

Draft Customer Access Strategy for the London Borough of Barnet

December 2015



BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH



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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Barnet's vision for 2020, as set out in the Corporate Plan, is to provide local services that are integrated, intuitive and efficient, making life simpler for our residents and customers. New technologies are an important part of this. Most of us are used to the benefits that new technologies have brought to our everyday lives – how we now shop, travel and communicate. As customer services across the private sector continue to innovate – particularly in the retail and banking sectors – this creates higher expectations about what residents expect of the public sector. The Council's vision is to create a public sector version of the online experience that residents receive from leading retailers and banks.
- 1.2. The Council has made progress and has already responded to the changing habits of our residents by providing more information and services online and via automated telephony. It is now much easier to interact with us – to report a problem; to pay a bill; to see how taxpayer resources are spent; and to participate in a consultation. This makes people's lives easier and saves the Council money by reducing pressure on staff resources. However, we know there is more work to be done to respond to increasing public expectations.
- 1.3. The Council's vision for customer services in 2020 is:
 - That the majority of access is via digital means – 'digital by default'
 - Customer journeys enable efficient and effective resolution at the earliest opportunity
 - Customers receive a high quality personalised service, including relevant services from partners
 - Customers are connected to the community, not just Council services
- 1.4. The data in this strategy shows that 82% of Barnet residents, have access to, and are competent in using digital means to access information and transact. While in some areas significant progress has been made (e.g. 98% of schools applications are made online), telephone still makes up around 80% of the contact for many services.
- 1.5. A key benefit of this approach will be the ability to direct staffing resources where they are most needed. Moving more services to digital-only channels will enable the resources to be focused on those customers with complex needs – customers with accessibility issues or who are in vulnerable situations, which place requirements for customer advocacy or additional assistance and management of expressions of dissatisfaction with services delivered that requires an empathetic human response.
- 1.6. However, the strategy concludes, that while some savings can be made from channel shift, and access consolidation, much bigger savings and customer experience improvements will result from a combination of demand reduction and process improvement along all elements of the supply chain, making end-to-end journeys as digital as possible.
- 1.7. The strategy identifies that 5% of residents make up 20% of the calls to the Council. Understanding and engaging with this group should be a priority in terms of ensuring that any service redesign has the desired impacts.

- 1.8. This Customer Access Strategy seeks to identify what now needs to happen to translate the vision for customer access into reality. It contains a lot of data and the output of detailed discussions with the full range of Council services.
- 1.9. The strategy will require investment, so a business case will be developed.

2 KEY PROPOSALS FROM THE STRATEGY

2.1 The Customer Access Strategy identifies what needs to happen to translate the vision for customer access into reality and concludes with the following recommendations:

- **Website information provision** - It still appears to be easier to find a phone number and phone the Council, than it is for customers to find the answers they need on the Council's website. For example, amongst all the phone calls received by Social Care Direct, the customer service team for adult social care, 60% are resolved straightaway. This means that the majority of these phone calls will simply be seeking information or advice, and much of this information either is already, or could be, published online. At around 4,000 calls per month, this is costing around £10,000 per month. ***Information about Council services still needs to be much easier to find and accessible to more people. A review of the existing website is required as well consideration given of other ways of providing the information such as apps for mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones, and proactive delivery of information via email in response to customers' own search criteria.***
- **Website functionality** – while good progress has been made with the new website and My Account, there is still some missing functionality. **The following integrated functionality needs to be prioritised in the IT investment roadmap** as it is not possible to deliver modern, efficient customer services that promote self-service until this functionality is in place:
 - An online bookings/appointments tool for accessing all those services that offer appointments or public facilities
 - A corporate payments solution, so that there is one consistent, integrated and user-friendly tool for all services payments to be made online
 - An online geographic mapping tool that can be integrated with service systems so that location-based services and service requests and other data can be easily presented on interactive, searchable maps, using common standards for geographic data
 - An improved tool for managing webforms and the full end-to-end process through to the resolution of the customer request, which would provide customers with electronic alerts regarding status updates and notification of job completion
 - Improved online directories of services and organisations that support the Council's community participation and demand management objectives
 - Integration of the Barnet Homes online services with the existing My Account facility on the main Council website, enabling customers to view and interact with multiple services in one secure place.
- **Piloting self-service only services** - it is recommended that once we have implemented improvements to make it easier for customers to self-serve, and ensured that the end-to-end customer experience is efficient and effective, that a set of services are tested as pilots for "self-service only" services. This means that personal support from customer services staff over the phone or in face to face locations would be focussed on helping customers to self-serve, or helping those customers who are unable to self-serve, or who have a complex case. It should be

noted that self-service may include automated telephony solutions where these best meet the needs of customers and are possible for the service in question. The Council already has a number of automated telephony services in place. The pilots proposed below have been developed in consultation with the Delivery Units and Commissioning Directors and reflect high volume transactions that should be straightforward, where customer services staff intervention can usually add little value:

- Reporting highways and street related issues
 - License applications for businesses
 - Parking¹
 - New bins and waste collections
 - Pitch bookings
 - Library Membership
 - School admissions (excluding in-year transfers)
 - Schools information
-
- **Digital Inclusion** – this is the term used nationally to refer to people who have the ability and the means to use digital technologies that rely on internet access. Our data, and national data, says that 82% of Barnet residents are willing and able to use digital channels, but we recognise that the 18% that are not ‘digitally included’ are likely to be the key users of our services. We also know that within the 18% there are people who have computer and smartphone and internet access but choose not to use them, where additional support from the Council or community organisations could make a difference. We also know that there are ways of making digital services more accessible through various assistive technologies and intelligent design. For other customers who will never be able to use self-service tools we need to ensure we have special arrangements that enable their access to services. ***A Digital inclusion strategy needs to be prepared in advance of any decisions to make any service self-service only, clarifying how this group will be supported through the period of change, and include using learning from other authorities.***
-
- **Telephone Contact Centres** – currently the Council has a number of telephone contact centres:
 - **Customer Services main provision** – 75% of all contact centre calls, based in Coventry, managed by the Customer & Support Group (CSG);
 - **Social Care Direct** – first line support for enquiries related to adult social care, based at Barnet House, managed by CSG
 - **Re service hub** – based at Barnet House, managed by Re
 - **Barnet Homes** – two separate telephone contact centres: one for tenants and leaseholder services, and the other for housing options
 - **Electoral registration** – a specialist service run by CSG for elections, with in-year contact handled by staff in the Assurance Delivery Unit;

¹ This service has gone a long way towards ‘digital by default’ already, and any further development will adhere to national guidance that there should be provision in place to allow a process of oral PCN representations to be made to the Council where the vehicle keeper would struggle to communicate in writing by reason of his/her disability.

There are also over 1 million calls are also made annually to Council desk phones, a portion of which represent external customer contact.

- Given that diversity of access can create diversity of standards, and given the need for savings, the strategy proposes that the starting point is that where this can be proven to be the most cost effective option, and can deliver the required service quality, ***all Barnet calls should use the same technology, customer care standards, and potentially, the same contractual arrangements. Therefore, there needs to be a review of all remaining Barnet based call centres to assess future options.***
- **Re-designing customer journeys end-to-end** – We know from our data and research that fulfilling a customer’s request is what matters most to customers and their satisfaction levels. Therefore, if we were only to look at the contact methods and access points, we would not deliver the level of improvement required to achieve the Council’s vision. The full end-to-end customer journeys need to be reviewed to make sure that information is transferred accurately and efficiently from the customer to the teams that deliver the final outcome, who in most cases are not part of customer services.

It is proposed that the key customer journeys are identified and subjected to detailed review and re-design. We believe that these reviews will be needed before we can pilot any services as ‘self-service only’. Following data analysis and discussions with Delivery Units, **it is recommended that this work begins with the following four services**, prioritised using a number of criteria – known issues with end-to-end service impacting satisfaction, the potential for savings, and the potential for reducing telephone and face to face visits in favour of self-service:

- Street Scene service requests, building on the existing project underway
- Adult social care – self assessment and information
- Creation of a business portal – single point of contact for Council services for businesses (e.g. Business rates, Trade waste). This is also recommended for our first ‘App’ pilot (see recommendation below).
- Housing services (homelessness, housing options, and tenant and leaseholder services)

These reviews will help us learn how best to approach subsequent service reviews, and what the costs and benefits of redesigning the customer journeys and IT requirements are. The IT strategy has a workstream to develop integration of systems and data sharing. The detailed requirements for this need to be informed by requirements of this strategy.

- **Customer and Business Intelligence (BI)**. Information about customers that is not held by CSG is still difficult to access. The Council’s data warehouse solution, used for customer data analysis, does not have a full ‘single view of the customer’. Without this oversight, the Council cannot fully or efficiently understand how its customers are experiencing services, or where there are opportunities for improvements. ***The Council needs to ensure that high volume customer data is available across all services and all DUs need to make their customer data***

available to the data warehouse to give a total overview of the customer experience for Barnet residents.

