on-line form will enable applicant's details to be entered directly into the Civica system, removing the need for re-keying from a paper form
IT infrastructure – Barnet IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data network connecting operational sites in Barnet to external service providers via appropriate firewalls etc PCs/Thin clients used by officers and managers in the service 	<p>Ongoing support of main Revenues and Benefits production processes. A number of issues exist with the current infrastructure regarding logon times and reliability. These need to be resolved in the future business model (see requirements below).</p> <p>In addition, the 'right first time' new claims process will require F2F presence at at least one additional site within the borough (probably Barnet House), and this will need to have adequate network connectivity and scanning capability</p>
Scanning/ photocopying devices	Digital imaging of paper documents	Enhanced scanning capability and capacity will be needed at F2F locations to support the new 'right first time' new claims process – see requirements below

Table 9: Future Systems

Requirements

Appendix 8 specifies the requirements for systems and technology that have not already been procured by the Revenues and Benefits service. These mainly relate to the new 'right first time' new claims process in Benefits, although there are some enhancements to the existing IT infrastructure that will benefit the entire service. In summary, the business requirements are:

- Ability for new benefits claimants to quickly ascertain their eligibility for Housing and/or Council Tax benefit and to complete an application form on line, either in their own house or in a Council F2F facility. It is proposed to achieve this through the implementation of the IEG4 eClaim form and on-line benefit calculator – licences for these have already been purchased but the capability has not been implemented
- Improved network reliability and log-on times for access to the Civica system
- Ability to scan documents directly into the Civica system at various locations within the borough of Barnet
- Appointment booking system, accessible by agents in both the Contact Centre and Face to Face facilities, to enable claimants to book appointments with benefits assessors (many proprietary on-line hosted systems available at low cost)

Information

The provisions for information and information management required in the future operational model are substantially the same as those required in the current model. Civica OpenRevenues is the primary database for all Revenues and Benefits transactions and will continue to be so in future. It therefore follows that staff dealing with Revenues and Benefits matters in the Contact Centre will need access (read only as a minimum) to OpenRevenues to be able to handle customer transactions.

Support

Support arrangements for the systems and technology currently used in the service are already in place and will continue in place in future. Changes to the current arrangements will include:

- The volume of scanning and indexing is expected to reduce substantially under the new F2F claims process, since there will no longer be any need to scan a 20-page form for each application. The existing contract, which runs up to 2015, encompasses a scanning and indexing service and efforts will need to be made to negotiate a discount
- The performance of the current end to end service has been poor due to the limitations of the thin clients in use - users are unable to run more than 2 applications, experience problems printing and have experienced delays in logging on. These will need to be upgraded with additional memory, but at present the problems appear to be out of focus for Barnet IS.
- Whilst a disaster recovery plan exists for Civica OpenRevenues and the hosting solution, no DR exists for the LBB provision of network or desktop PCs/Thin Clients. No connection to Manchester or Leeds data centres can be made without coming through LBB servers first. These arrangements will need to be reviewed to ensure a robust ICT infrastructure that meets the needs of both the back office service and the new contact centre environment.

5.8 Infrastructure

Overview

The 'right first time' Benefits new claims process will require changes to the existing face-to-face facility in Burnt Oak Library and will require the creation of a new full-time face to face facility in the east of the borough. The most likely location for the latter is Barnet House, since it already has the necessary network connections and is easy to reach by public transport. On the downside, it is in need of refurbishment, the multi-floor layout is not ideal and the current customer reception is fairly heavily used by other services. Other potential options for the eastern location are available, but have shortcomings compared with Barnet House.

At each location the requirements are as follows:

- Front desk staffed by Customer Service advisor(s) who will check claimants' documents and support them in accessing the on-line claim form (see next bullet)
- A bank of at least 6 and preferably 8 desks, equipped with terminals/PCs that are connected via the Barnet network and the internet to the IEG4 e-claims form. These will be used by claimants to complete a 'quick assessment' form, and if this indicates that they may qualify for benefit they will use the same terminal to complete the full benefits claim form
- A bank of at least 6 and preferably 8 stations for use by assessors, equipped with network-connected PCs/terminals that they will use to access a range of resources including Civica. They will also need telephones
- 2 low-capacity scanners, connected to the Barnet network and the internet, for use by assessors in scanning evidence submitted by claimants (2 needed in case one breaks down)
- Waiting area with seating capacity for at least 12 benefits claimants

An **indicative** layout of the face to face facility is shown in Figure 14 below. Further work will need to be undertaken to complete the optimum design.

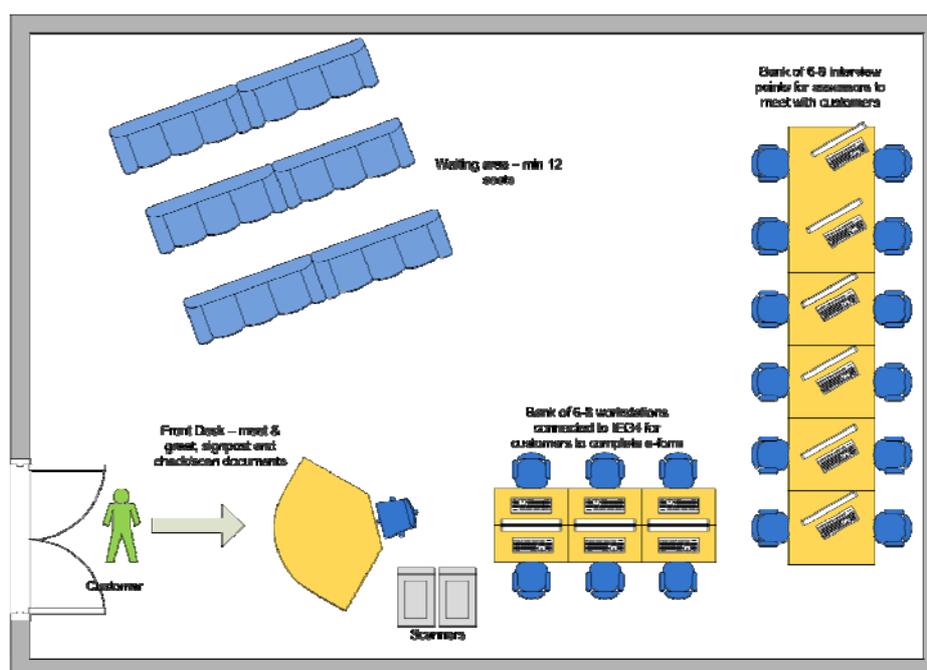


Figure 14: Indicative layout of new Face to Face facilities, showing key features required to support the 'Right First Time' new claims process

6 Changes to the Current State

6.1 Changes to be implemented

Customer experience:

In the short- to medium-term the principal changes that the customer will experience from the current state are as follows:

- Introduction of a more sophisticated IVR at the front end of telephone contacts
- Handling of routine/straightforward calls by staff in the contact centre rather than in the service
- Complete revision to process for applying for benefits – face to face only, no paper forms
- Ability to view Revenues and Benefits account status on line

Process:

- 'Right first time' new claims process for Benefits
- Benefits staff updating Revenues records when CTax benefit approved
- IVR and routing of calls to L1/2 (Contact Centre) and L3 (Back Office)

Organisation:

In summary, the principal changes from the current to the future structures are:

- Reduction in number of FTE at Officer level enabled by:
 - Reduction in work to be undertaken as a result of the introduction of the 'right first time' Benefits new claims process – net reduction of 8.7 FTE officers in Benefits
 - Allowing Benefits Officers to update CTax records when processing CTax Benefit claims – reduction of 4.2 FTE officers in Revenues
 - Improved call handling through better training, in particular to efficiently and effectively close down long calls (1FTE total, split equally between Revenues and Benefits)
 - Transfer of L0/1/2 contacts into the Contact Centre – reduction of 11.6 FTE officers in Revenues and 14.9 FTE officers in Benefits
- Rationalisation and reinforcement of control and support functions, together with pushing routine tasks currently performed by managers down to lower organisational levels – net reduction of 4 FTE in management roles offset by an increase at officer level in support functions of 3.8 FTE
- Increase in managerial spans of control:
 - In operational areas to around 1:10 at Team Manager: Officer level
 - In support areas to 1:5 at Team Manager: Officer level
 - At Team Manager level and above to at least 1:5
 – net reduction of 8 FTE
- Managerial culture change, to focus on the exercise of judgement, managing the flow of work and managing staff performance - pushing administrative work down the structure
- Phasing out or radical revision of the existing homeworking arrangements

Management Controls:

The approach proposed in this area represents a fundamental change in approach from the current state, in that the generation of management reports and other specialist data will be

performed centrally within Revs & Bens rather than being dispersed across a range of managers. This will enable:

- Managers to concentrate on the management of staff and the flow of work rather than being distracted by the task of generating reports and data
- Reporting and data analysis to be standardised and undertaken by dedicated, specialised resources who will be skilled in the most efficient and effective techniques
- Work to be pushed down to the lowest organisational level possible

This implies that work will migrate from operational areas to the central team, enabling (through economies of scale) a small net reduction in the number of staff involved in these processes and changes in the level at which they operate. Overall it is expected that all the specialist work currently undertaken by Team Managers (33% of their current workload) will be undertaken by an additional 3 FTE officer-level staff the new Support Team. This will support an increase in spans of control at Team Manager: Officer level from the current 5-10 to at least 10 across the board.

Systems and Technology:

The following changes will be made in this area:

- Implementation of IEG4 eClaims and quick assessment forms enabling the re-engineering of the new claims process
- Implementation of OpenAccess for on-line viewing of Revenues and Benefits account status
- Improved network reliability and speed of login
- Connection of compatible scanners in F2F facilities to directly import scanned images to OpenRevenues, removing the need to copy and post/courier documents to Northampton
- Appointment booking system for new benefits claimants, accessible by contact centre agents, face to face staff and on-line
- Daily payment runs

Infrastructure:

The following changes will be made in this area:

- Changes to layout in Burnt Oak to provide 6-8 customer workstations and 6-8 customer interview points (potentially use existing interview rooms and cashiers office to provide additional interview space), and additional waiting space
- Setup of equivalent infrastructure in Barnet House (or similar location)
- Provision of scanning machines at both locations

The key outcomes expected from the implementation of this project are summarised in Table 10 below, which shows the impact of change on both the customer and the service

Change	Outcome for Customer	Outcome for Service
Right first time Benefits process	Substantial reduction in time between submission of claim and payment of benefit, from average of 18 days to, in most cases, 24 hours Ability to complete claim form on line	Reduction in work to be undertaken through elimination of much failure activity – reduction of 10 FTE at officer level, with and saving of over £300K pa Improved relationship with customers through face to face contact Relocation of some benefits assessors from NLBP to Burnt Oak/Barnet House
Transfer of work to Contact Centre	Improved call response times Improved routing of calls to person best able to deal with them More professional call handling	Freed up to deal with more complex cases
On-line view of account status	Ability to view all account transactions and download – particular benefit for landlords with multiple properties	Small reduction in transaction volumes
Rationalisation of management structure		Substantial reduction in staffing levels – 8 FTE and £400K pa Management freed up to undertake management tasks rather than complex administrative tasks
Improved reporting	Better tailoring of the service provided to customer needs	Improved flow of work through the process Increased motivation to improve service performance

Table 10: Impact of changes on customer and service

6.2 Change Options Ruled Out

There is a limited capacity to deal with change in both the service and the project team. Opportunities have therefore been prioritised on the basis of maximising the level of savings and performance improvement prior to the take-on of the service by the selected NSCSO partner. The following options for change have therefore been considered but ruled out for implementation in the short term, since they will not pay back in less than 12 months.

However, they do show a positive business case if a longer timescale is considered and should be considered for incorporation in the competitive dialogue process for the NSCSO.

- **Change in Circs on-line form.** Civica has quoted £103,500 capital plus £20,700pa, plus implementation costs estimated at £20K. Potential savings of up to £85K pa (assuming 50% take-up, achieved over 4 years), so could pay back after 3 years
- **Risk-based verification.** Civica has quoted £9,500 capital plus further £62,000pa for RBV on both new claims and CiCs. Savings potential reduced since F2F process will make it easier for claimants to bring in the right documents first time round. For this reason, potential savings may be limited to £15K pa, resulting in a payback period of 5 years
- **OpenAccess Web Forms:** OpenAccess has extensive web form functionality, tailored specifically for Revenues and Benefits services and integrated directly with OpenRevenues. However, in order for the citizen to access this at present it is necessary to apply for an account and wait for account details to be sent. It is unlikely that many citizens will voluntarily go through this process when a number of other access channels are available for them, and take-up is therefore likely to be very low. OpenAccess web forms will be incorporated in any future implementation of a council-wide Citizen Portal through which citizens can access a range of services, but this is not expected to be feasible before the NSCSO partner is in place.

Appendix 1: Current Customer Profiles and Service Statistics

Revenues:

Revenues customers can be divided between:

- All domestic householders living or owning a property within the borough of Barnet – these are liable for Council Tax at a level in one of a number of bands determined by the size and value of their property
- All businesses occupying property within the borough – liable for business rates based on the rateable value of the property

As such they are geographically dispersed across the whole borough and demographically spread across all social strata.

Landlords are a further important customer segment with particular needs relating to the number of properties that they may own and the number of tenants occupying the properties – although the tenant is liable for Council Tax the landlord is liable during voids (periods when the property is not let to a tenant).

Key service statistics are given in the tables below:

Council Tax

Dwellings on Council Tax List as at 12/09/11	
Band A	2,286
Band B	9,452
Band C	27,123
Band D	31,875
Band E	29,807
Band F	18,945
Band G	15,619
Band H	3,960
Total	139,067

Collection Statistics	
Collection Rate 2007/8 (in-year)	95.7%
Collection Rate 2008/9 (in-year)	96.3%
Collection Rate 2009/10 (in-year)	96.3%
Collection Rate 2010 /11 (in-year)	95.6%
Arrears as at 31/3/011	£7.6 million
Net Collectable Debit 2010/11	£203 million

Council Tax Workload Measures	Numbers (approx.) per annum
Annual bills	139,000
Revised (change of occupation, benefits etc.) and copy bills	225,000
Reminders & Final Notices	75,000
Summons	18,000
Liability Orders	15,000
14-day letters & request for financial info.	13,000
Bailiff Instructions	9,000
Attachment Of Earnings orders	900
Deductions from Income Support	1,800
Special (liability order) arrangements	1,300
Charging orders	40
Bankruptcies initiated	20
Bankruptcy orders made	3
Committal hearings	200
Number of single person discount (SPD) cases	45,300
Other discounts	4,500
Number of exempt properties as at 31/8/11	3,500
Empty properties as at 31/8/11	2,400
Disability reductions as at 31/08/11	580
Items of Correspondence pa & email	90,000
Phone calls	126,000
Direct Debit Cases	73,000
Percentage paying by Direct Debit as at 31/08/11	64%
Refunds	12,000
Formal Complaints	48

National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates)

General Statistics	
Total Rateable Value (as at 14/09/11)	£286,822,858
Number of properties (as at 14/09/11)	8,221
Exempt properties	225
Small Business Rates cases	1400
Charity & Discretionary relief cases	580
Part occupied relief cases	1

NNDR Workload Measures	Numbers (approx.) per annum
Annual bills	8,000
Revised (occupation or rateable value changes, etc.) and copy bills	16,000
Reminder notices	6,000
Summons	1,600
Liability Orders obtained	1,300
LO letters	1,000
Bailiff Instructions	900
Special (liability order) arrangements	400
Committal hearings, Bankruptcies Initiated	0
Formal Complaints	7
Refunds	2,000
Interest Cases	154 in 2010/11
Items of correspondence pa (inc. emails)	7,000
Phone calls	14,000
Direct Debit Cases	3,500
Collection Rate 2007/8 (in-year)	98.1%
Collection Rate 2008/09 (in-year)	96.8%
Collection Rate 2009/10 (in-year)	96.3%
Collection Rate 2010 /11 (in-year)	94.5%
Arrears as at 31/03/11	£5.5 million
Net Collectable Debit 2010/11	£103 million (including BRS)

Benefits

Key service statistics are given in the tables below:

General Statistics	
Number of new claims per annum	18,000
Number of Changes of Circumstances pa	70,000
Benefits caseload	34,000
Benefits Subsidy claim 2010/11	£237M
Housing Benefit cases open	29,000
Council Tax Benefit cases open	28,000
Rent rebate cases open	8,000
Rent Allowance cases open	20,000

Benefits Performance Measures	Numbers (approx.) per annum
Average time to process a new claim	18 days
% new claims processed within 10 days	60%
Average time to process a Change of Circumstance	8 days
% of CoC's processed within 10 days	85%
Amount of HB overpayments collected pa	£2.7M
% of overpayments recovered within 12 months	63%
Number of HB visits to F2F facilities pa	35,000

Customer Demand

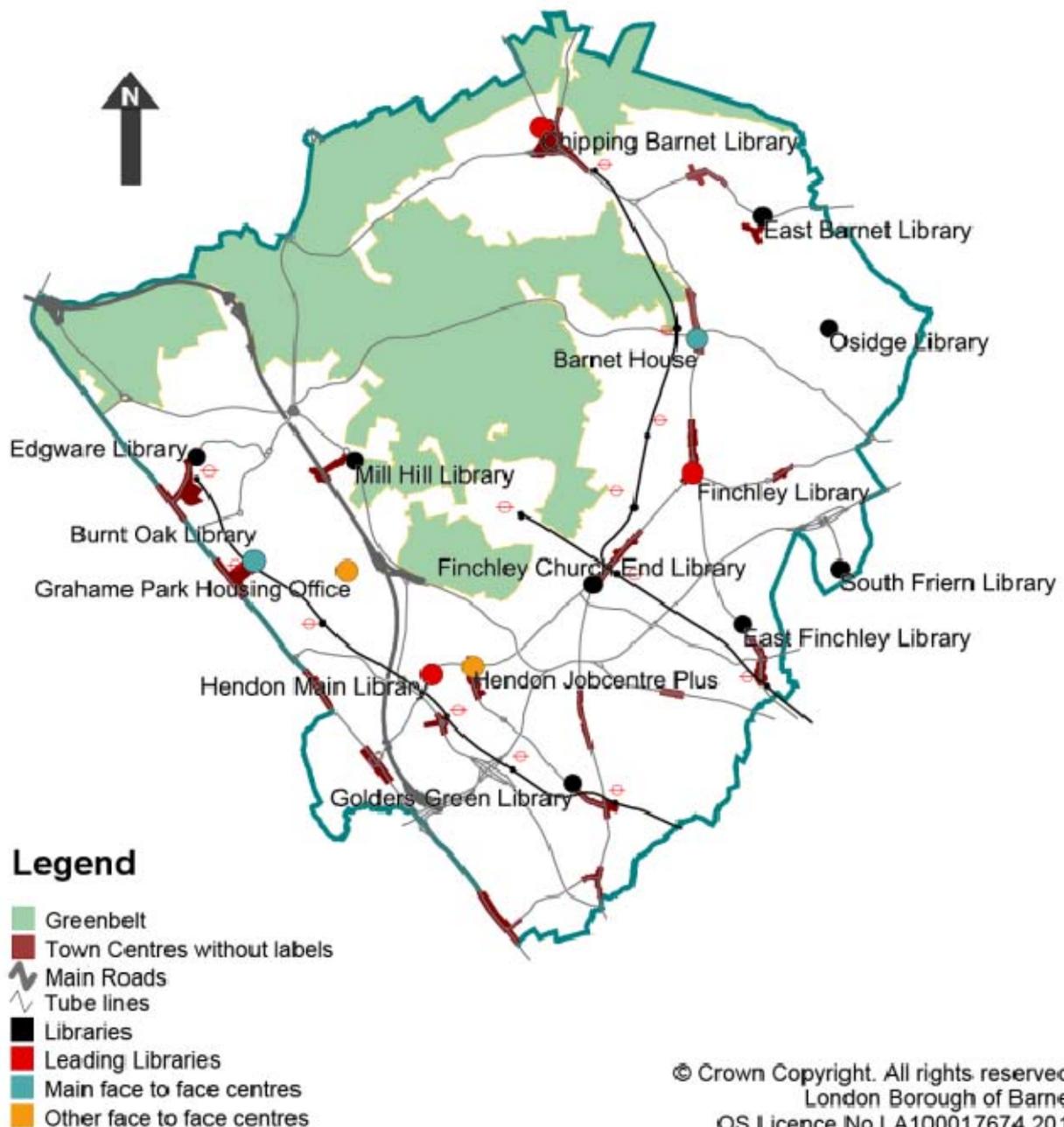
The requirements of the various customer segments are summarised in the table below:

Customer segment	Requirements	Preferred channel(s)	Service availability
Council Tax payers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy to pay Council Tax by cash, card, cheque, bank transfer, direct debit - CTax account status transparent, up to date and easily available - Ability to conduct transactions on line - Clear bills and payment schemes 	Web, smartphone, phone, face to face	Anywhere, 24/7
NNDR payers	As above	Web	Working hours Mon-Fri
Council Tax/NNDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility to pay arrears in line with what they can afford and by means of 	Mainly phone, but	Mon-Sat 9am - 9pm

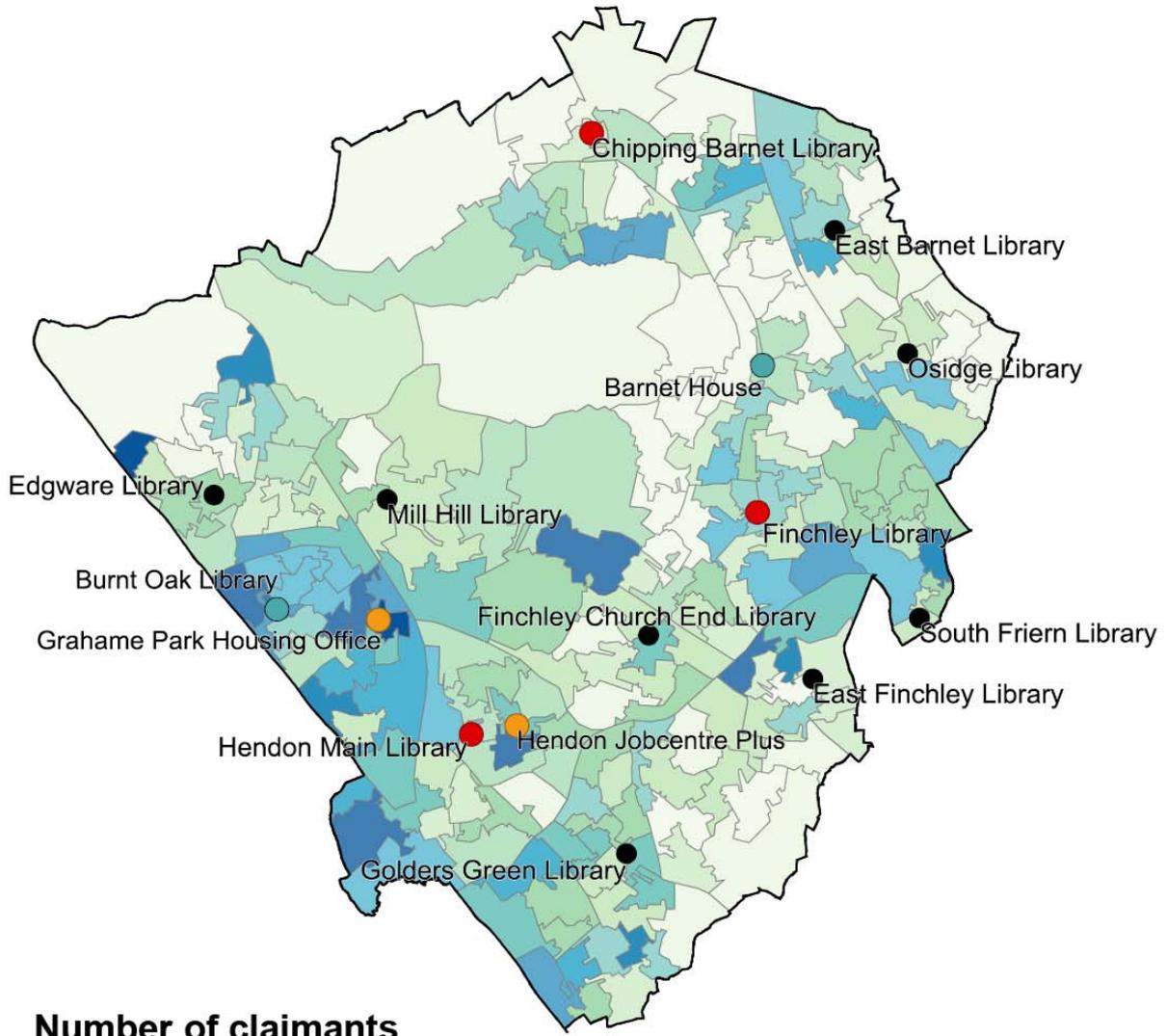
debtors	their own choosing - Clear, transparent and up to date account status - Opportunity to pay before bailiffs arrive	also face to face	
Benefits claimants	- Quick payment of benefit following submission of claim - Help/advice in benefits claim process and form - Prompt processing of CoC's	F2F, phone, web	Mon-Sat 9am – 6pm F2F locations easily accessed from the whole borough
Landlords – CTax and Benefits	- Single statement covering all owned properties of Council Tax payment status - Prompt responses to advice on changes in tenancies	Web	24/7

Appendix 2: Geographical distribution of Benefits claimants in Barnet

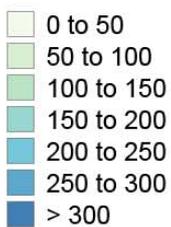
Location of face to face facilities and transport links



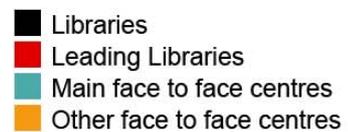
Distribution of all benefit claimants 2011



Number of claimants

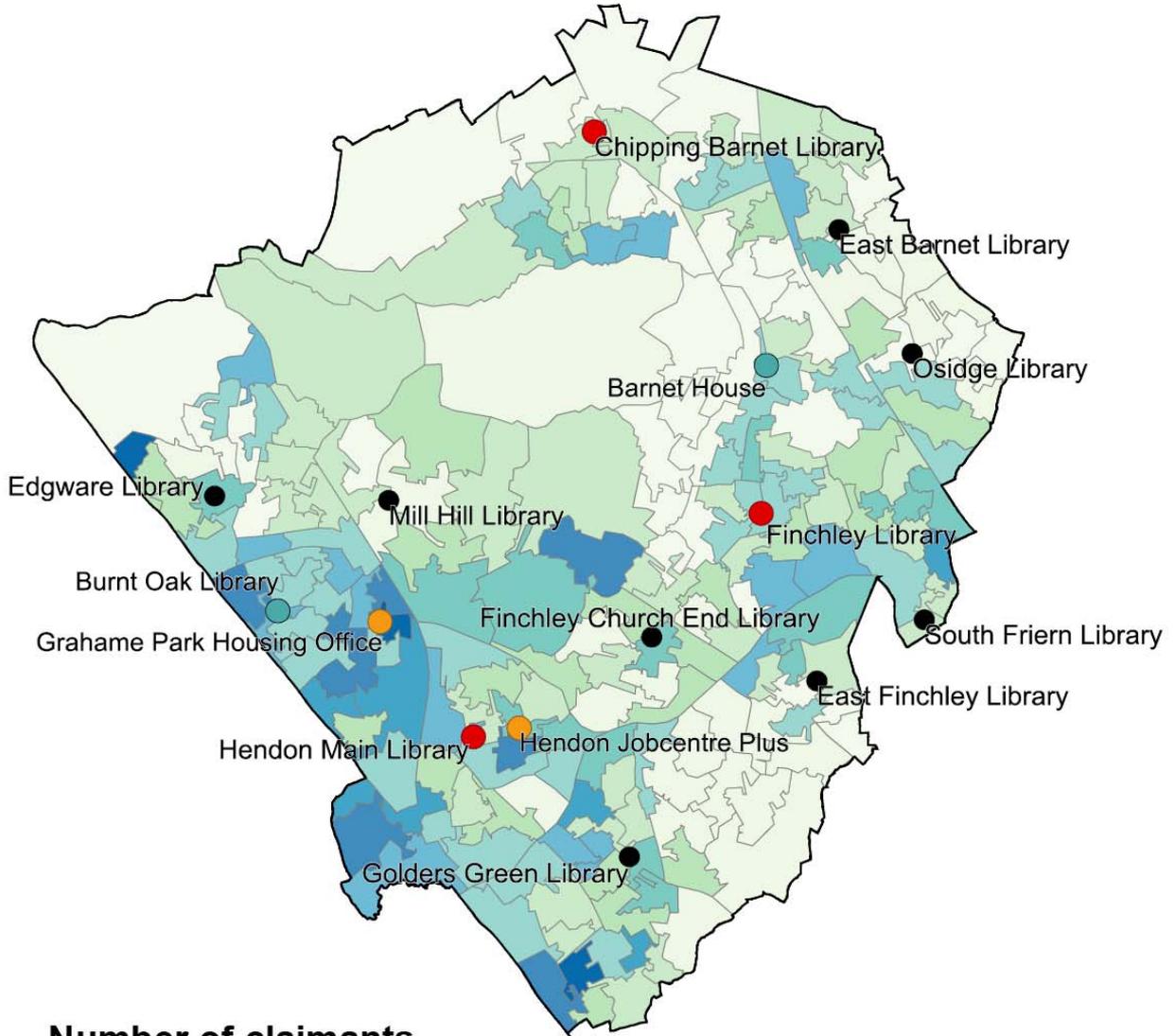


Legend

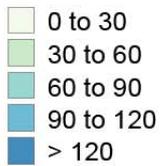


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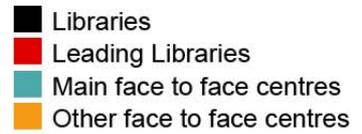
Distribution of standard housing benefit claims 2011



Number of claimants

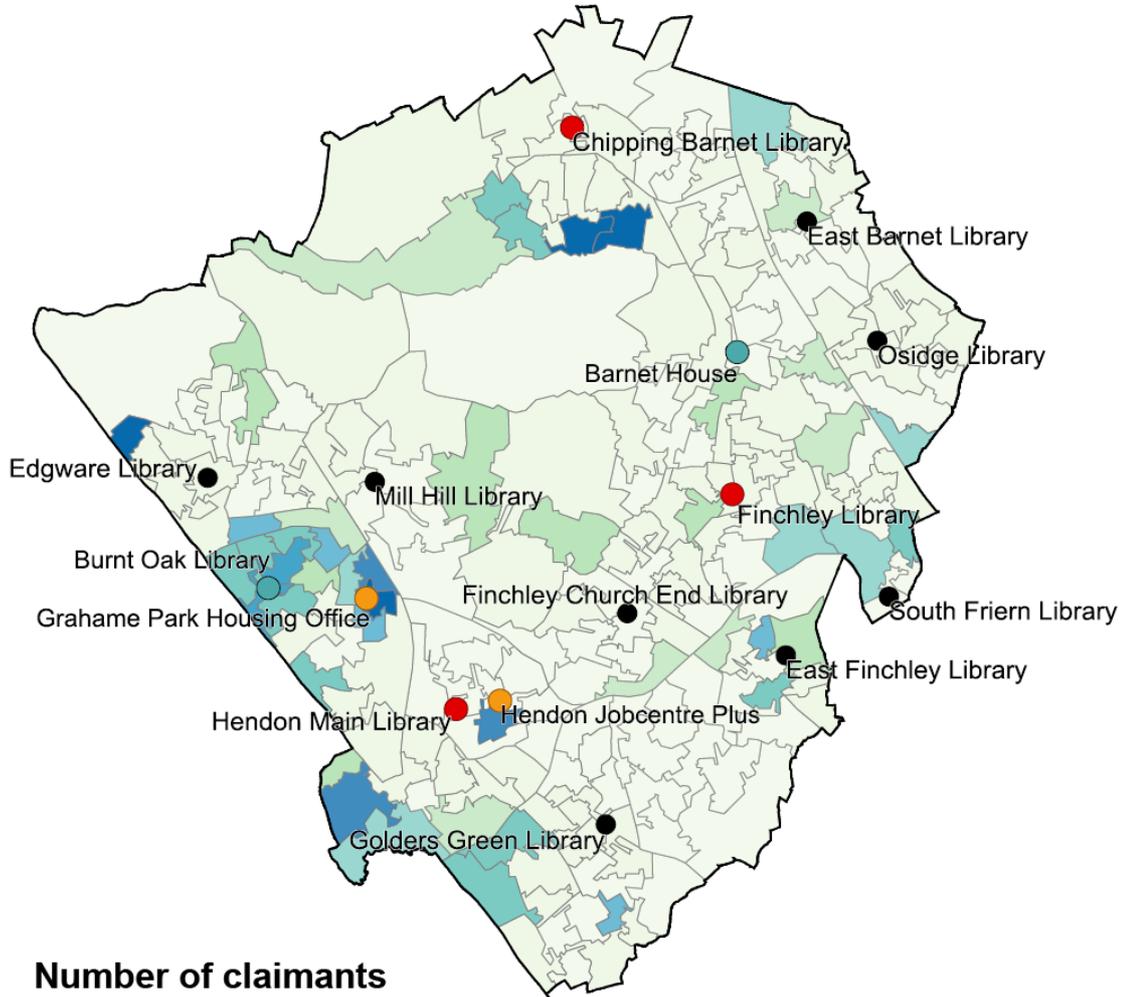


Legend



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Benefit claimants in council owned homes



Number of claimants

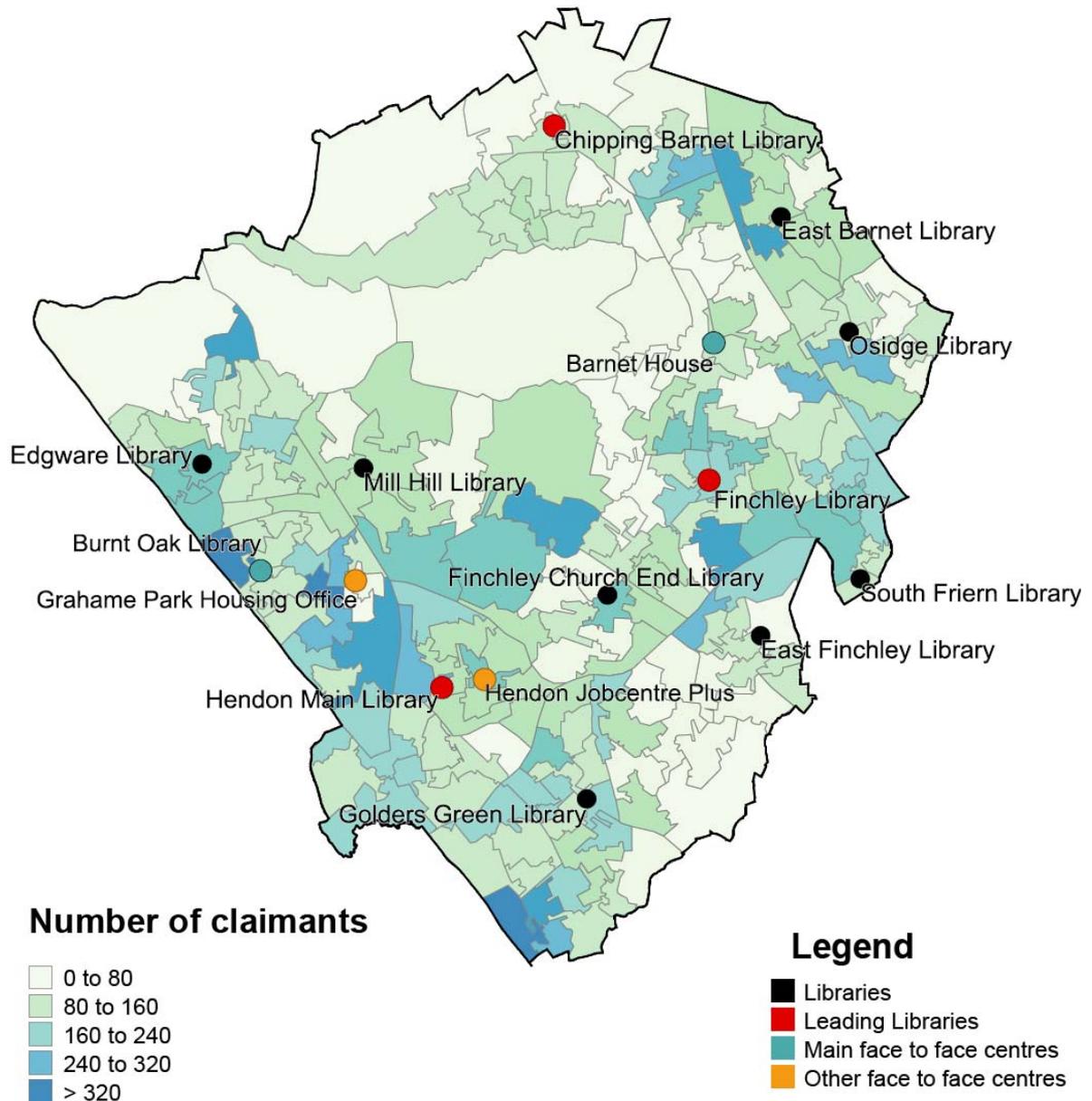
- 0 to 50
- 50 to 100
- 100 to 150
- 150 to 200
- > 200