- **Social Media** – the Council has two active Twitter accounts, one main one, and one for the libraries service. There is also a Council Facebook page, and a Barnet Libraries Facebook page, and a less active page for young people regarding employment and training ('BEETS'). Customers increasingly use the main Council accounts to report problems related to Council services – with on average two reports via this channel each day. CSG Customer services is in the process of taking on responsibility from the corporate communications team for responding to those social media contacts that raise customer service issues, with responses directing customers to use the existing access channels, particularly the Council's website, unless the issue concerns a technical problem with those channels. The Council is not proposing to create a dedicated customer services Twitter or Facebook account at this stage, due to the low volume of customer service messages, but this will be kept under review. The Council will instead focus its resources on ensuring that the Council's website is easy to use and delivers a quick, responsive service. ***The customer journey mapping projects will consider the role social media might play in improving the customer experience for the individual services being reviewed.***
- **Apps** – The strategy contains data on the huge increase in the use of mobile devices such as smartphones, which use 'apps' to access services. The strategy proposes that the Council develops an app to evaluate whether it improves customer satisfaction and increase self-service when compared to website self-service, and whether the cost is lower. The app would need to provide access to a service with a degree of complexity in order for it to be a useful pilot for testing a broader approach. ***Given the Council's aim to encourage an 'entrepreneurial Barnet' and the desire to make Council services for businesses more joined up and easier to access, it is proposed that a business app be the first pilot. This will be the goal of one of the four proposed end-to-end service reviews.***
- **Demand management and community participation** – The strategy primarily focuses on customer access to Council services, but in parallel the community participation programme, overseen by the Community Leadership Committee, is working to establish a stronger role for the community in delivering services and supporting residents. ***Commissioning Directors to identify, with their theme committees, how they wish customer services to promote more community participation and the use of community providers for the services they commission.***

2.2 The future of Council face-to-face Services

The Council's vision, as articulated in the Corporate Plan, is that, by 2020, the public sector will become more integrated in its approach to service provision, by co-locating in areas of need; pooling resources; sharing staff and assets; and developing joint solutions to manage demand and provide quality services. By 2020, the objective is that Barnet's public services will be commissioned jointly for the borough by the Council working in partnership with the NHS, Jobcentre, police, education providers and other local partners, and that those services which require face to face contact will be co-located in areas where there is need.

For residents, this approach will mean easier access to the services without having to deal separately with different agencies and, for the Council, it will reduce bureaucracy and generate efficiencies, with increased collaboration driving improvements in the way services are designed and delivered. The Council has already worked effectively to co-locate with other agencies in a 'hub' model in a number of areas, including the Barnet Welfare Reform Task Force and the Burnt Oak Opportunity Support Team (BOOST)

- 2.3 In Barnet, there are currently two face to face centres with a footfall of c.125,000 annually, with around 45% of visits to Burnt Oak Customer Services Centre and 55% to Barnet House. Most of these visits are for housing benefits and Barnet Homes services. Whilst there will remain a need for face to face contact for those at risk of homelessness, and family services clients, and for Universal Credit claimants of pension age, there is scope to reduce the need for the remainder of visits. The introduction of Universal Credit as a web-only service for working age claimants has established a precedent with regard to moving benefits claiming online.
- 2.4 Services that currently require customers to physically present documentation for proof of eligibility and entitlement will be asked whether this can be done remotely either electronically or by post, and making the required process changes will be incorporated into the proposed face to face project.
- 2.5 The model of obtaining advice via scheduled appointments rather than 'walk-in' is intended to become the main operational model for non-emergency face-to-face visits.
- 2.6 The Council's Assets and Regeneration Committee agreed that as part of the Council's accommodation strategy, the Council would initiate a new build development at Colindale, with a view to breaking the lease at Barnet House or sub-letting from October 2017.
- 2.7 There is no current plan to close the Burnt Oak Customer Services Centre. Thus the Council has a choice about what should happen to the face to face customer contact that currently happens at Barnet House. Through analysing the customer data and understanding the plans for the various services and Council buildings, section 6 of this strategy sets out where the demand would be met. At this stage, this shows that the demand can be accommodated within the other Council buildings that are available. However, as plans for community hubs and multi-agency working develop, these new sites can be considered for certain services. All these proposals need further investigation and detailed design, and will be informed by consultation with the public, which will commence following the Strategy's approval by this Committee.
- 2.8 The detailed proposals around provision in libraries will be developed early in the new year and will need to recognise the implications of the libraries strategy which is currently out to consultation. The funding implications will be considered as part of the development of the business case for the proposed face-to-face changes.

3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 Purpose of Report

The key purpose of this report is to assist the Council in:

- Understanding the current state of customer services across all Delivery Units;
- Understanding the gap between the current state and the agreed vision for customer services;
- Identifying opportunities for improvement that deliver improved customer satisfaction and reduced cost of delivery.

3.2 2020 Vision for Customer Services

The Council's vision for 2020 is that the vast majority of Barnet customers' interaction with the Council will be fully resolved via the web, and other self-service and automated channels, making the experience quicker, more efficient and flexible for all. Customers will experience a consistently high quality personalised service focussed on achieving fast and effective resolution of their queries and service requests, as well as promoting the services and the behaviour change the Council needs, such as healthy lifestyles, community participation and recycling. Resolution at the first point of contact will occur over 80% of the time, and satisfaction will consistently exceed 80%. The Council will be proud that it is transparent about the standards of service customers can expect across its vast range of services, and the fact that it consistently keeps its promises, and keeps customers informed by their chosen communication method when things don't quite go to plan. The Council will also be extremely proud of its track record in joining up with partners to find solutions to customer needs, and helping customers who need additional support to engage effectively with the range of public and third sector options available.

This strategy therefore explores:

- How can we simplify access and process, raise performance and reduce cost?
- What are the priorities for change from the sources of greatest customer frustration, complaint or avoidable contact with respect to customer access and greatest Council cost?
The data sources we have looked at include:
 - satisfaction surveys,
 - biannual residents survey,
 - GovMetric feedback,
 - complaints
- What are the barriers to achieving change? What is stopping customers from using existing digital access channels?
- What is the optimum channel for each service based on the nature of that service? Is that position altered by the nature of the customers who most use that service?

The underpinning philosophy is that if you start with the perspective of the customer, and design services according to how they would like to access them, you will deliver a more efficient and effective service. There are some common requirements that will relate to all customers – make services simple and quick to access and resolve, make sure that the staff handling them are helpful, friendly, and knowledgeable, make sure expectations are set and fulfilled, and that where services fall below expectation, communication is made and apologies are given. However, there are also important differences in terms of how people prefer to access services, and the specific services different customers need and rely on.

3.3 Background to customer services in Barnet

Barnet Council has moved to a commissioning model, taking a “best in class” approach to the delivery of services. This has resulted in a network of delivery mechanisms, varying from in-house services (e.g. Street Scene), outsourced contracts (e.g. Parking and CSG), and Local authority owned companies (e.g. The Barnet Group), a Joint venture company (Re Ltd) as well as services commissioned from the third sector.

The role of the commissioning side of the Council is to identify and review how services are performing and to consider the best way to ensure that the Council’s corporate objectives are being delivered.

However, it is recognised that regardless of the delivery mechanism, the residents of Barnet should not have to navigate the complexities of these arrangements and should expect a consistent high quality experience when they contact the Council, regardless of the channel.

Therefore there is a set of customer service related performance metrics that apply across all Delivery Units that are monitored on a monthly basis. CSG is responsible for compiling this, bringing together data for which it is directly responsible as well as data that is held within systems managed and owned by the Delivery Units.

Like many Councils, in seeking to ensure both consistency of response for customers, and to achieve value for money Barnet centralised a range of front office activities into a contact centre which was then, in September 2013, along with a range of back office functions and Revenues and Benefits, outsourced to Capita plc, as part of 10 year outsourcing deal. This deal gave the Council a guaranteed saving of £125m over the life of the contract. The savings would be delivered by a combination of efficiencies and income growth.

In terms of customer services, the key elements to achieving these saving were:

- Moving services to a shared service centre outside of London with a lower cost base (Coventry)
- Encouraging customers to utilise lower cost, self service access channels via the investment of a new customer services infrastructure (Lagan CRM², expanded automated telephony, new website, My Account) with design choices informed by a new ‘Insight engine’ in the form of a data warehouse and team of analysts
- Moving the two face to face service centres to an appointments model

At the same time as the CSG outsourcing, the Council signed a contract for a joint venture company, Re Ltd, a partnership with Capita plc for the delivery of a range of regulatory services. This contract is designed to deliver a net benefit of £39m to the Council by a combination of service efficiencies and growth. Currently, Re Ltd manages its own customer services function, via a Barnet-based service hub.