Legend

- Libraries
- Leading Libraries
- Main face to face centres
- Other face to face centres

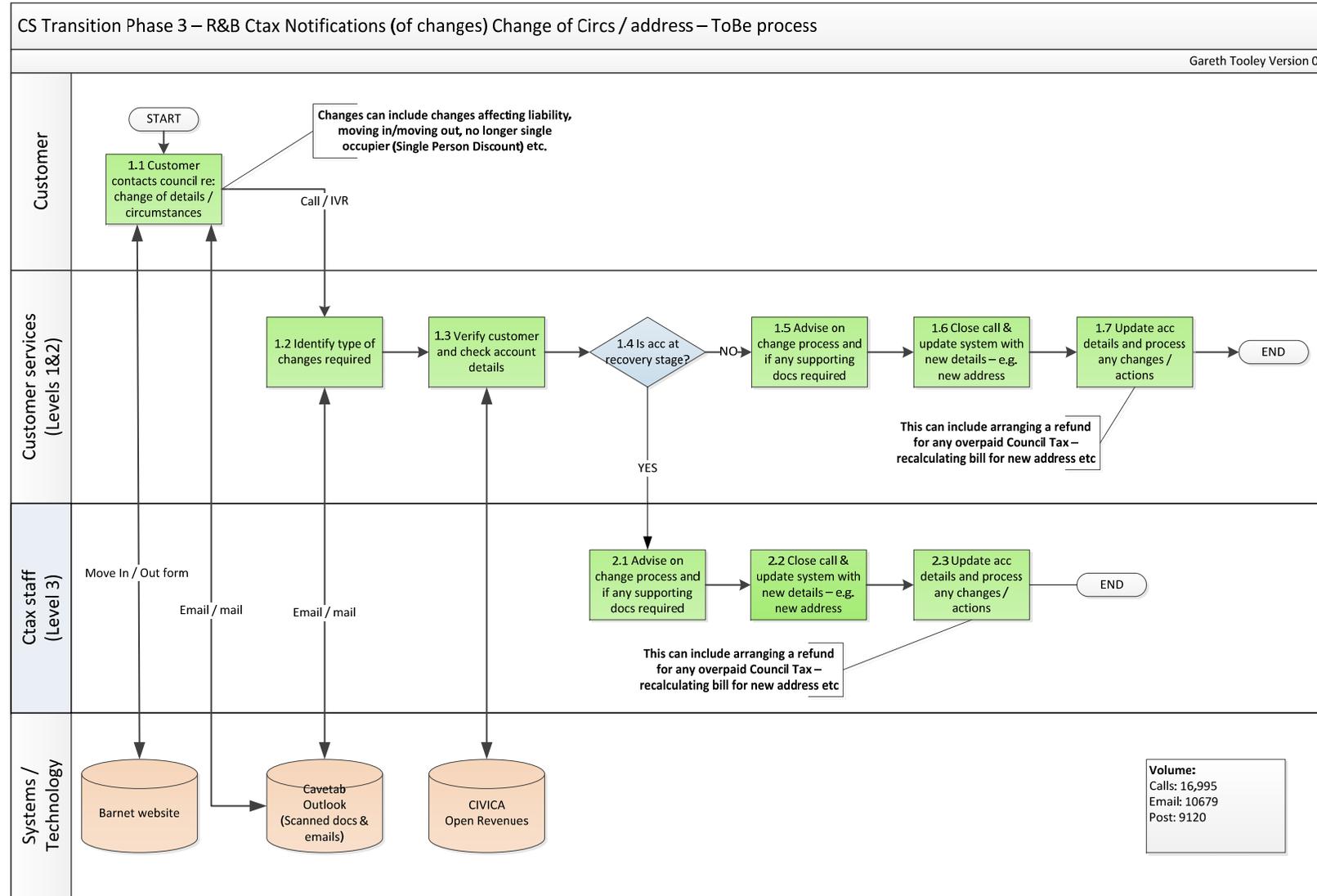
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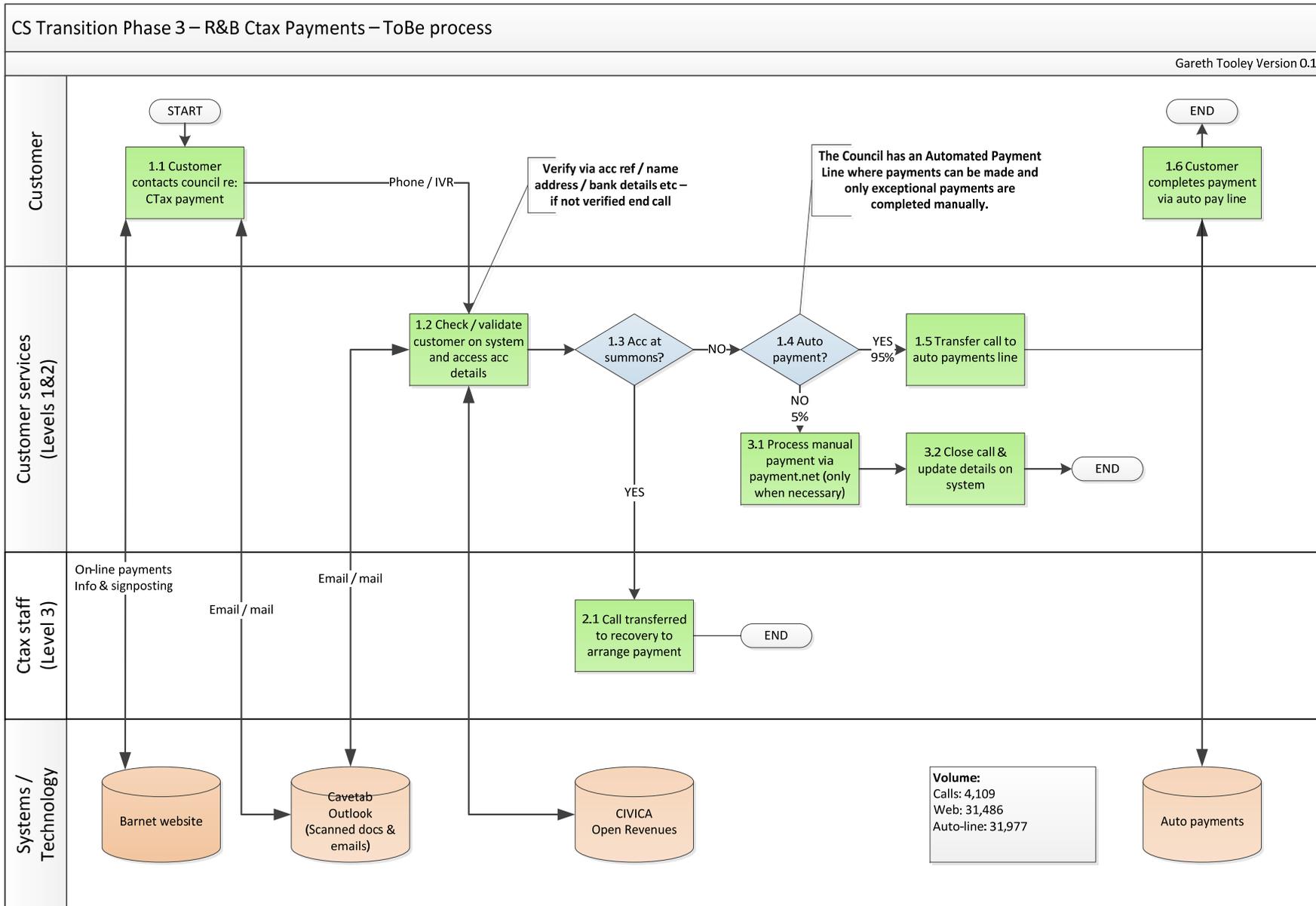
Benefit claimants in privately owned homes

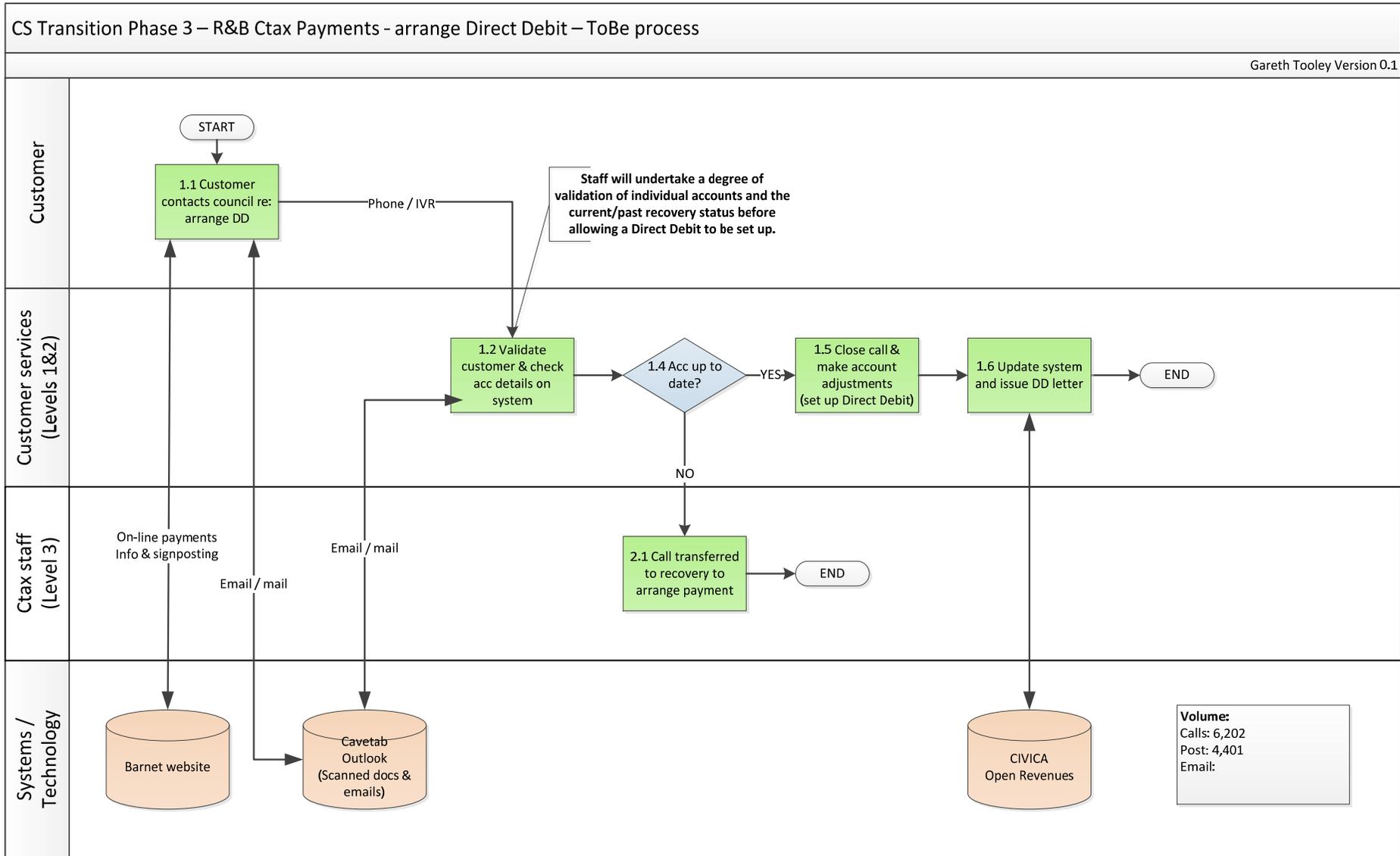


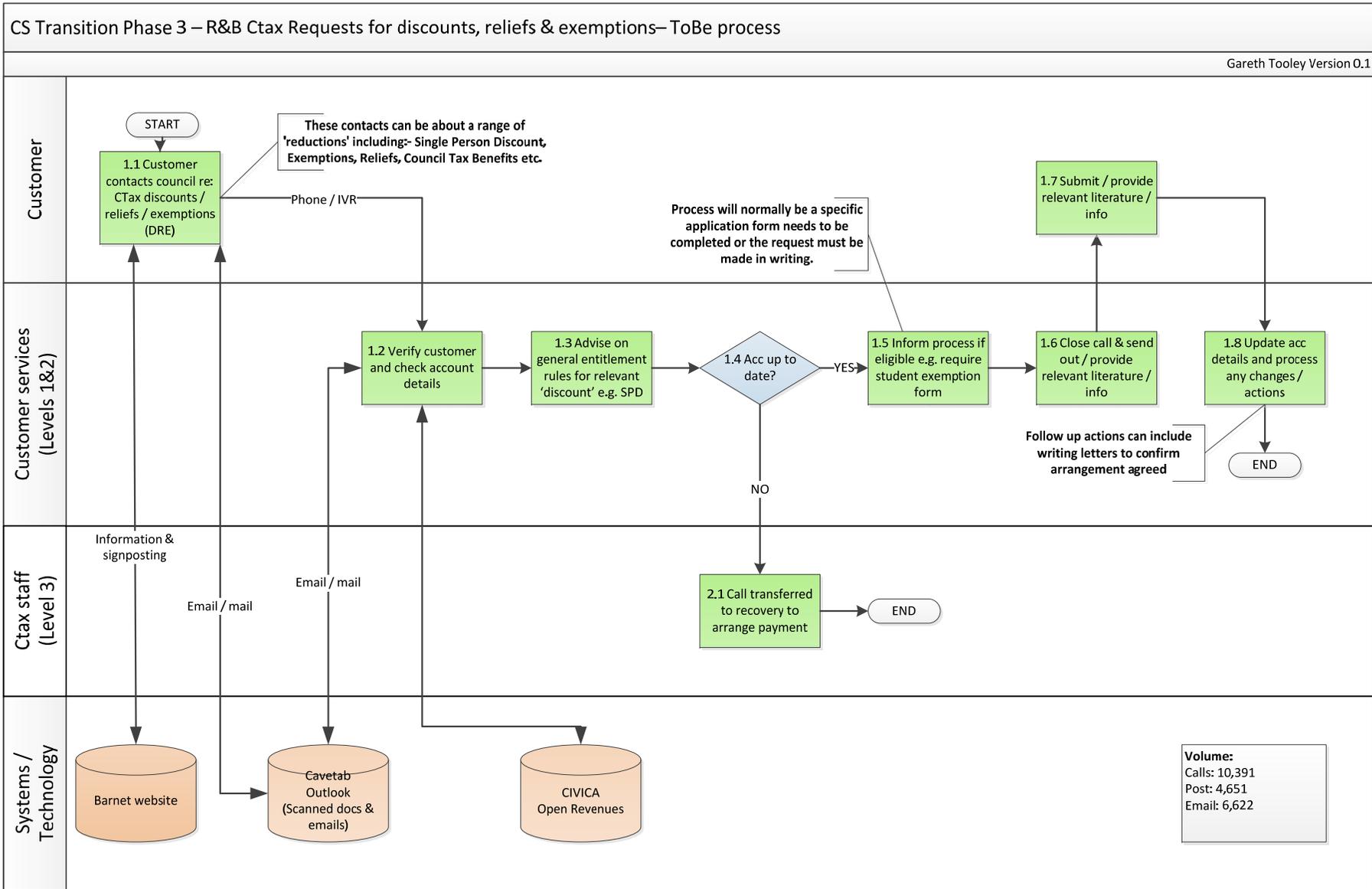
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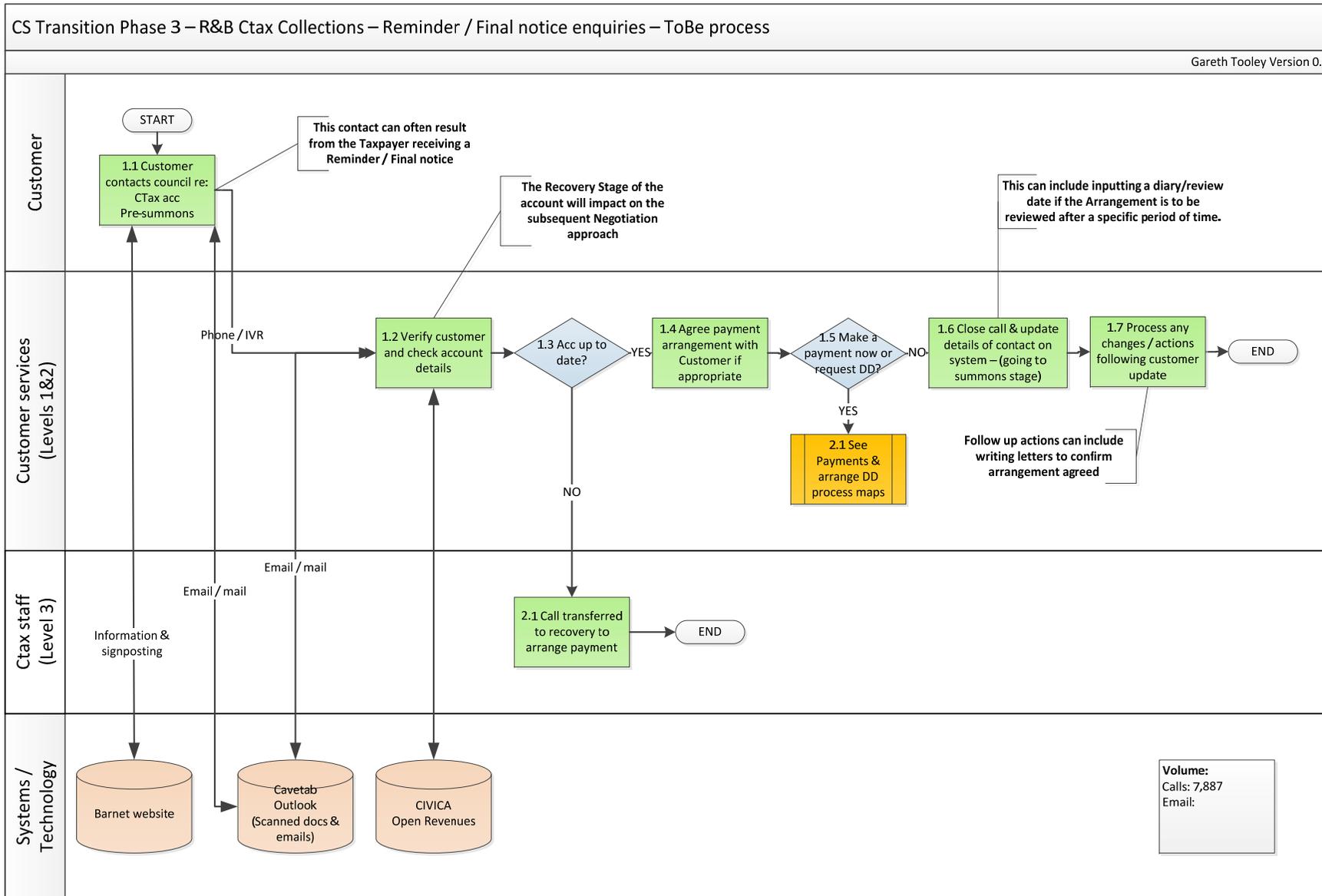
Appendix 3: To Be Process maps

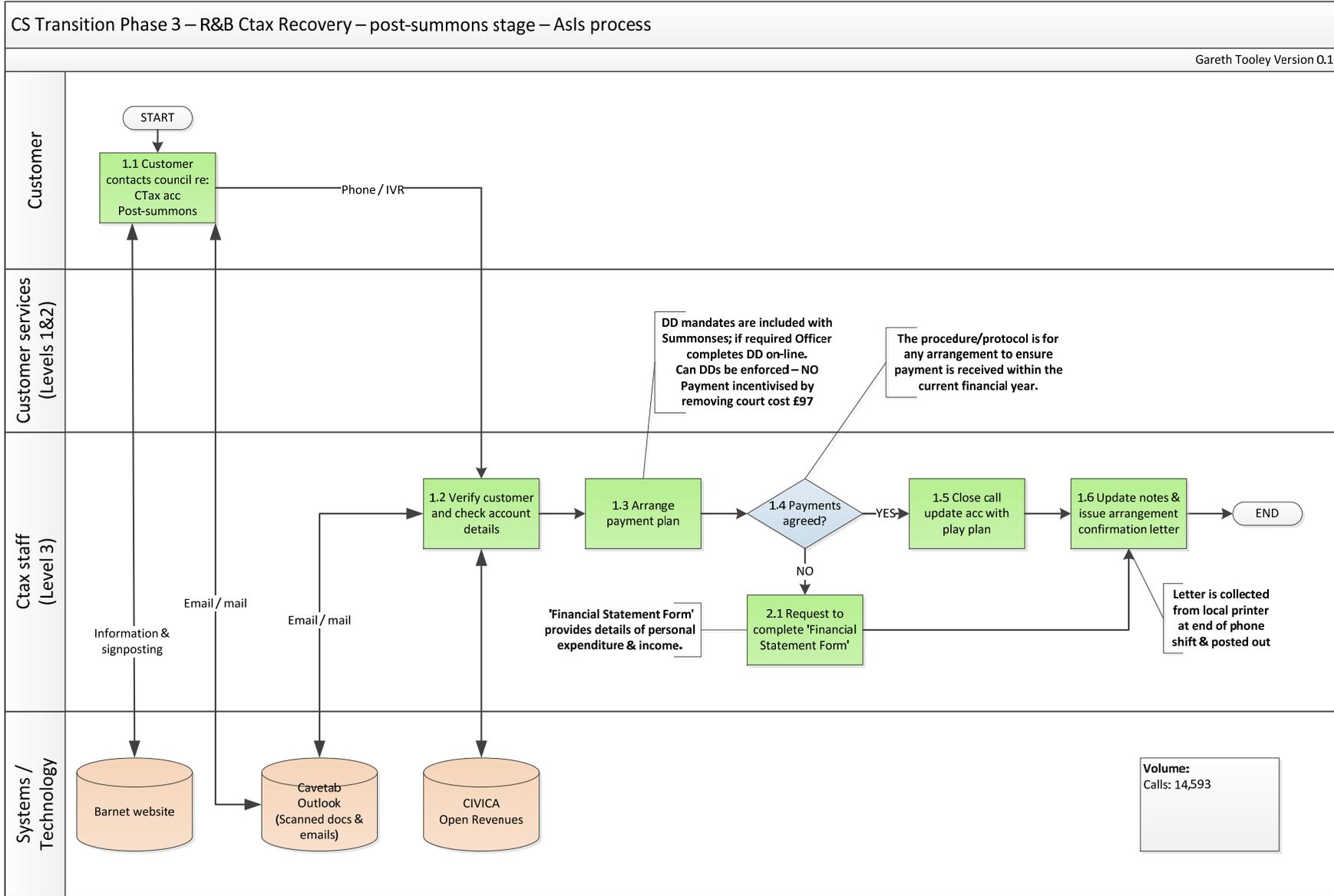


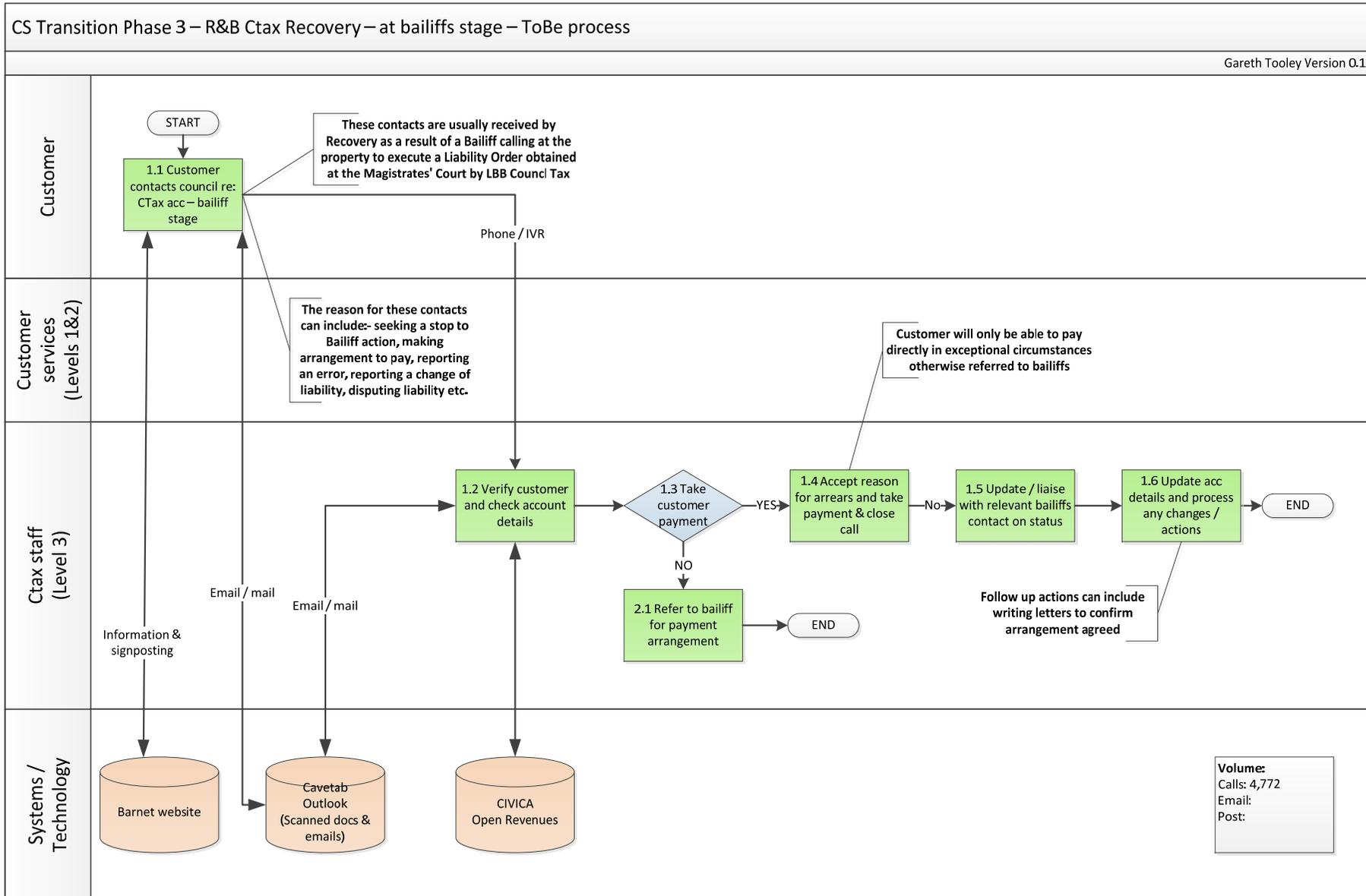


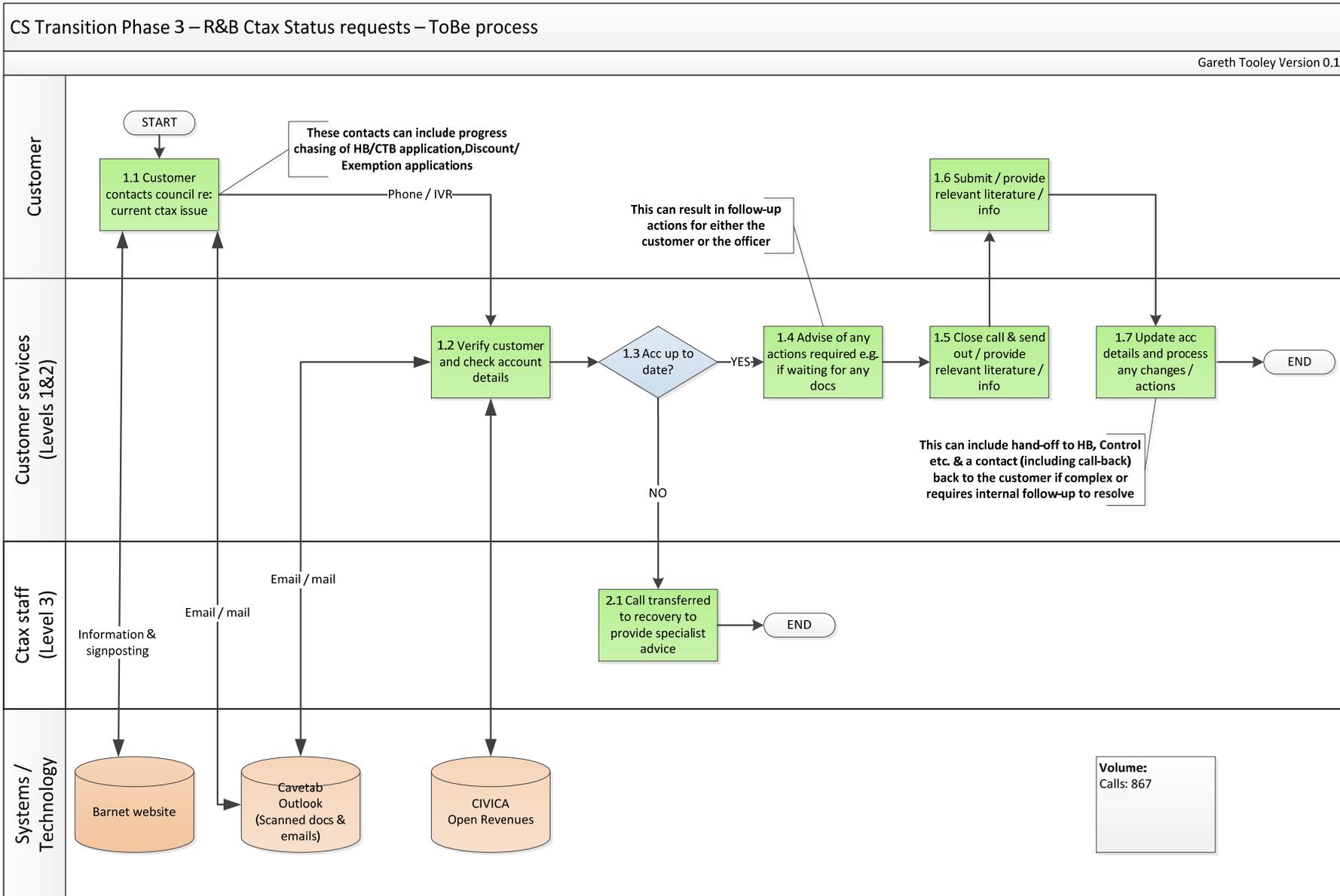


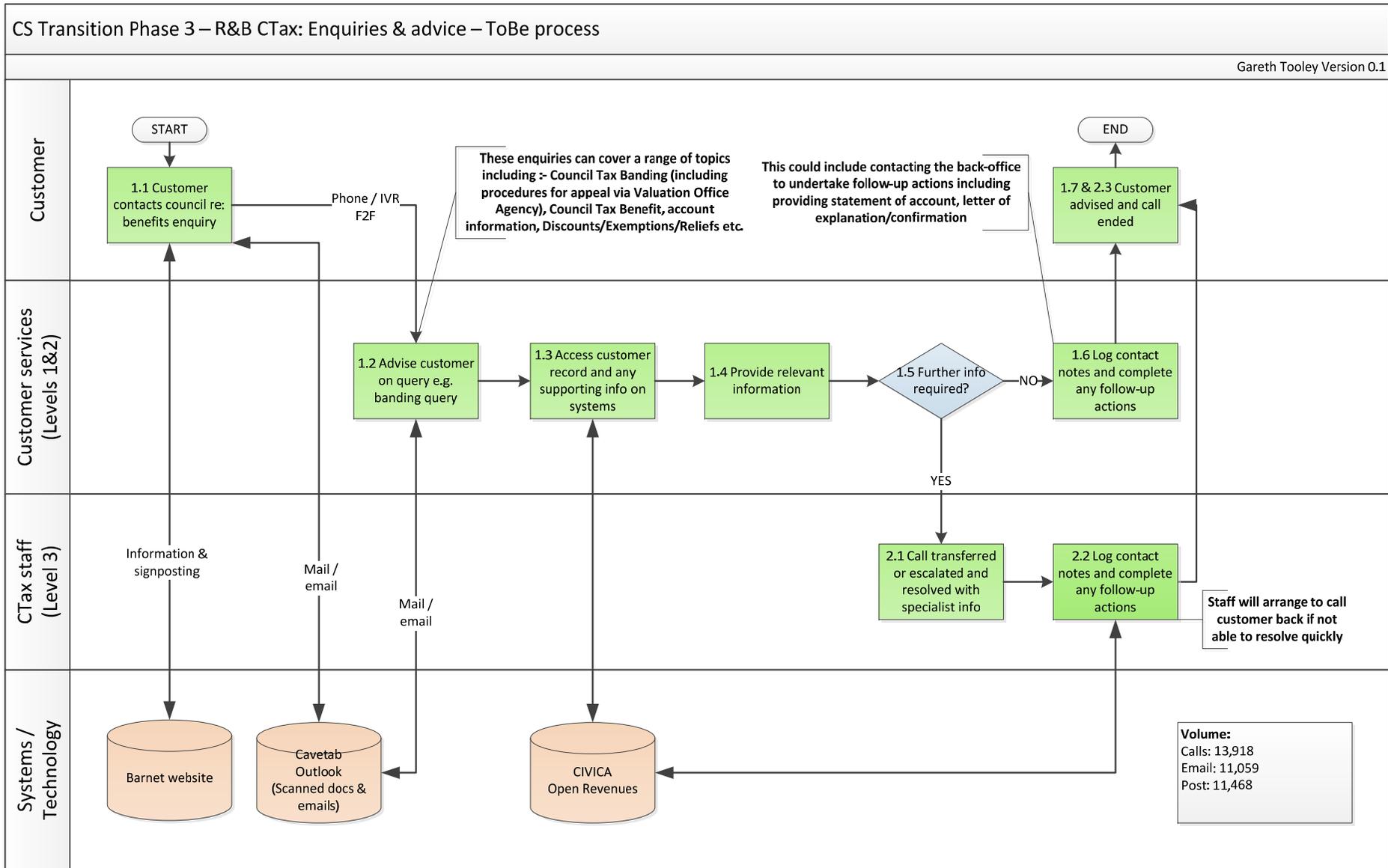




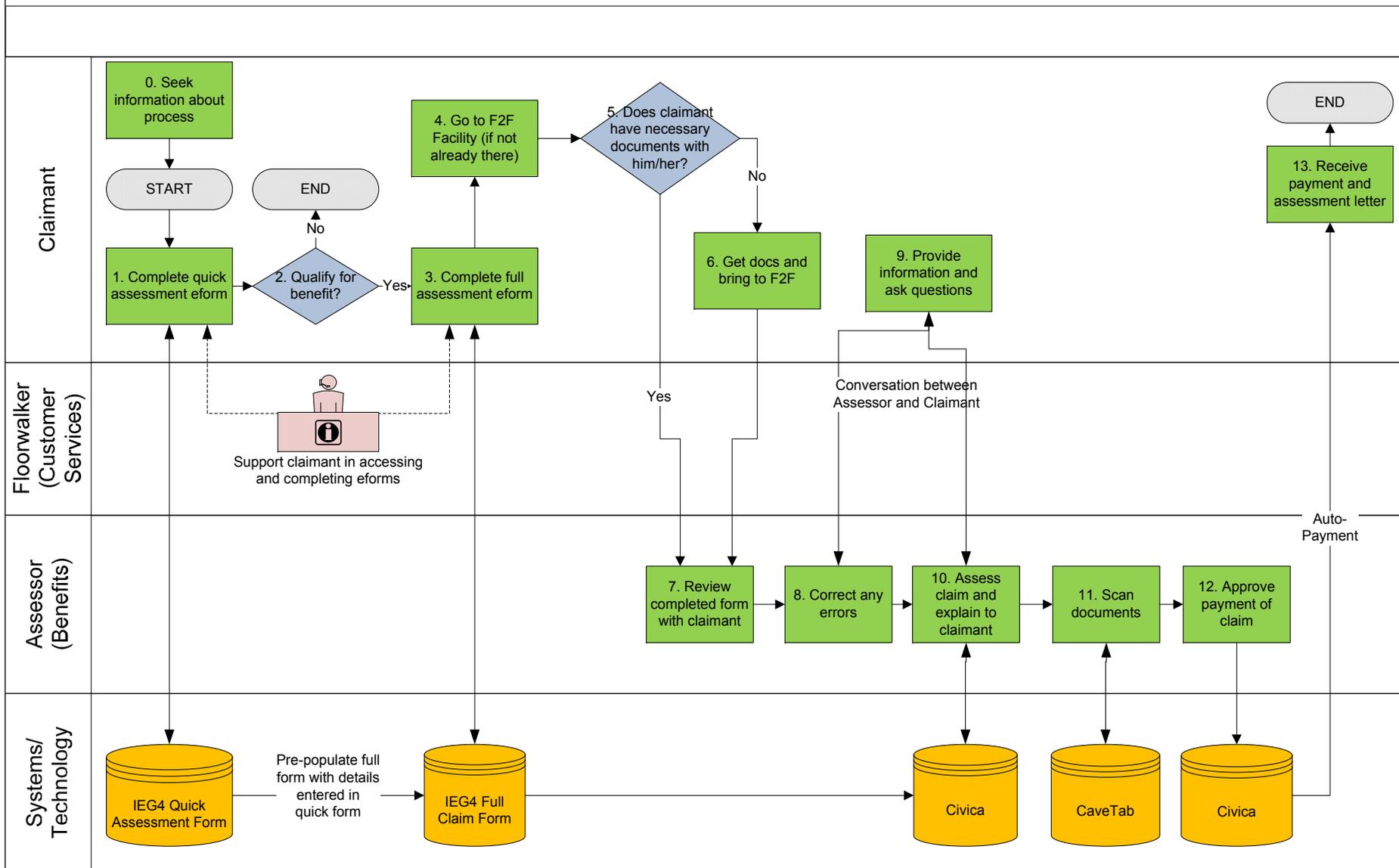








Benefits New Claims Process – To Be Base process: Overview



Base Process – Notes

Overall: This is the base process for claimants to apply for Housing and Council Tax Benefits. This should cover the vast majority of non-DWP claims and will be enforced by closing down the current paper-based process for all but the most exceptional claims [if any].