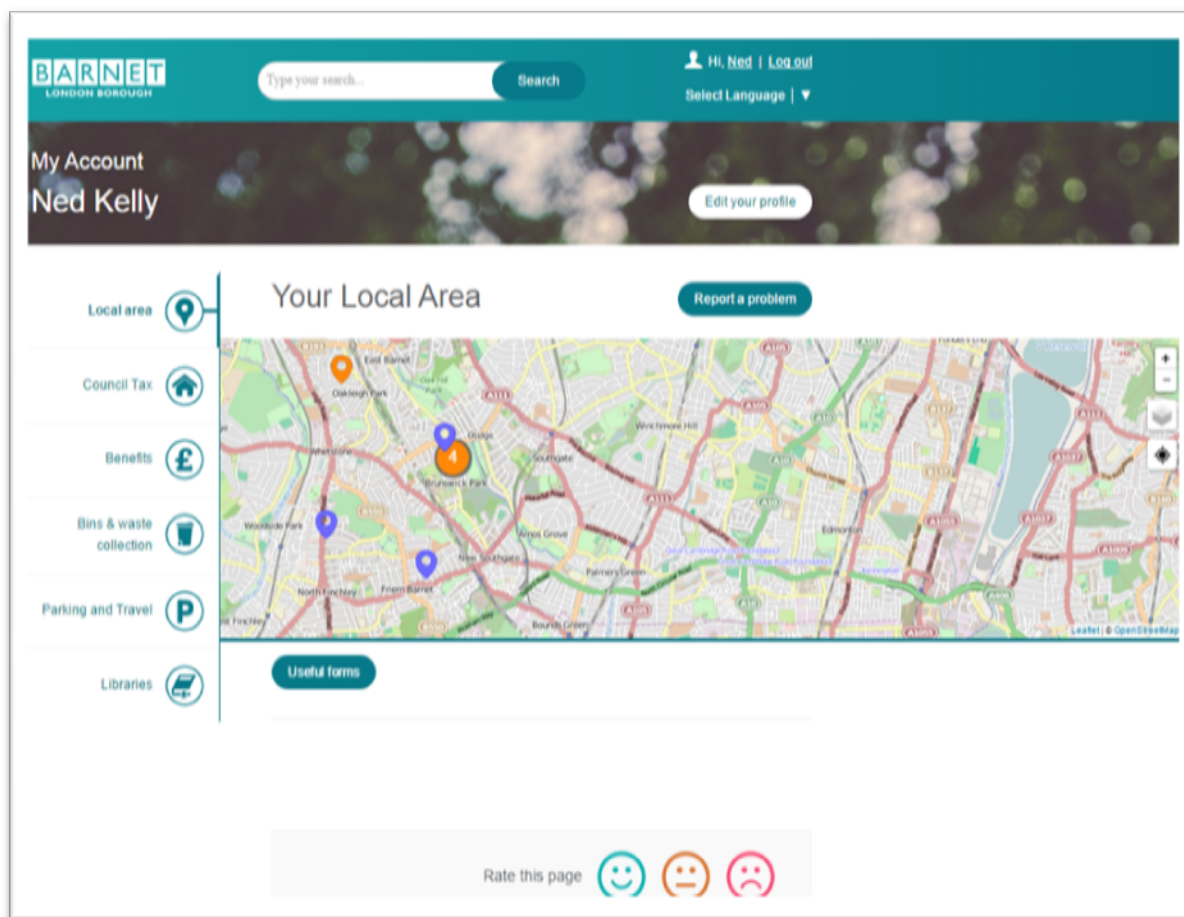
Barnet Homes, the Council’s social housing provider, also manages its own customer services function, based currently in Barnet House.

The first significant change for customers resulting from the CSG contract was the launch of My Account in March 2015. This resulted in the rebuilding of the Council’s website and the launch of a My Account functionality that enables customers to register to be able to easily access a range of the most used services. At the time of writing over 10,000 people had registered with My Account.

The first phase of My Account includes the following services:

² Lagan CRM is the system used by CSG to log customer transactions

- Report a Problem – and track how it's being dealt with
- Bins & Waste collections – keep a check on the dates of bin collections, seasonal changes and report a missed bin
- Parking – request, renew & pay for parking permits and vouchers
- Libraries – request membership, reserve and renew books and films & pay fines.
- Council Tax – register, check balance and make a payment
- Housing benefits – check your account, make payments and apply for benefits
- My Area – find out about services and events in the area
- Useful Forms – Find forms for a range of services with pre-population if you are logged into My Account



The Council has significant ongoing budgetary challenges over the spending period to 2020. CSG has a target to provide the Council with £0.5m savings from customer services by 2018, over and above the savings it already has to continue make as part of the original contract.

3.4 Links to other strategies

3.4.1 Community Assets, Libraries, Smarter Working and IT Strategies

The Customer Access Strategy is closely linked to the Community Assets Strategy, which is defining where and how physical contact will be available to customers in the future from both the Council and the large vibrant third sector that exists in Barnet. There is a proposal to rationalise the estate with the creation of community hubs. These will provide an opportunity for some services to be commissioned differently, with third sector groups providing signposting to residents to get support for services which the Council does not directly provide.

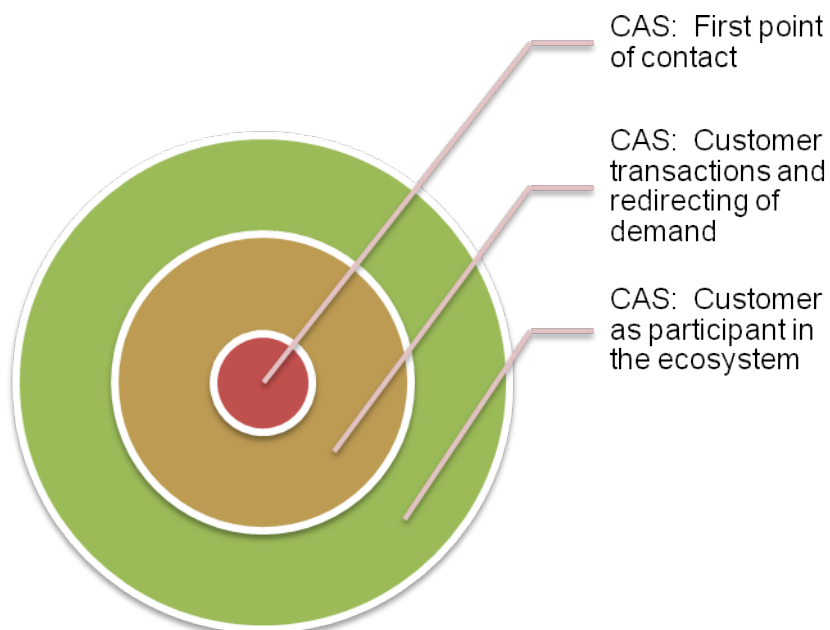
There is also a close link to the Council's Accommodation Strategy, which is setting out where staff will be located, which buildings they will operate from and the services that they will provide. This proposes a new Council headquarters in Colindale.

These strategies are underpinned by the IT strategy, which provides the technical architecture that is vital to achieving a step change in the digital offer for our customers.

3.4.2 Community Participation Strategy (CPS)

One of the ambitions for the CPS is to enable residents of Barnet to be active contributors to local public services in a number of different ways; as private citizens, as members of community groups or by helping to shape and deliver the marketplace of services needed to create a vibrant local economy. The totality of the system to make this happen is sometimes referred to as an eco-system.

The diagram below shows how CAS and CPS fit together, with customer access seen as the inner core of the system, but part of a much wider system linking together a much more extensive range of help and support mechanisms.



An initial step in developing this is the creation of a database of community assets, human and physical, that will be integrated into the customer services infrastructure to support the process of directing demand to community-based provision rather than necessarily Council services. As

new services are developed using an “innovations lab” model then this can become the conduit by which we shift demand away from our transactional services.

It is recognised that the customer access strategy needs to go beyond seeing residents as transactional customers and look to develop deeper relationships which see residents as active participants who are commissioning and perhaps delivering services as well as receiving them. As the community participation work is progressed this proposition will be developed.

3.4.2.1 Digital civic spaces

The Council is doing a great deal of work on physical regeneration and how the public sector estate can be best used, but increasingly Councils are also thinking about the role that digital technology can play in the ‘public realm’. Over the coming year the Council; intends to explore:

- Working with the town teams to experiment with smart cities technology, which involves introducing digital technology to Council-maintained infrastructure (for example, street lamps, car parks and traffic crossings)
- Working with libraries teams to explore the options for online community and digital social activity around library provision
- Working with the community participation team to ensure that digital technology supports the ambitions around new forms of volunteering

Digital civic spaces should have the same level of ambition that we have for our physical space investment and this will be developed during 2016.

3.4.2.2 Digital Inclusion

While the data in this report shows that the vast majority of Barnet residents are well placed to utilise digital channels, there is a group of residents who, for a range of reasons, are not part of the digital community. There is, as yet, no formal digital inclusion strategy for Barnet. This strategy does not seek to create, in full, a new digital inclusion strategy, but does identify areas where this is required if the vision is to be delivered.