0. Before claimant fills in the quick assessment form he/she may contact the Council to enquire about the application process. Appropriate information will be available on the Barnet web site and will be available to L1-2 agents in the contact centre to advise applicants. Applicants will be advised to bring originals of proofs of identity, residence, income, rent etc with them when they come to a F2F facility. Claimant may be offered an appointment at the F2F facility to see a benefits assessor (see step 6)

1. Claimant can complete quick assessment form via the internet either at home, in a public web access point (eg library) or in one of Barnet's Face to Face facilities, eg Burnt Oak, Barnet House. Claimants are given support in F2F facilities by L1 customer service staff (floorwalker), who will help them use the web form but will not give any benefits advice. Quick assessment form will identify whether a claimant may qualify for Housing or Council Tax Benefit, and if so give a preliminary indication of the sum that might be paid. This will filter out the >10% of current applicants who complete the full application form only to find that they do not qualify for any benefit.

2. If claimant is found not to qualify through the quick assessment form, the process ends and he/she cannot progress to the full form. If the claimant does qualify, his/her details are automatically pre-populated in the full form at the next step

3. Claimant completes the full benefits assessment form (IEG4 eClaims), which will present only those questions relevant to the claimant's circumstances. System produces a list of evidence that must be reviewed prior to approval of their claim – this will be printed off if completed at Burnt Oak or Barnet House or claimant advised to print this off if they are completing the form away from Burnt Oak or Barnet House

4. If the claimant has filled in their form at a location other than Burnt Oak or Barnet House they will then have to travel to Burnt Oak or Barnet House to see a benefits assessor. They may make an appointment to do so (call to the contact centre), or they may simply turn up and wait their turn.

5. On arrival at Burnt Oak or Barnet House, or on completion of the full claim form in Burnt Oak or Barnet House, a L1 CS Agent reviews the documents that they have brought against the list of required documents listed in the printout at step 3 (if they have not printed this out they will need to have the maximum set of documents). If they do not have all the required documents they are asked to go home, gather the required documents, and come back to Burnt Oak or Barnet House at a later time/date. They may be given another appointment if requested or advised to take their chance in the queue

6. Claimant goes home to collect the required documents and then returns to F2F facility as indicated in step 5

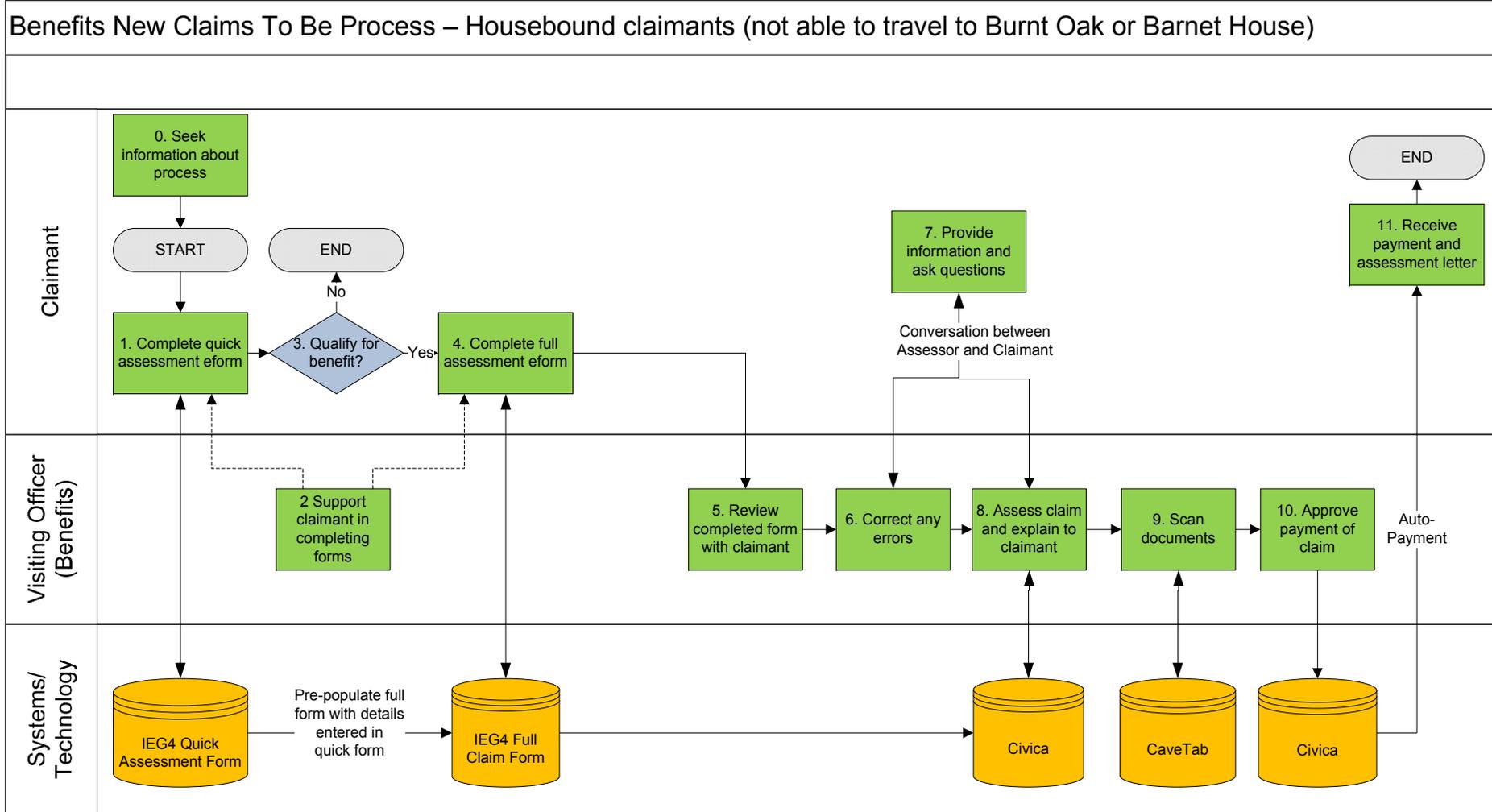
7,8,9. Benefits Assessor (L3) sits down with claimant and goes through the information that they have provided on the on-line form. As they do this, they check the data for accuracy and consistency with the evidence presented, and look for any inconsistencies, both within the form and with any other declarations they have made to the Council (eg application for SPD on CTax but declaration that more than one person lives at the property in the benefits claim). Any corrections are made on-line directly into the system

10. When all the data has been checked, the assessor assesses the claim and advises the claimant of the amount that will be paid, and the period for which it will be paid. The assessor confirms that the claimant is happy with this assessment – if not the assessor will further explain the basis of the calculation and answer any questions posed by the applicant. If the claimant is still dissatisfied with the proposed amount, they will be advised of the appeals process and asked if they would like to proceed with the claim anyway.

11. The assessor scans the relevant documents directly into the system [and indexes them appropriately]

12. The assessor finally approves the claim in Civica and advises the claimant that payment will reach their bank account within [3-4] days

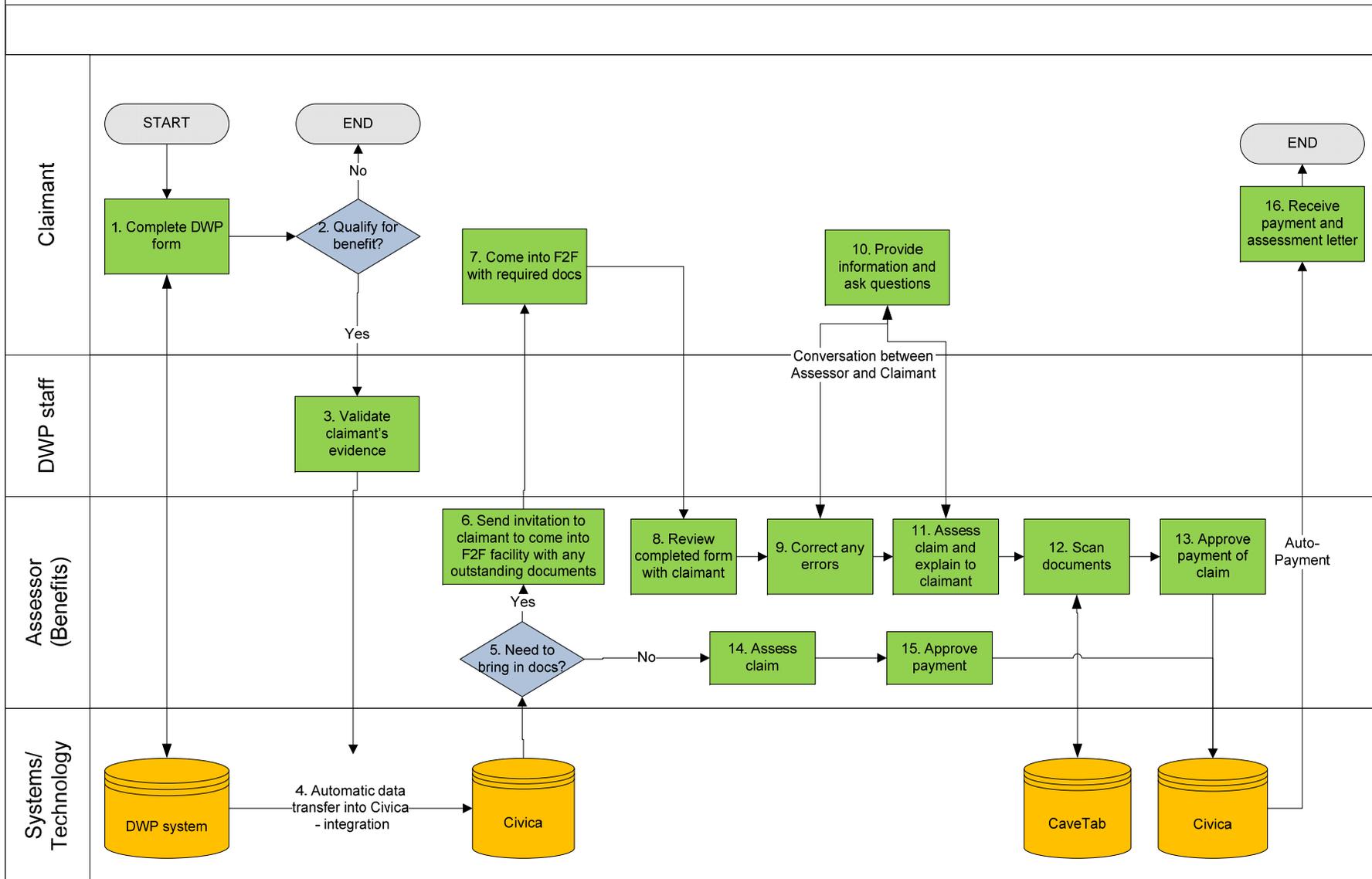
13. Claimant receives payment into their bank account



Housebound process: Changes from Base process:

1. Claimant can either complete quick assessment form via the internet at home using their own computer, before the visiting officer visits, or on the visiting officer's computer/tablet when he/she arrives at the claimant's property.
2. Visiting officer will support claimant through the application process if necessary – in this case steps 5-8 can be performed at the same time
- 5-8. Performed by the Visiting Officer in the claimant's own home
9. Evidence scanned by visiting officer using hand-held scanner and [probably] downloaded to Civica on return to the office

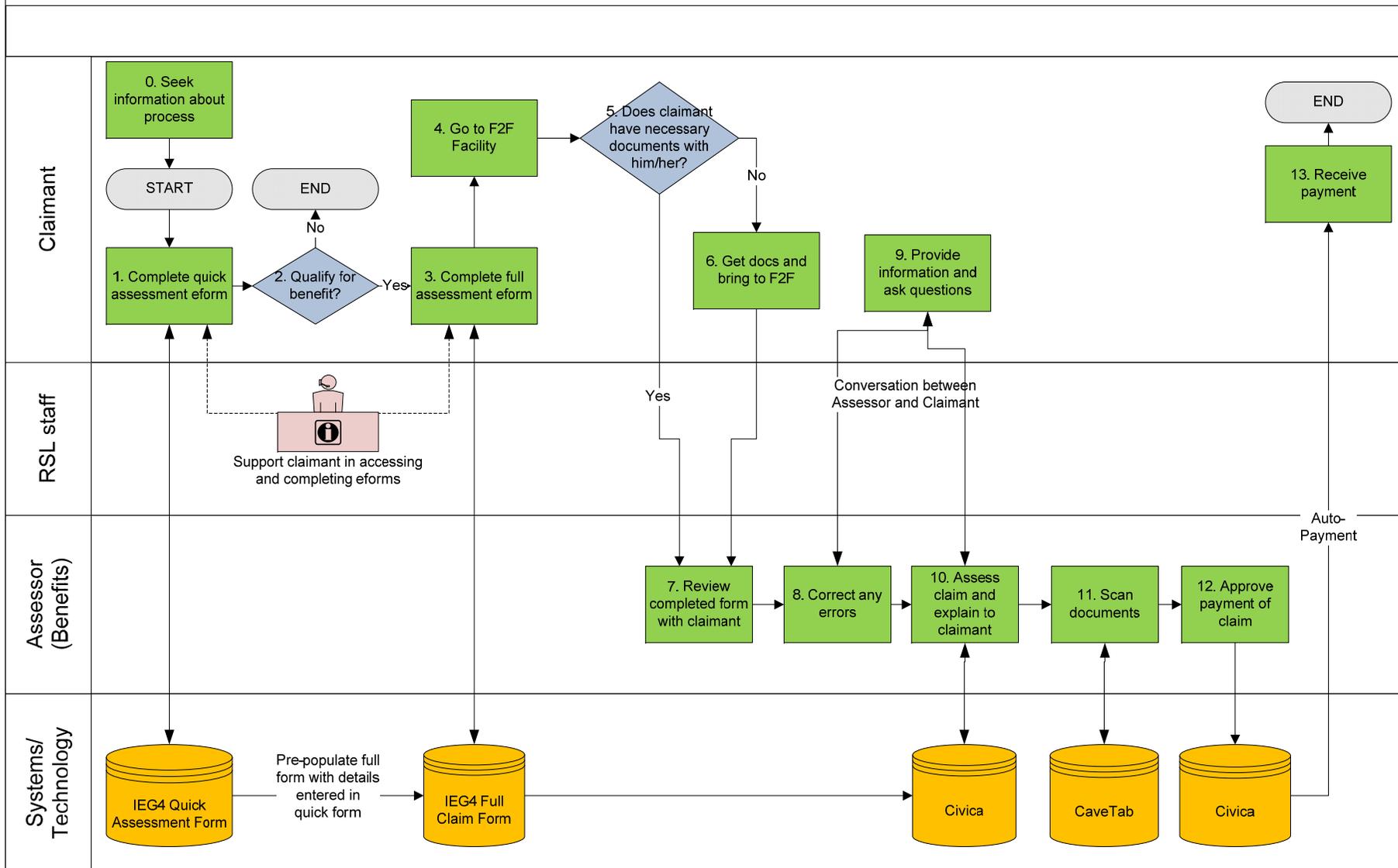
Benefits New Claims To Be Process – DWP claimants (LAID/LACI)



DWP process: Changes from Base process:

1. Claimant completes DWP claim form in DWP system
2. If claimant fails to qualify for benefit, process ends
3. DWP reviews and validates evidence and records in system
4. Claimant's data automatically transferred from DWP system into Civica
- 5, 6. If claimant needs to present evidence (eg private tenants), they are invited to bring it in to F2F facility
- 7- 13. As Base Process
- 14, 15. If claimant does not need to present any evidence, claim is assessed and approved for payment without any further contact with the claimant, who will receive an assessment letter as at present

Benefits New Claims To Be Process – Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