3.5 Scope of this report

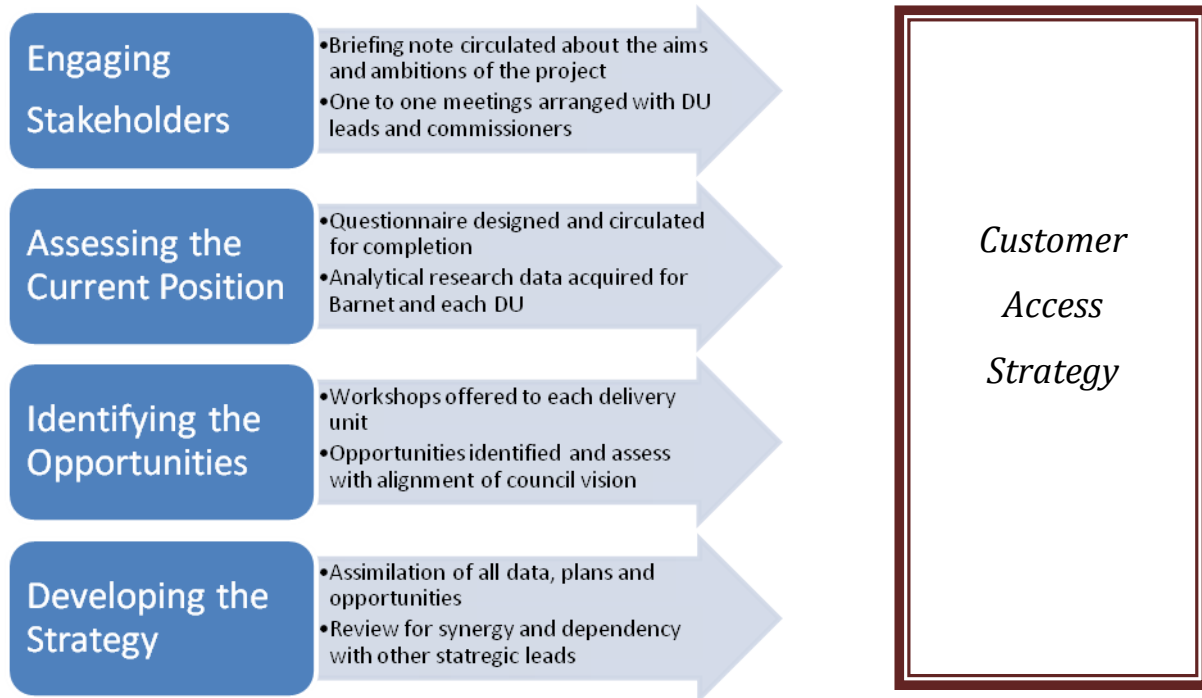
This report covers the key aspects of each delivery unit, their current position and future plans for a digital by default future. It takes into account the other related strategies (outlined above) and the major Council wide initiatives that will have an impact on customer access such as the development of the community and voluntary sector.

The report does not include a detailed appraisal of back office systems and the plans to automate back office functions. However, these initiatives are noted.

3.6 Method deployed in writing this report

The method adopted for compiling material for this report is summarised Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Method for compiling data for report



As the diagram shows, this report has been compiled as the result of a range and variety of interactions with key stakeholders from the Delivery Units, commissioners, the Insight team and those leading other Council strategic initiatives. These interactions included invites to attend one to one meetings, the completion of a questionnaire seeking information about the current position and future aims, workshops designed to present an understanding of the Insight data held about each delivery unit, to confirm the understanding of this and to qualify the future opportunities, the establishment of a customer access strategy room open to all stakeholders to review and comment on the emerging strategy.

These views have then been brought together to present the overall picture as well as taking in wider initiatives both across and beyond the Council. The outcome of the strategy will go to public consultation after Policy and Resources Committee approval.

4 UNDERSTANDING BARNET'S CUSTOMERS

Barnet is an affluent, healthy and diverse borough:

- The average annual income is £38,800, compared with a North London figure of £31,862 and nationally, £27,487.
- The average house price is £451,963 (ranked in the top 20% of districts nationally).
- The life expectancy is high in Barnet, fewer people smoke and/or are obese than the norm and cancer mortality rates are in the lowest 20% in the country.

4.1 Digital by Default in the UK

Barnet's ambitions do not exist in a vacuum. The whole of the public and private sector are addressing the issue of how to make best use of the opportunities technology provides to improve and simplify access to services. In March 2012 the UK Government made a commitment to move towards Digital by Default. The UK Government's Digital Strategy sets out how government will redesign its digital services to make them so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use them prefer to do so. This strategy:

- follows the [March 2012 Budget](#) commitment to digital services being the default
- has been developed collaboratively across government, as part of the [Civil Service Reform Plan](#)
- has been followed up with [departmental digital strategies](#), published in December 2012
- is supported by a cross-government approach to [assisted digital](#) provision

This strategy will affect the lives of the residents of the UK as a whole pushing the population towards the use of digital communication for government services (e.g. Universal Credit). To ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to engage with the Council's services we will need a more focused digital inclusion strategy.

4.2 Customers, Services and Access Channels

4.2.1 The digital world and the UK population as a whole

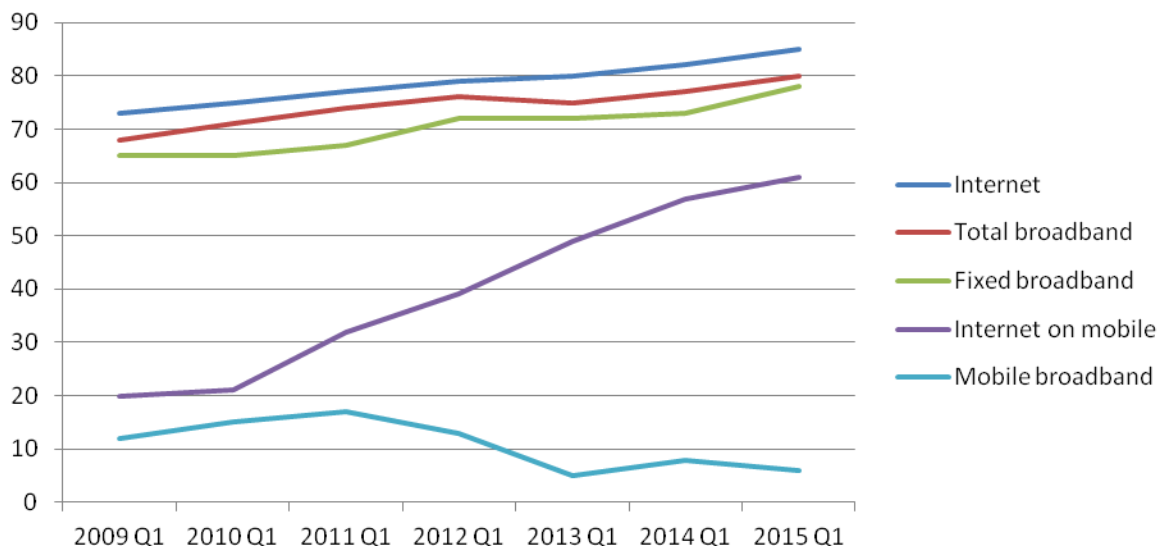
The digital world has become increasingly important to the UK population as a whole year on year. Ofcom's 2015 survey into 'The Communications Market' had the following key findings:

- **Almost eight in ten households now have fixed broadband access at home.** Home internet access continues to grow, with 85% of adults having access in Q1 2015, a rise of three percentage points since Q1 2014. In particular, fixed broadband has increased by five percentage points, standing at 78% in Q1 2015.
- **Smartphones have become the most widely owned internet-enabled devices, alongside laptops.** In Q1 2015 smartphones were present in two-thirds of households (66%), on a par with laptops at 65%.
- Tablet ownership has increased by ten percentage points since 2014, the largest increase of all internet-enabled devices, with over half (54%) of households owning at least one tablet. This increases to almost two-thirds (64%) of 35-54s. Although over-55s are the least likely to own a tablet, take-up among this age group has increased nine-fold over the past three years (37% vs. 4%).

- **The average amount of time spent online per user on smartphones exceeds that spent browsing on desktops and laptops.** In March 2015 users spent an average of 58 hours 39 minutes browsing or using apps on smartphones, compared to 31 hours 19 minutes browsing on laptops and desktop computers.
- **More than three-quarters of offline homes do not intend to take up the internet.** Fifteen per cent of adults did not have household access to the internet in Q1 2015. The majority of these said they did not intend to get access (12%); a further 1% of respondents were not sure if they were likely to get access, and 2% said they were likely to get access in the next 12 months

Figure 2 shows the changing nature of internet access between Quarter 1 2009 and Quarter 1 2015 as indicated in Ofcom’s report:

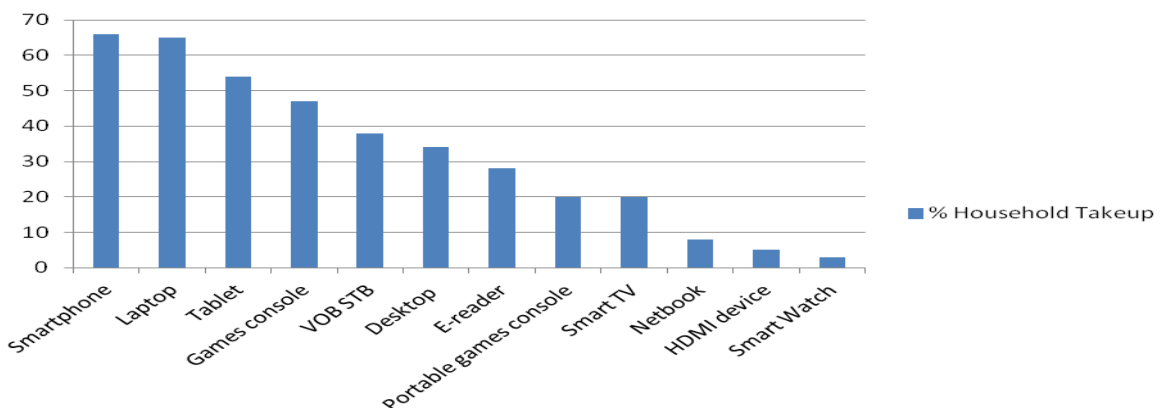
Figure 2: Household internet access - Q1 2009 to Q1 2015



It is interesting to note from Figure 2 that the largest change in the accessing the internet is the rise of use of Internet on Mobile (i.e. smartphones), tripling usage from 2009 to 2015.