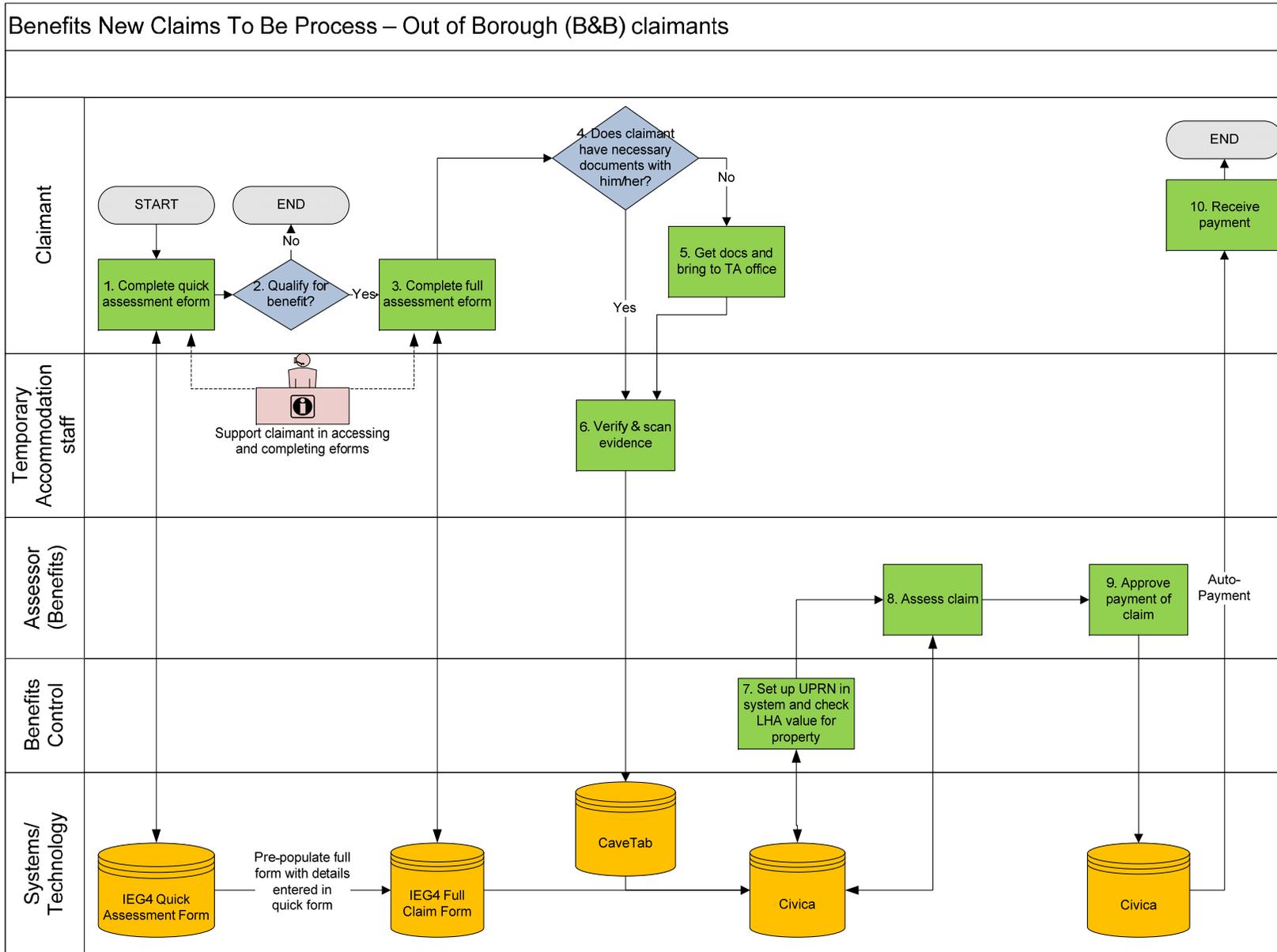


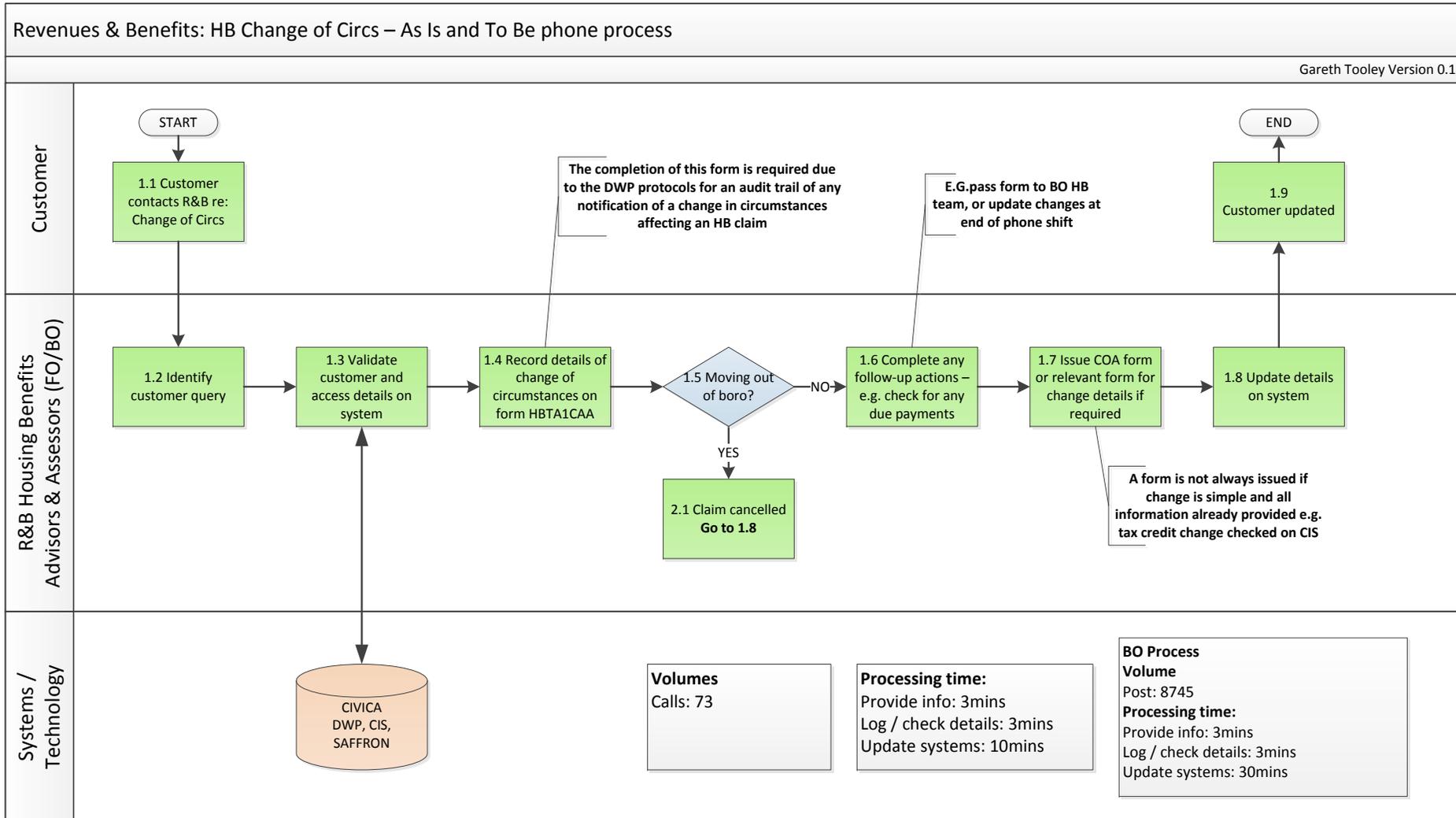
RSLs Process: Changes from base process

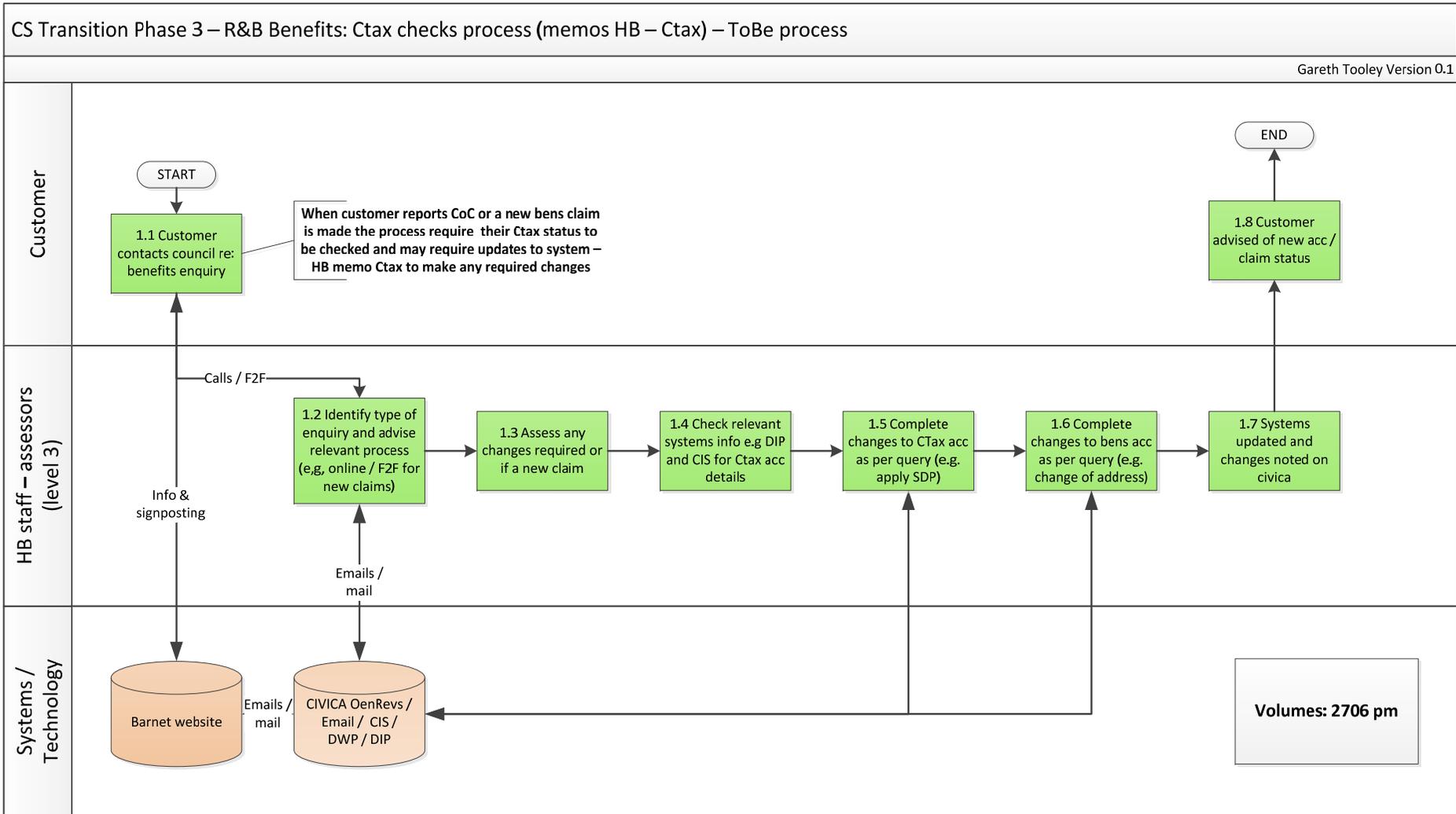
1. Claimant completes quick assessment form in RSL office with support (if necessary) from RSL staff
3. Claimant completes the full benefits assessment form (IEG4 eClaims) in RSL office with support (if necessary) from RSL staff
- 4-13. As base process

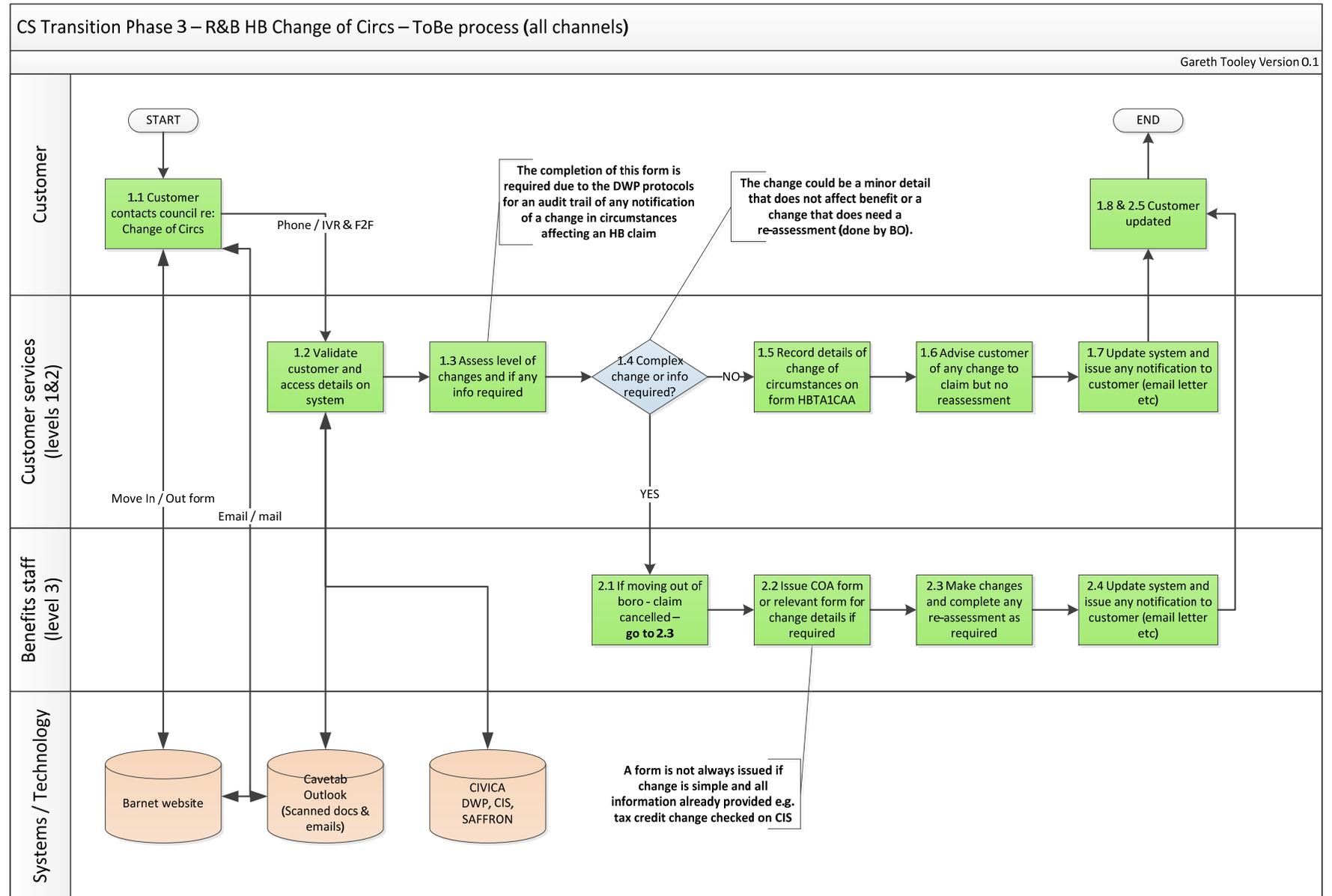
Note: Barnet Homes

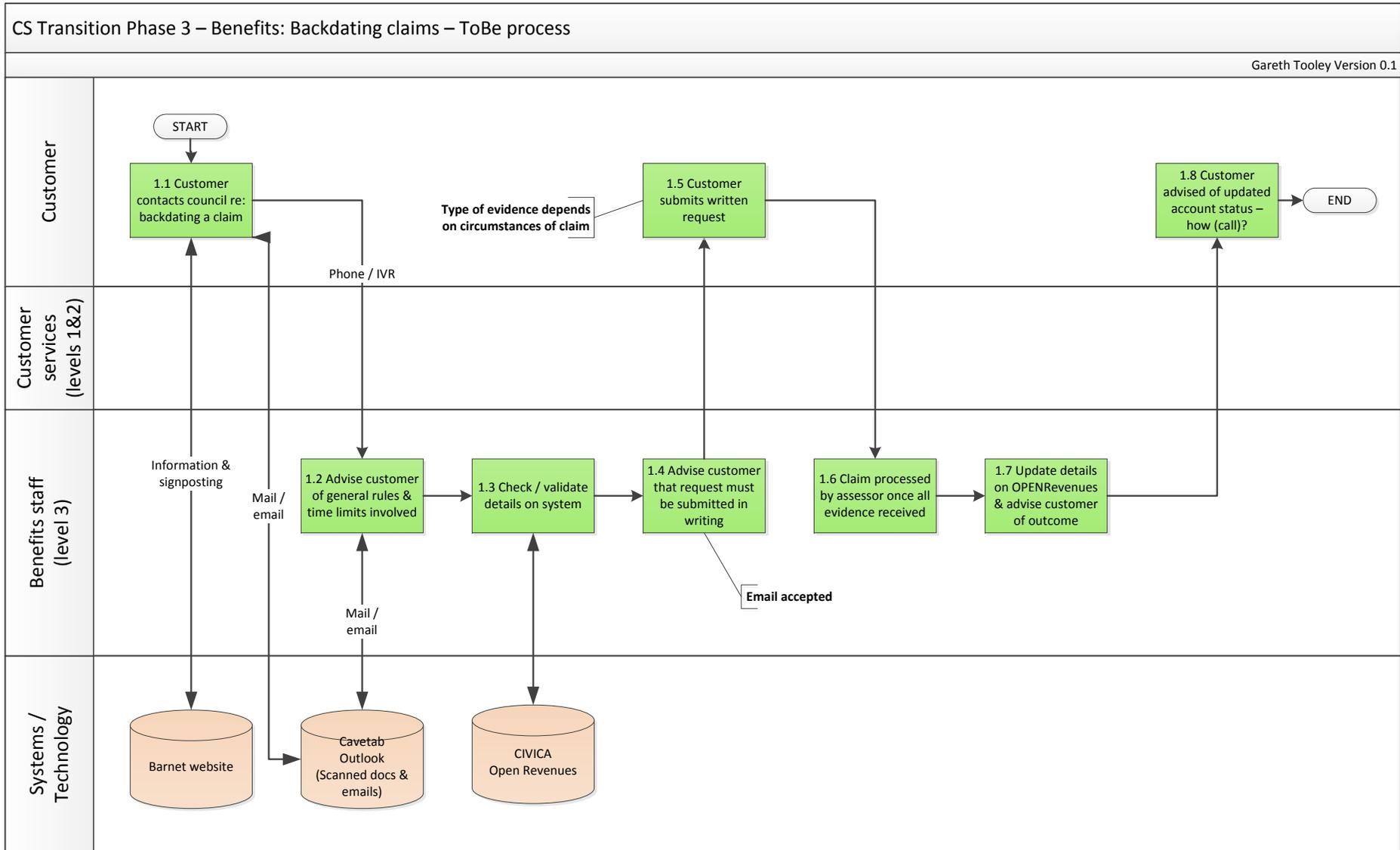
Barnet homes claimants will be treated as base claimants – Barnet Homes will send claimants to the F2F facility in Barnet House

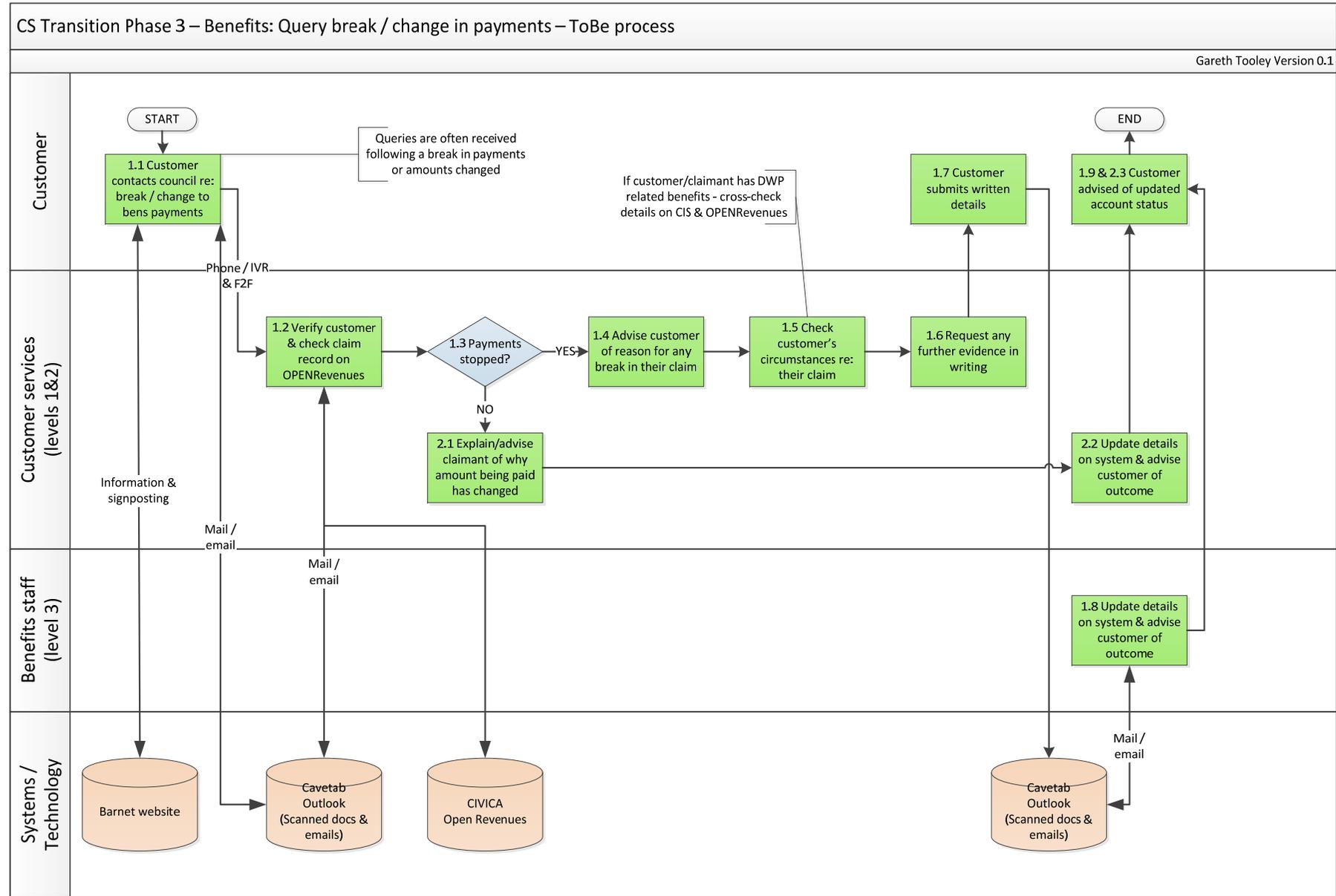


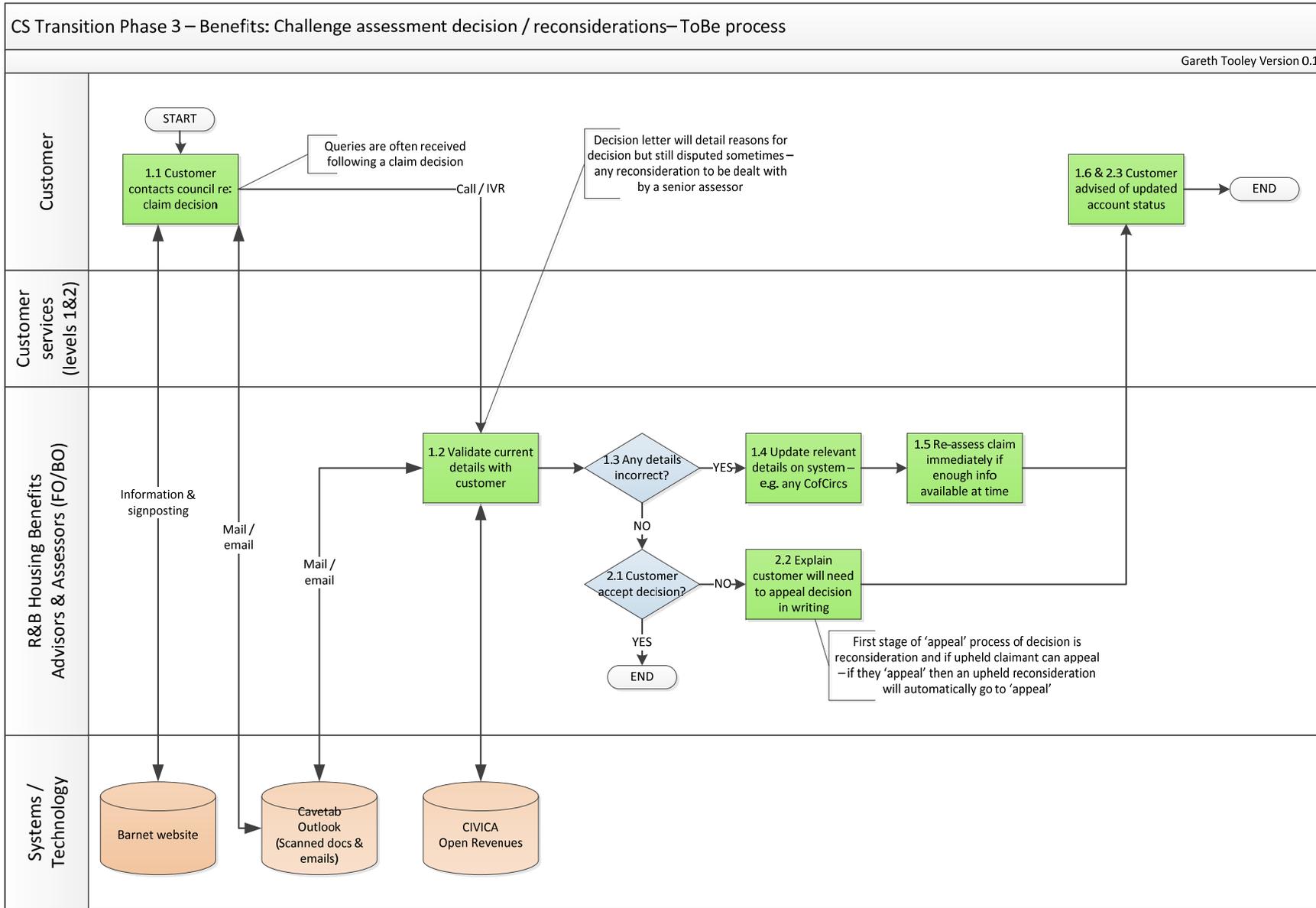


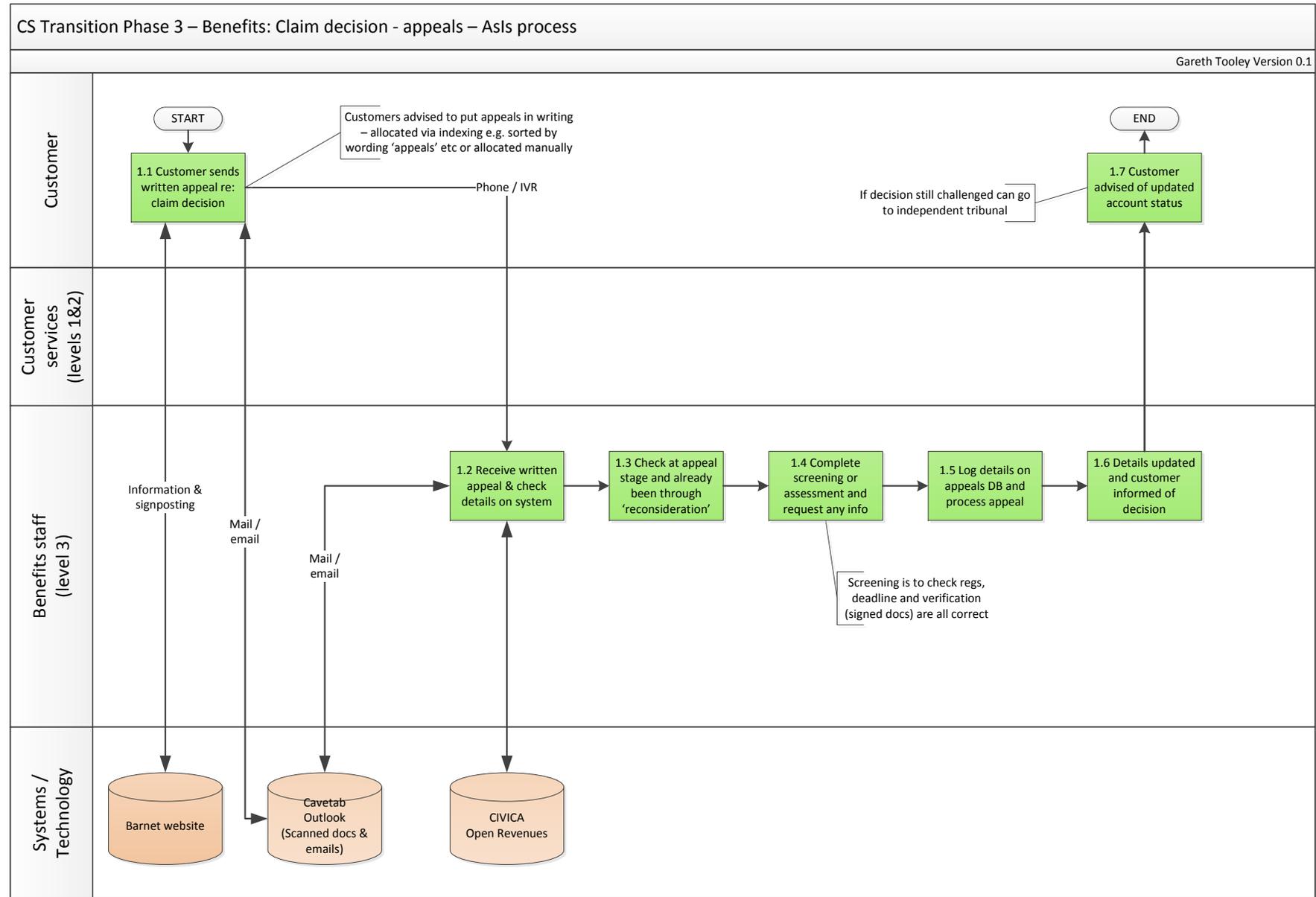


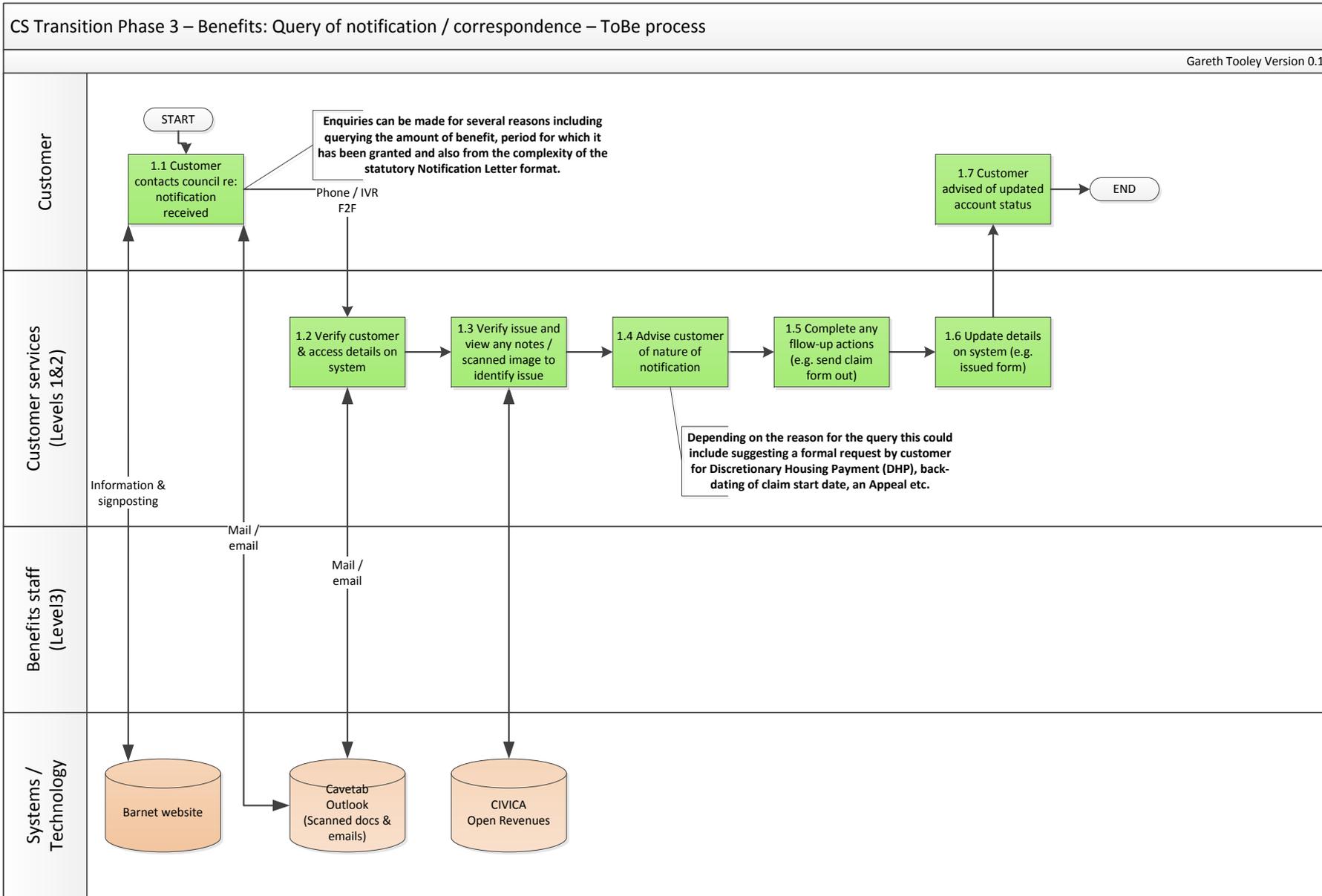


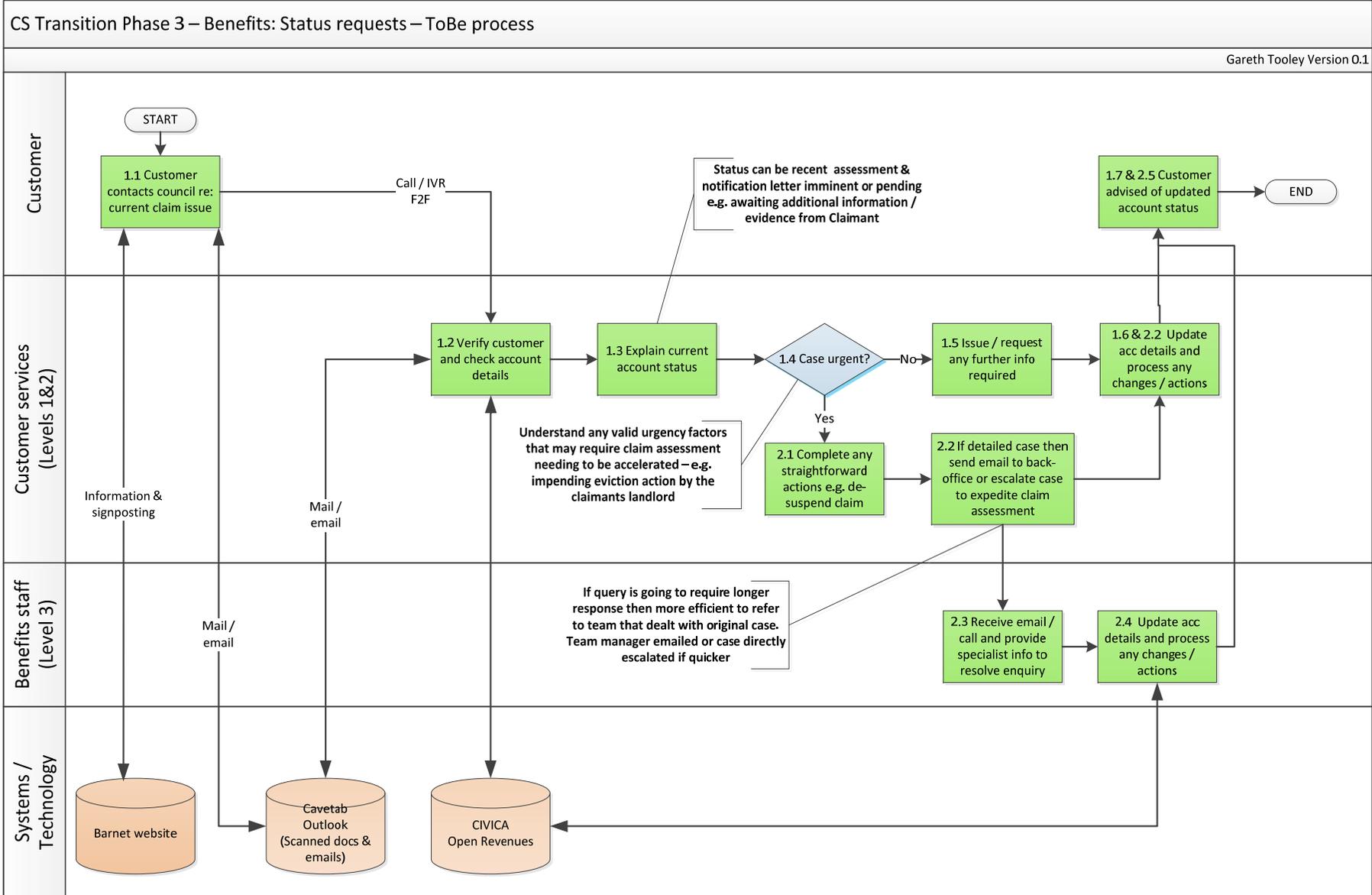


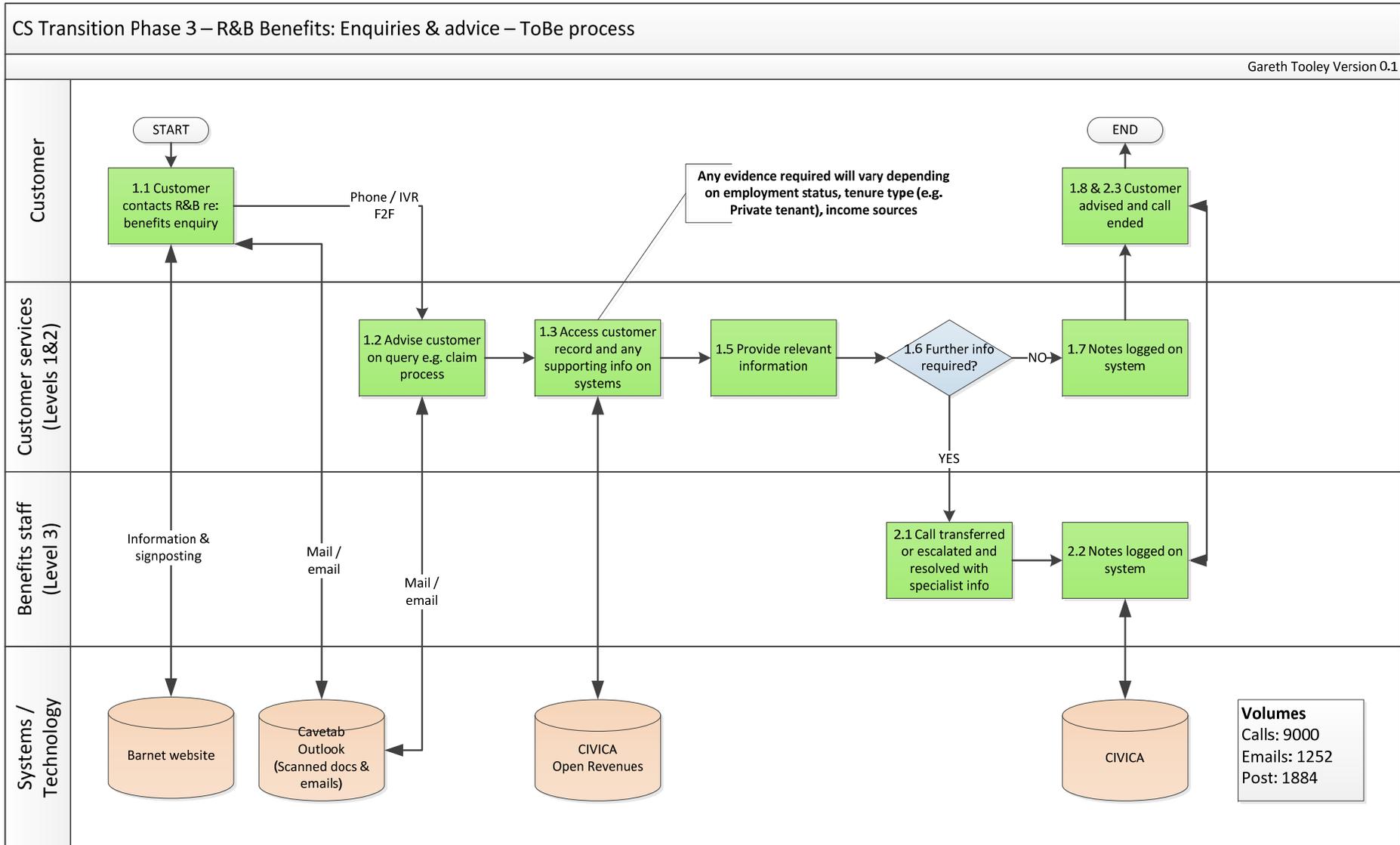












Appendix 4: Customer Interaction Grid

The grid on the following page has been completed to show the transaction types that may be encountered within each process. Please note that this should be used as a guide only – the split of work between L0/1/2/3 that has been agreed with the service is shown in section xx of the main report.

No	Transaction type	Process levels	Description
1	Switchboard transfer to Back Office	0 / 1	Enquiry which needs to be passed straight to back office to resolve
2	General Information		Enquiry which can be resolved by providing information available in knowledge base
3	Report a problem/ Request a service		Take details for a service or problem which needs to be actioned (i.e. bulky waste collection or missed bin recollection, pot hole or abandoned vehicle).
4	Payments in		Take a payment
5	Bookings		Make an appointment with an officer or third party provider to whose availability you have access (or it is a 'request for service')
6	Authenticate customer and give account specific information		Answer a simple query by accessing a customer's account and providing the information requested (i.e. simple council tax enquiry, or check if a rent payment has been received).
7	Apply for service (make application)		Take details for an application for a service or product (i.e. blue badge) and submit this for a decision (including automated decisioning)
8	Make rules based decision	2	Make a decision which requires a rules based judgement (i.e. check eligibility)
9	Status updates		Provide an update on an outstanding matter using information which may require some interpretation of customer details held on a system (i.e. update on request for respite care)
10	Specialist advice	3	Provide highly professional advice or advice which requires subjective or multi-agency assessment.
11	Specialist decision		Make a non rules based decision (eg a multi agency assessment) or one which requires a high level of professional skill (planning

Revenues & Benefits											
Customer Interaction	Transaction Types										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Council Tax:											
Advice & Queries	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Payments	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Set up Direct Debit	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Recovery pre final notice	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Recovery post final notice	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Attachment of Earnings	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Discounts/exemptions etc	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Change in Circs	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Status updates	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
NNDR:											
Advice & Queries	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
Payments	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Set up Direct Debit	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Recovery pre final notice	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Recovery post final notice	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Misallocations	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Reliefs	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Notify changes	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Status updates	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Benefits:											
Advice & Queries	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
New claims	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Breaks in payments queries	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
Backdating	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
2 homes	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
Challenges	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Change in Circumstances	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Status updates	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N

Appendix 5: Typical division of staff time by activity

	Service Manger (Revenues only)	Area Managers	Team Managers	Senior Officers	Officers - Operations
Staff management	46%	45-50%	50-65%	20%	0%
Specialist work	23%	30-40%	20-35%	10%	0%
Project/improvement work	23%	10-20%	0-10%	0%	0%
Operations	8%	0-20%	0-20%	70%	100%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	Support Manager	Team Managers - Support	Control Manager	Team Managers - Control	Officers – Support and Control
Staff management	35%	40-65%	10%	30%	0%
Specialist work	50%	15-25%	35%	20%	0%
Project/improvement work	15%	0-25%	40%	15%	0%
Operations	0%	10-25%	15%	35%	100%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Appendix 6: Homeworking cost analysis

Home based							
Incremental costs compared with office based				Incremental savings compared with office based			
		£ pa per head				£ pa per head	
Heating & Lighting allowance		£120		Productivity		£0	
BT line rental		£660		Accommodation		£0	
Depreciation on IT kit		£333					
Maintenance on IT kit		£200					
IT kit downtime cost		£300					
Team manager time		£1,750					
Team support (K Murphy role)		£882					
	Total	£4,246		Total		£0	
	Incremental cost/(benefit)	£4,246					
	Total incremental cost for 17 homeworkers	£72,177					
Assumptions							
1	Heating & lighting allowance per head per month of					£10	
2	Additional capital cost of homeworking kit					£1,000 depreciated over	3 years
3	IT maintenance costs as % of capital cost pa					20%	
4	Homeworking IT kit availability					99%	
5	All-up officer-level staff costs					£30,000 pa	
6	All-up Team Manager costs £35Kpa					£35,000 pa	
7	Additional TM supervision of homeworkers compared with office-based workers					50%	
8	Average team size					10 officers	
9	% of Kevin Murphy's time supporting 17 homeworkers					50%	
10	All-up cost of Kevin Murphy					£30,000 pa	
11	Additional productivity of homeworkers compared with that of office workers					0%	
12	Office workers space allowance					60 sq ft	
13	Incremental cost of office accommodation to the council					£0 pa (large areas of unused space in NLBP)	

Appendix 7: Civica Modules

The service has purchased a range of Civica modules, the implementation status of which is shown below.

Module	Function	Implementation status
Core Person & Property Database		Complete
Housing & Council Tax Benefits		Complete
NDR		Complete
Verification Framework		Complete
Fraud Case Management		Not implemented see below*
Overpayment recovery		Complete
Victor Interfaces		Complete
Appeals (Benefit)		Complete
OPENAccess		In progress
OPENMobile (15 users)		Not yet implemented
OPENExec – Benefit Processing		Completed
OPENVision		Completed
OPENWorkflow		Completed
Workflow e-mail		Completed
DIP		Completed
Bar Code Recognition		Not yet implemented
Quality Check		Not yet implemented
e-Billing (for Ctax & NDR)		Not yet implemented
e-notifs		Completed
e-Benefits		In progress
e-Landlord Schedules		Not yet implemented
e-BARS		Completed
E-Secure		Not yet implemented
LLPG Interface		Not yet implemented
New Resident Indicator		Complete
Experian Bank Wizard Interface		Complete
EDT Processing module		Complete
BIDS module		Not implemented
Performance Status Monitor		
PTC Status monitor		Complete
IEG4 e-benefits form		Not yet implemented

* The fraud team use Encase software and do not wish to use this module