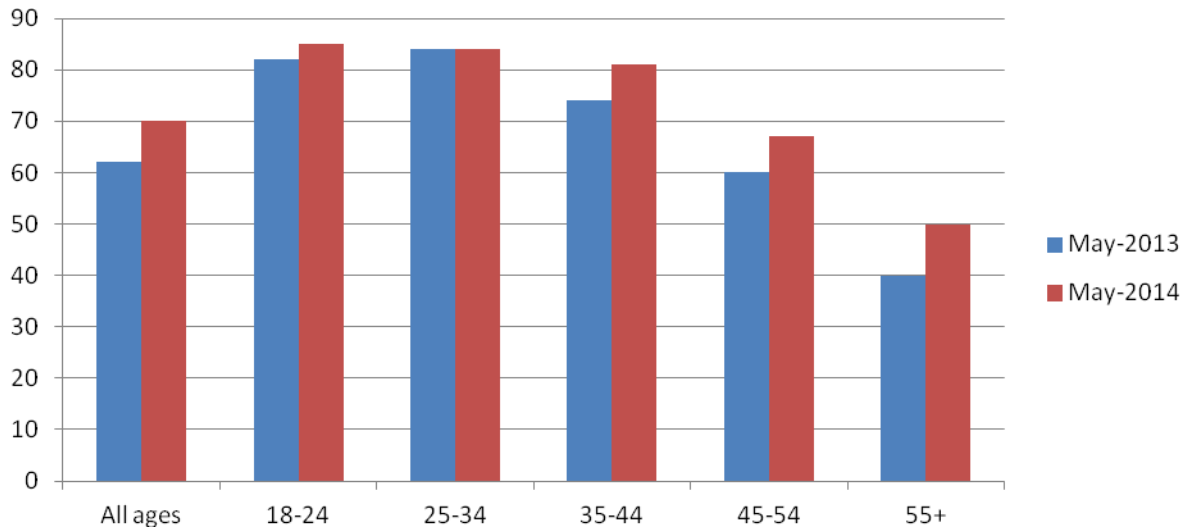
Figure 3 shows that smartphones are marginally the most widely owned internet enabled device.

Figure 3: Ownership of internet enabled devices - Q1 2015



Professional services firm Deloitte's Mobile Consumer Survey looked into five key trends in the smartphone market and habits of consumers. More than 4,000 UK consumers between the age of 18 and 75 participated in the research. The key conclusion is clear: mobile services dependency in the UK continues to rise sharply, and consumers can't seem to leave their phones alone. Figure 4 shows smartphone penetration per age group (as indicated in Deloitte's survey):

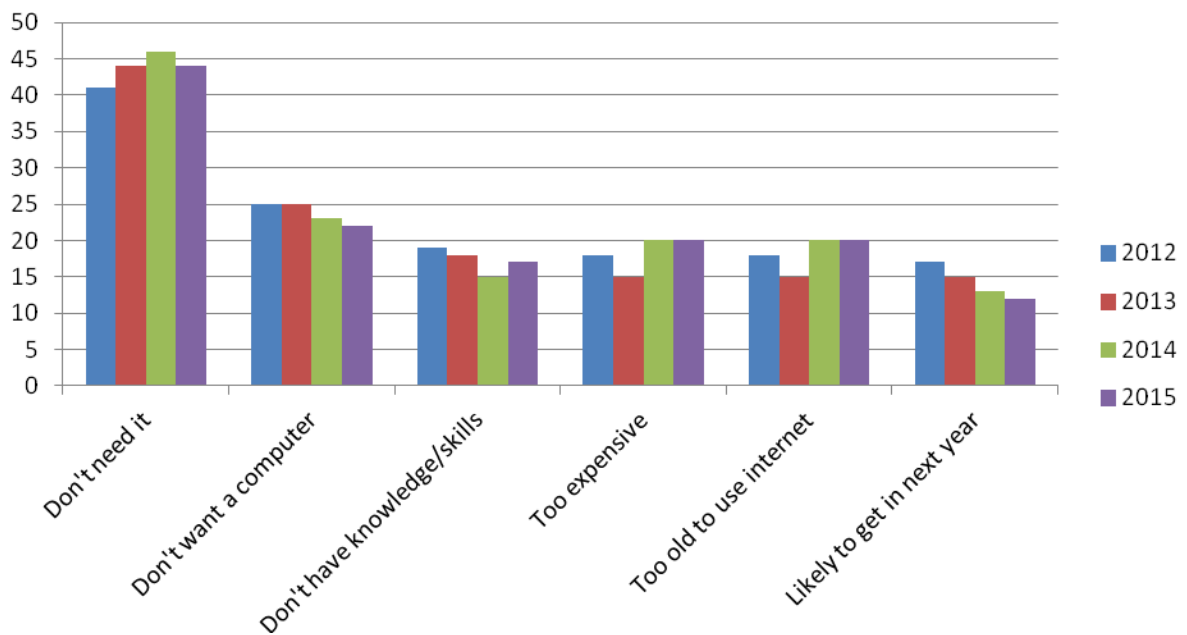
Figure 4: smartphone penetration by age group



For those homes that do not have internet access (according to Ofcom's 2015 survey into 'The Communications Market')

Figure 5 below shows the reasons given, with the most dominant reason being that the homes do not see a need for it, or want it.

Figure 5: Main reason for not having home broadband connection



According to Ofcom's latest 'Adult Media Use and Attitudes Report', 14% of UK adults are not online (for any reason) and are more likely to be aged over 65, and in lower income households.

Non-internet users were prompted with seven possible benefits of being online and were asked to say which of these, if any, would be the main advantages to them. Although just over half (52%) did not think there were any advantages to them being online, just over a third (34%) agreed that there would be some benefits, especially in being able to find information quickly (22%).

However, research shows that there are other benefits to digital inclusion. BT's report into 'Valuing Digital Inclusion' has calculated the financial value of digital inclusion for new users is worth £1064. Also, [EE's research into older internet users](#) indicates that for over half of those polled, being online is an important tool to reduce feelings of loneliness or isolation as it helps them feel closer to their families. Perhaps surprisingly, for the majority of people aged over 65, the internet is the most important source of news and information with 98% of those asked saying they would rather give up their TVs, radios, magazines and newspapers before cutting off access to the internet.

4.3 **Barnet Residents**

4.3.1 **Barnet Customer Segmentation**

The Insight team have created a number of customer segments to help the Council's understanding of the households and residents in Barnet. They were created using lifestyle, demographic, technological, and service usage data. This data is based on the Insight Report into 'London Borough of Barnet Household Segments – July 2015'.

The 17 customer segments created are described on the Council's open data portal: <https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset/barnet-information-dashboard>

The three largest segments in Barnet are:

1) Sophisticated Singles (14% of households)

These mixed households are predominantly represented by mature adults, many of whom are aged 45 years and over. Most have reached the pinnacle of their careers and are drawing very comfortable incomes. Sophisticated Singles are local business owners and pay business rates to the Council. The majority of Sophisticated Singles have lived in their homes for over seven years. Some may be living with older children or in shared homes. Overall, this group is likely to account for a large number of contacts to the Council, the majority of which will relate to car parking.

2) Educated, Affluent Families (14% of households)

This group comprises a mix of families of all ages who like to spend their time travelling and taking in activities that keep the kids occupied. Older families, especially those with children studying at college or university, will find time to enjoy more cultured activities such as theatre and dining. As expected, these families live in large houses that are likely to be mortgaged. Educated, Affluent Families lead busy lifestyles and are very enthusiastic towards any technology that makes juggling work and family life easier. However, they are likely to contact the Council by telephone for all things school and library related.

3) Low Income House Sharers (10% of households)

Households in this segment are characterised by their low income and living arrangements. They tend to be house shares, although there will be instances where an owner is renting out multiple rooms in a single property. People in these households are often fitness enthusiasts

and well travelled. This segment is the third largest in the borough by number of households, and as such accounts for a high proportion of Council contacts. Low Income House Sharers are keen internet users who are willing to navigate around the Council's website looking for specific information. However, important enquiries relating to benefit payments are likely to be submitted over the telephone.

The Insight team have produced the following summary of the Barnet Residents and their likelihood to use Council services based primarily on Lagan CRM data, which is used by CSG customer services, but not Re, Barnet Homes, or other Delivery Units:

Table 1: Barnet Residents likelihood to use Council services

Segment	Households	Adults (16+)	Adult Social Care	Schools	Benefits	Parking Permits	Libraries	Business Rates
Well Educated and Employed Single Parents	4,260	5,775	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Secure Older People	8,903	8,903	High	High	High	High	High	High
Financially Restricted Single Parents	7,448	12,036	High	High	High	High	High	High
Financially Secure Retirees	9,149	22,528	High	High	High	High	High	High
Low Income Singles	5,994	5,994	High	High	High	High	High	High
Low Income House Sharers	10,566	30,130	High	High	High	High	High	High
Comfortable Older Families	6,568	19,582	High	High	High	High	High	High
Wealthy and Nearing Retirement	4,277	8,355	High	High	High	High	High	High
Sophisticated Singles	15,301	34,779	High	High	High	High	High	High
Financially Secure Singles	2,509	2,509	High	High	High	High	High	High
Penny-wise Pensioners	10,181	14,538	High	High	High	High	High	High
Affluent Singles	9,404	17,849	High	High	High	High	High	High
Prosperous Young Couples without Kids	1,907	3,742	High	High	High	High	High	High
Educated, Affluent Families	14,374	38,900	High	High	High	High	High	High
Low Income Couples	1,172	2,303	High	High	High	High	High	High
Financially Restricted Single Students and Friends	2,164	5,039	High	High	High	High	High	High
Struggling Families	646	2,307	High	High	High	High	High	High

Note: The following legend indicates the likelihood to contact the Council in relation to a particular service in Table :

High Contact	Medium Contact	Low Contact
High	Medium	Low

While this data is interesting for those services where data is held in Lagan, it is not comprehensive, as does not include contact data which is held in other back office systems. A key recommendation of this strategy is the need to ensure there is a comprehensive approach to capturing customer data across all Delivery Units. Without this data, robust business cases for change will be difficult to develop.

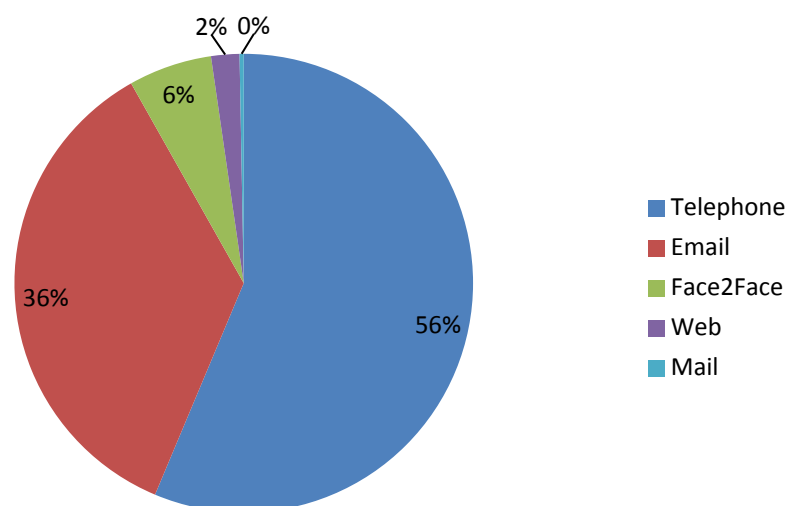
4.4 Access channels

The 4 key customer access channels that this report looks at are:

- **Face to face** – customers visiting our offices
- **Telephone** – this can be to the call centre or direct to the back office and can include the use of interactive voice response (IVR) technology
- **Mail** – this relates to traditional paper forms or letters
- **Email** – typed communication, which is usually unstructured and requires time to consider the query and respond
- **Webforms** – use of our websites and My Account to find out information and perform transactions.

Figure 6 indicates the likelihood of the residents of Barnet to contact the Council using the access channels mentioned above for transactions, based on a sample size of 788,339 recorded transactions. This excludes all those contacts that are resolved ‘instantly’ (first contact resolution) and do not involve the creation of a case. When these contacts are included, the telephone contact figure rises above 80%.

Figure 6: Contact Type Percentage for Barnet Residents for Lagan Logged Service Requests



The average costs associated with each of these access channels are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Cost per Transaction (local government data)

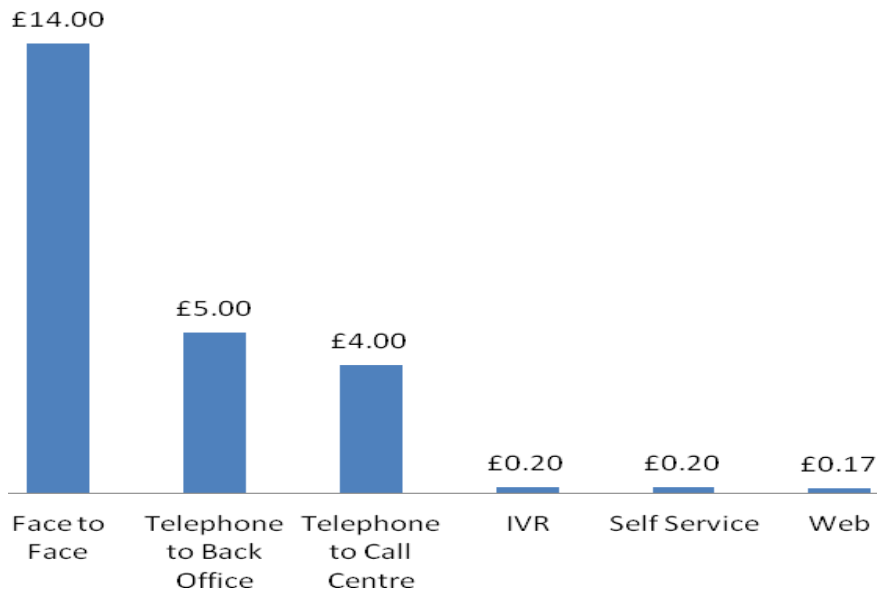


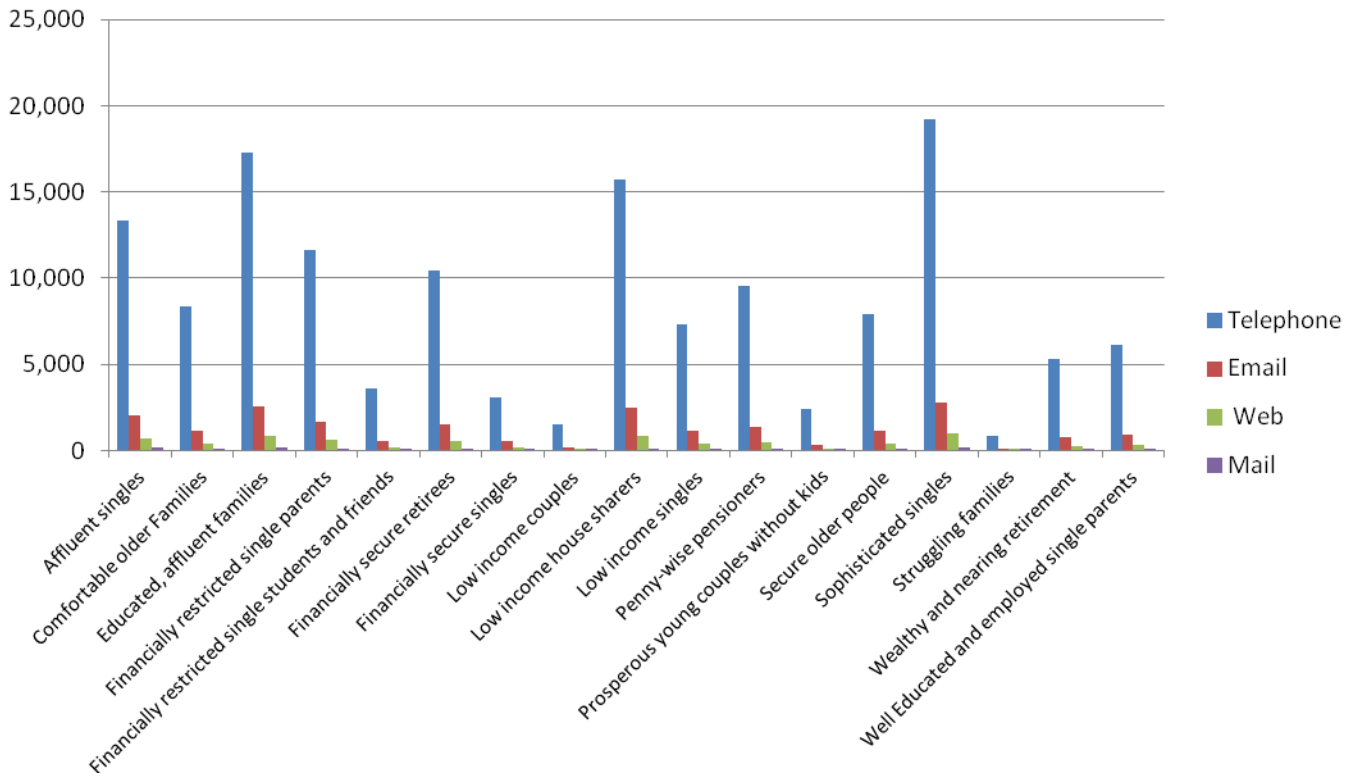
Figure 7 shows that face to face communication is by far the most expensive, followed by telephone and then the web, which is 70 times cheaper, as all of the investment is up front in terms of functionality and integration with back office systems. It allows the customer to access information and perform transactions themselves.