Appendix 8: Business Requirements for Systems

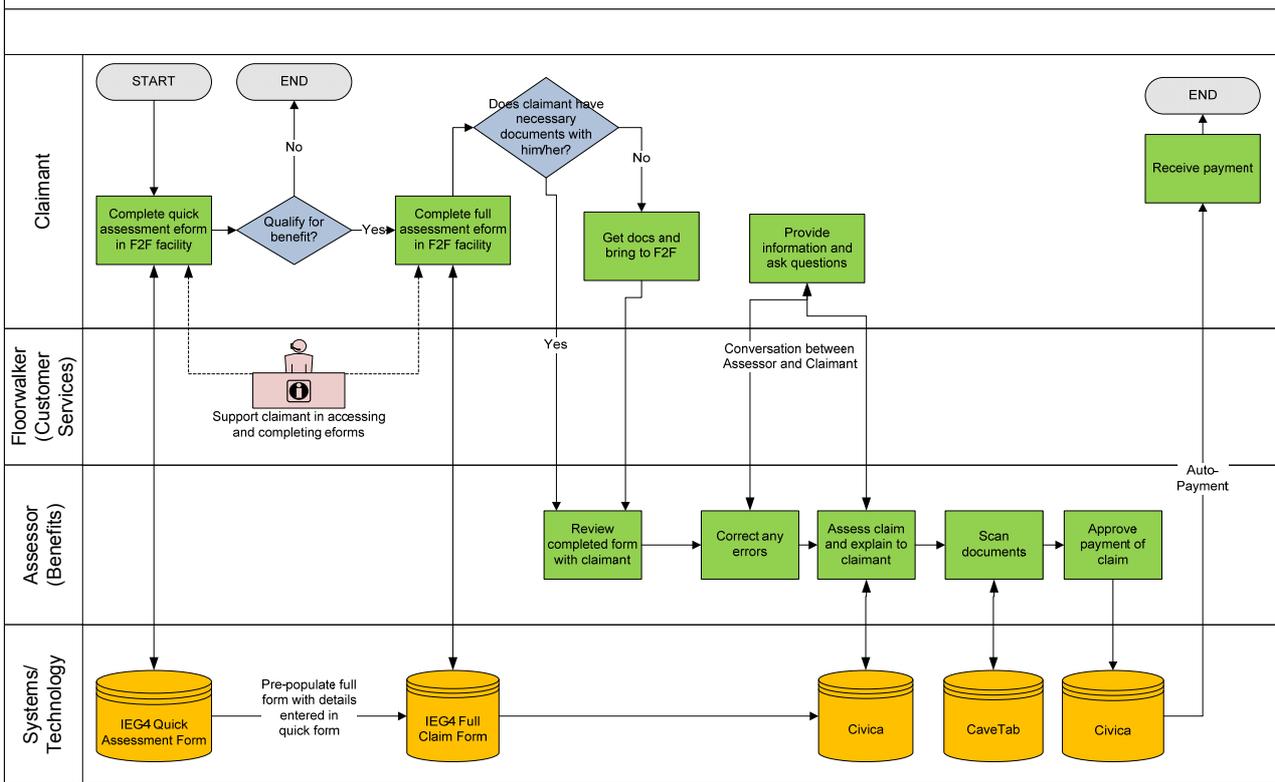
Process Name	F2F New Benefits Claim	Process Owner	
--------------	------------------------	---------------	--

Process Description

The 'right first time' new claims process turns the existing process back to front and puts assessment expertise at the front of the process rather than at the end. By doing so it is expected that substantial downstream failure demand will be eliminated, resulting in improved customer service at lower cost. The process is illustrated below and has the following key features:

- Claimant completes a quick assessment form on line, either in a Council F2F facility or in their own home/library
- If they find that they may qualify, they then fill in the full on-line claim form (pre-populates with information provided in quick form)
- Claimants advised by publicity etc of the need to bring in key documents (proofs of identity, income, rent) with them when applying F2F for benefits
- Claimant sits down with Benefits Assessor in F2F facility, who reviews form with claimant, checking for completeness and accuracy
- Assessor scans documents, digital image of which is lodged directly into OpenRevenues system
- Assessor assesses claim, authorises payment and advises claimant of the amount of benefit that will be paid and timing of payment
- Claimant receives payment via bank transfer

Benefits New Claims Process – Option 1



IT Applications Currently Used	Known Performance Measures
<p>Civica OpenRevenues is currently used to store claim data and calculate benefit entitlement. Civica Records Management (CRM) is the scanning and indexing application (integrated with OpenRevenues) that is currently used to store digital images of the application form, documents and correspondence relating to each claim</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End-to-end process time for new claim, from first contact by applicant to payment

High Level Requirements
<p>The following business requirements for systems and technology flow from this revised process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability for new benefits claimants to quickly ascertain their eligibility for Housing and/or Council Tax benefit and to complete an application form on line, either in their own house or in a Council F2F facility. It is proposed to achieve this through the implementation of the IEG4 eClaim form and on-line benefit calculator – licences for the main eClaim form have already been purchased but the capability has not been implemented, and licences for the on-line benefit calculator need to be procured Improved network reliability and log-on times for access to the Civica system to be acceptable in a contact centre environment. The performance of the current end to end service has been poor due to the limitations of the thin clients in use. These are in need of additional memory, as users are unable to run more than 2 applications, experience

problems printing and have experienced delays in logging on. The problems appear to be out of focus for Barnet IS. The root cause appears to relate to the running of citrix over citrix on the thin clients as the same issues are not experienced by users with desktop PCs

- In addition, the resilience of the Barnet network is poor and there have been a number of recent incidents where the cutting of a power line somewhere in the borough has caused a complete outage of the Barnet network (both data and telephony) for several hours. Solutions to these problems are needed – this will require close collaboration between Barnet ICT and Civica, since it is sometimes difficult to ascertain whether the problem lies with the Barnet network or the links to the host in Civica.
- Ability to scan documents directly into the Civica system at various locations within the borough of Barnet – as illustrated in the process diagram above, there is a need for a claimant's documents to be scanned directly into the Civica system by assessors in F2F facilities. At present such documents are photocopied and then sent by courier to Civica's scanning and indexing facility in Northampton, but the business requirement is for documents to be scanned and indexed directly in the F2F facility and then electronically transmitted into the Civica system. It is understood that Civica is developing a suitable scanning solution, which is expected to be available in May 2012.
- Resource booking system to allow potential claimants to book an appointment with an assessor – this is required to maximise utilisation of assessors. Bookings should be capable of being made by phone (to the contact centre), in person at a face to face facility and on-line via the Council's web site. Appointments made via the booking system should automatically be transferred into the Assessor's Outlook calendar. The system should be capable of dealing with at least 20 different resources (assessors), located at one of a number of locations. It should facilitate the even distribution of appointments across assessors, ie it should not place appointments with resource 1 before resource 2 etc, thereby leaving resource 20 underutilised. It should also facilitate the moving of appointments for a specific time slot between resources – from the customer's point of view the appointment is with an assessor, not assessor x. Numerous proprietary systems are available.

Unless otherwise stated, all the above needs to be in place in line with the timescales set out in the implementation plan, ie full implementation of the new process by end July 2012

Process Name	View CTax and Benefits balances on line	Process Owner	
--------------	---	---------------	--

Process Description

As part of the Council's new web site, to be implemented at the end of March 2012, it is intended to offer citizens the ability to view their Council Tax and/or Benefits payments status on line. This will potentially reduce the number of phone queries on these topics. Process will be:

- Citizen applies for on-line account by [phone, email or letter]
- Council checks citizen's details against Council Tax database
- If they are on the database Council posts logon details and password to citizen
- Citizen logs on to system and views account

IT Applications Currently Used	Known Performance Measures
Functionality not currently available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timescale for issue of logon details • Response time of web service • Availability of web service

High Level Requirements

Civica OpenAccess provides the necessary functionality. Current plan is for this to be implemented at end of March 2012 in line with rollout of the Council's new web site

Process Name		Process Owner	
--------------	--	---------------	--

Process Description

Provide a description of the future end to end process that shows the parts played by organisational units and by systems in supporting the process (use swim lanes).

IT Applications Currently Used

Describe in limited detail, the current technology which supports the process, to a level of functionality such as SAP – Work Order Management .

Known Performance Measures

Describe any key performance measures, either set internally or externally which govern the process.

High Level Requirements

List the high level functional requirements to either support the delivery of the process, or develop it into the future. Need to include the priority or expected timescales for deployment, along with any phased requirement over a number of months / years.