4.5 Delivery Unit and service level data

Each delivery unit has its own analysis. Where this has been provided, it is included with the Delivery Unit specific pages. Generally, other than for CSG services where data is included in Lagan, and Re which has performance indicators that require a channel breakdown, it is not possible to get a comprehensive view of all customer contact broken down by channel. Specifically, e-mail traffic, is in the main, not logged into any specific system and therefore not readily available for analysis.

However, the data held within Lagan CRM system does include over 700,000 transactions across a diverse range of services. This has been applied across the customer segments, shown in figure 8.

Figure 8: Contact volumes by segment and contact method



The telephone channel is significantly higher than every other type of access channel used for contacting the Council. Figure 8 also shows that the following segments: Sophisticated Singles, Educated Affluent Families and Low Income House Sharers contact the Council most frequently, which is to be expected given that they are the largest segments by household numbers.

Table 2 below, looks at access channels from the perspective of Council Delivery Units.

Table 1: Access Channel summary for Delivery Units

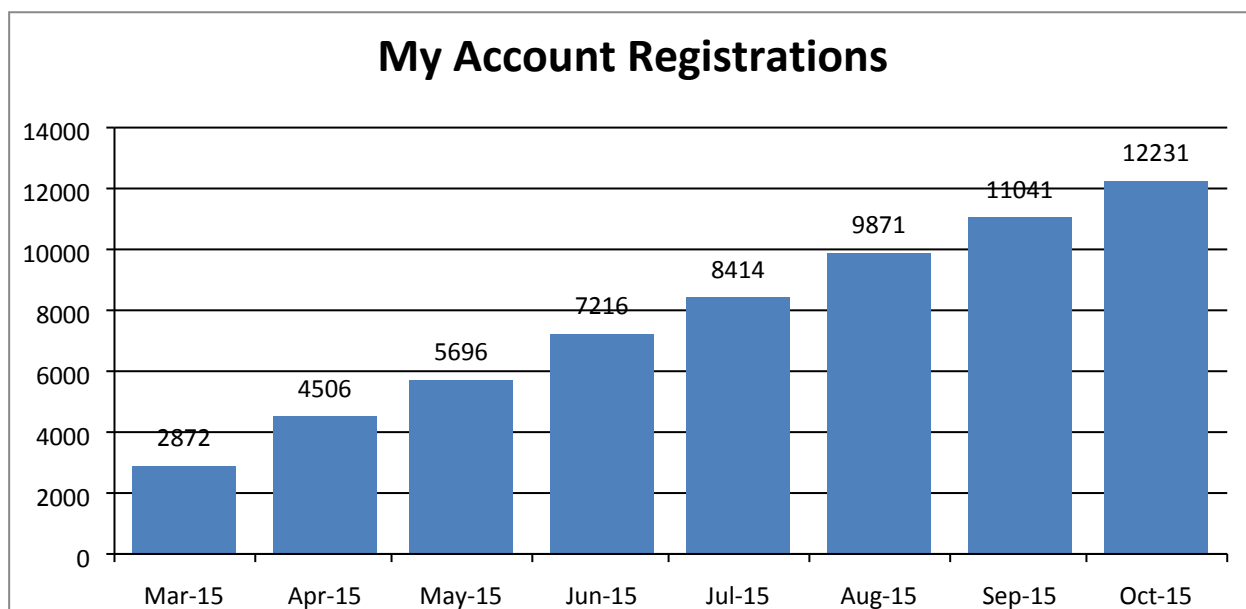
Delivery Unit	Access Channel				
	Face to face	Telephone	Email	Web	White Mail
CSG – Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd largest contact method, driven by Housing Benefits • Two ‘walk in’ centres available, although the focus has shifted to appointments, freephones and web self-service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly used for switchboard services • New IVR introduction to push channel shift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd largest contact method but resource intensive to manage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of My Account functionality • Problems with navigation of website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited
CSG - Revenues & Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary method for new claimants – assessment process requires a face to face assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intelligent IVR features required to drive channel shift • Used in relation to enquiring around updates to accounts/transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used in relation to enquiring around updates to accounts/transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit features are included in My Account • Used in relation to enquiring around updates to accounts/transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used in relation to enquiring around updates to accounts/transactions
RE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning reception at Barnet House. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of areas that are income generating & hence would require this contact method to generate income • Customers will tend to want to use this method when fast response is required (e.g. noise nuisance issues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest method of contact for planning • Seen significant shift to e-mail for highways and Environmental Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Report a problem’ usage is starting to gain wider usage but still too earlier to assess impact • Webforms are not intelligent which drives customer towards telephone • There are problems with search functionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal
Street Scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly used with ‘friends’ who maintain parks, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently used by parents/guardians looking to cancel SEND transport • Used as a method of raising issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still small numbers but impact of My Account could be changing this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used as a general source of information • Could be used for reporting issues with bin collections etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest contact method used • mostly related to PCN queries/appeals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal use • Since introduction of My Account the numbers of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small number

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLA different than normal for PCN, customers call up to find out progress • Recently installed closed loop IVR to deal with number of contacts related to PCNs 		those taking up the parking service have increased month on month	
Barnet Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of contacts related to Housing options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest contact method used • Contacts from housing options and tenants/leaseholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two mail boxes (one for housing options & second for tenants/leaseholders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited functionality (really only useful for logging a complaint) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited
Adults & Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily carers in crisis • Require information/advice about services and providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest contact method • Primarily carers in crisis • Require information/advice about services and providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly used by professionals (e.g. Doctors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small uptake • Perceived difficult to use • Not interactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Assurance (including Elections)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small number • Mostly by public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly used by those involved in Council • Small percentage (~10%) by public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available but not used very often (spikes at election time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members and officers tend to use micro site for information & advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest contact method due to legal requirement
Education & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly used by young people related to BPSI and Post 16/BEETS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly used in relation to special education needs and disabilities (SEND) services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98% of school admissions through web portal • Used frequently for BPSI • Used frequently by newly qualified teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for the majority of cases where supporting documentation is required

Email channel is hard to analyse as this type of communication is unstructured, often open ended and can often be misused, for example to send junk email unrelated to requests for services.

The web channel is currently used to access the My Account facility. It is still relatively early to know if this will impact the actual use in terms of enrolment for services and then actual transactions that impact tendency to use the phone. Figure 9 shows that the number of My Account registrations is steadily increasing, which is encouraging at this stage in its development. In November a poster campaign was launched to promote the use of My Account – note that at the time of writing November’s data was not available, however it is anticipated that the campaign will have boosted registrations significantly.

Figure 9: My Account Registrations



4.6 Customer satisfaction data

There are a number of forms of customer satisfaction data that have been examined when developing this document. The following section covers the most important aspects of that information.

Residents’ Perception of Barnet Council

According to the ‘Residents’ Perception Survey Autumn 2014’ Barnet residents are generally in line with the national average in terms of satisfaction with the Council. That report shows that the following areas are most important to Barnet Residents as a whole:

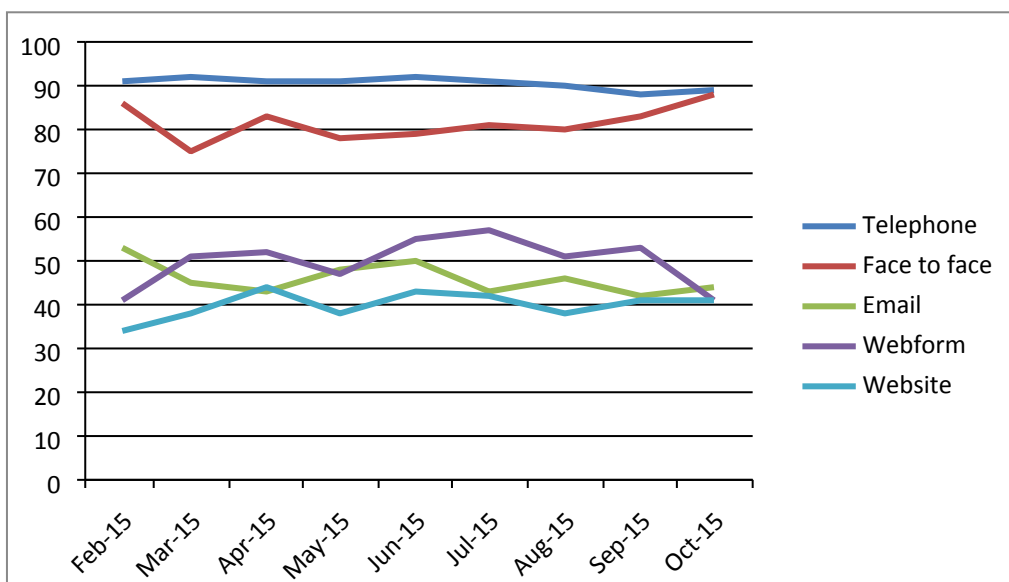
- Condition of Roads and Pavements
- Lack of Affordable Housing
- Crime

This report also showed a decline in the perception that the Council keeps residents informed, this area had shown that largest decline in feeling that residents had in relation to the Council.

Satisfaction Levels for Customer Access

The 'Performance and Contract Management Customer Experience Q4' report indicates that between October 2013 and March 2015 the residents contacting the Council are consistently most satisfied when contact is either via telephone or face to face; and customers are consistently least satisfied when contact is via the web (both general web and transactional webforms). This can be seen graphically in Figure 10 (note that for the October 15 data the webform and website data has not been separated).

Figure 10: Percentage Satisfaction per contact channel between February 2015 and October 2015³



GovMetric feedback about the website

For the web, there is a system used called GovMetric which enables customers to provide feedback. A manual check through the more negative comments about digital communication left by customers seems to indicate the following:

- That customers like to be kept informed of progress and get frustrated whenever requests take a long time to complete
- Residents find that the website is difficult to navigate
- There are quite a few comments relating to the difficulty in finding contact telephone numbers for the Council on the website (but the checking for a number could be related with difficulty in finding information that they require and the time taken for electronic requests to be completed).
- The information supplied is not always up to date
- The information supplied is not always in the easiest format (e.g. lack of maps to display information: parking zones, polling stations, school catchment areas, etc)
- Residents seem to have problems completing the webforms (reports of them not working, timing out before completion and also inability to save drafts of forms)

There are also positive comments related to the website, these tend to relate to the following:

- The look of the site

³ Email ratings are collected for CSG customer services only

- The ease of finding information
- Ease of use of some of the new My Account features (e.g. updating segment information, ordering bins)

4.7 What we know about Barnet residents

4.7.1 Customer Segmentation

From research carried out by the Callcredit Information Group the segment comparison between Barnet residents and residents of London as a whole, is shown in Figure 81:

Figure 81: Segment Breakdown of Barnet Residents versus London population

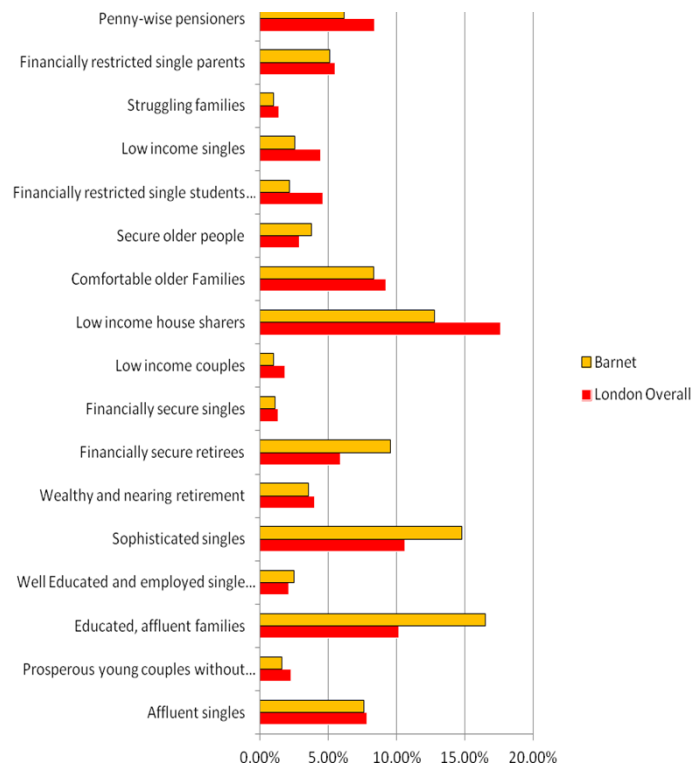


Figure 81 shows that in relation to the residents of London as a whole; Barnet residents have a higher proportion of three segments – Financially Secure Retirees, Sophisticated Singles, and Educated Affluent Families.

The customer segmentation chart above has also been broken down to show the mean age groupings that the different segments split into.

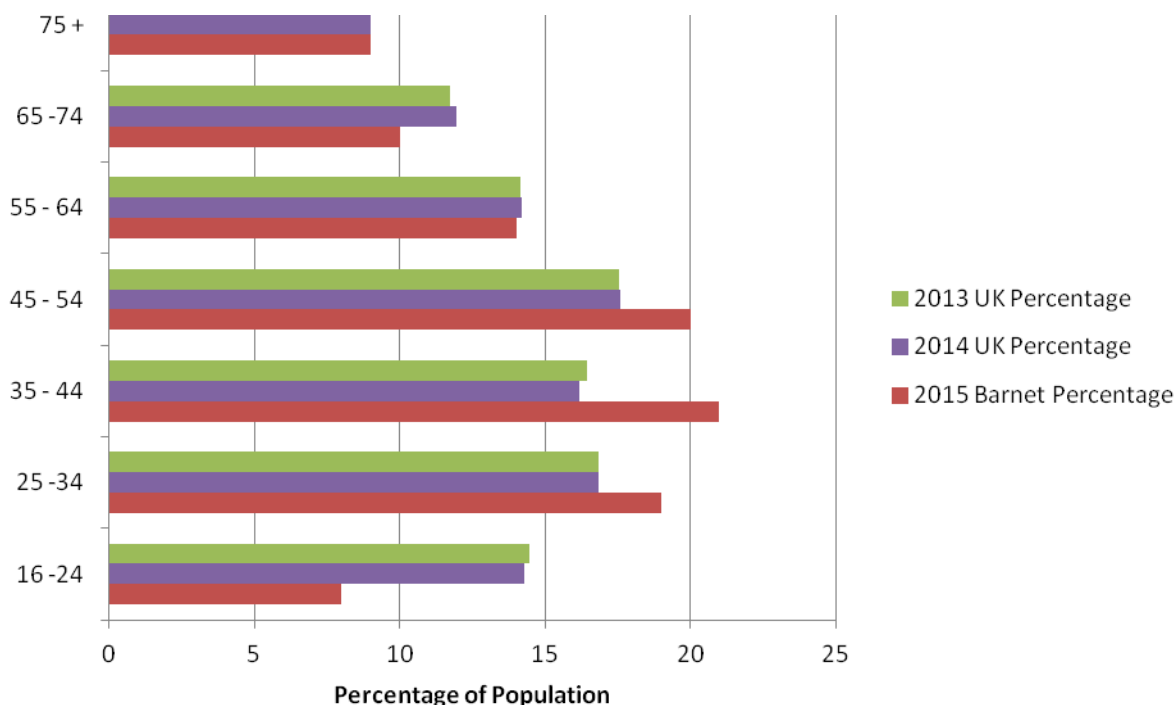
Customer Segment	Mean Age Group
Financially Secure Singles	25-34
Prosperous Young Couples	
Financially Restricted Single Students & Friends	
Secure Older People	35-44
Affluent Singles	

Well Educated & Employed Single Parents	45-54
Financially Restricted Single Parents	
Educated Affluent Families	45-54
Sophisticated Singles	
Low Income Home Sharers	
Comfortable older families	
Low Income Singles	
Struggling Families	
Wealthy & Near Retirement	55+
Financially Secure Retirees	
Low Income Couples	
Penny Wise Pensioners	

The Barnet Customer Segmentation chart (shows that the largest mean age grouping that Barnet resident households fall into is 45-54, with more than 50% of residents included in that grouping).

Compared with the UK, the age group profile of Barnet residents is shown below.

Figure 92: Age group break down: Barnet Residents versus UK population



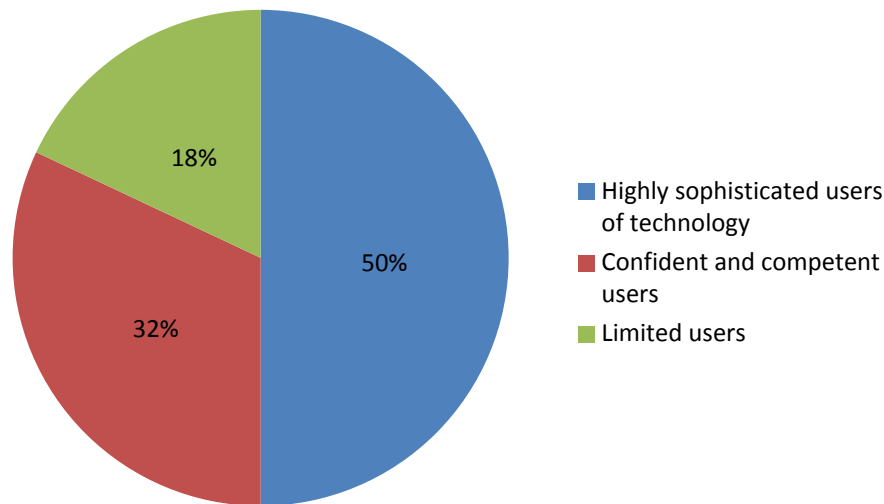
Compared to the UK as a whole, Barnet's population shows that there are noticeable differences in the age groupings 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 where Barnet has between a 3 & 5% higher population than the UK average and in the age groupings 16-24 and 65-74 where Barnet has a lower populations than the UK average (6% and 3% respectively).

4.7.2 Barnet Residents' confidence in using the internet

In relation to confidence in using of the web:

- 82% of Barnet residents with internet access are confident and competent or highly sophisticated users of technology.

Figure 13: Web confidence percentages of Barnet residents



The information for the chart above was provided by Callcredit Information Group detailed in the CSG Insight Report into 'Connectedness of Transactions – April 2014'.

These figures are set to increase in the future as the population becomes more tech savvy and is used to doing things online, often finding this the most convenient access channel, especially outside of normal working hours.

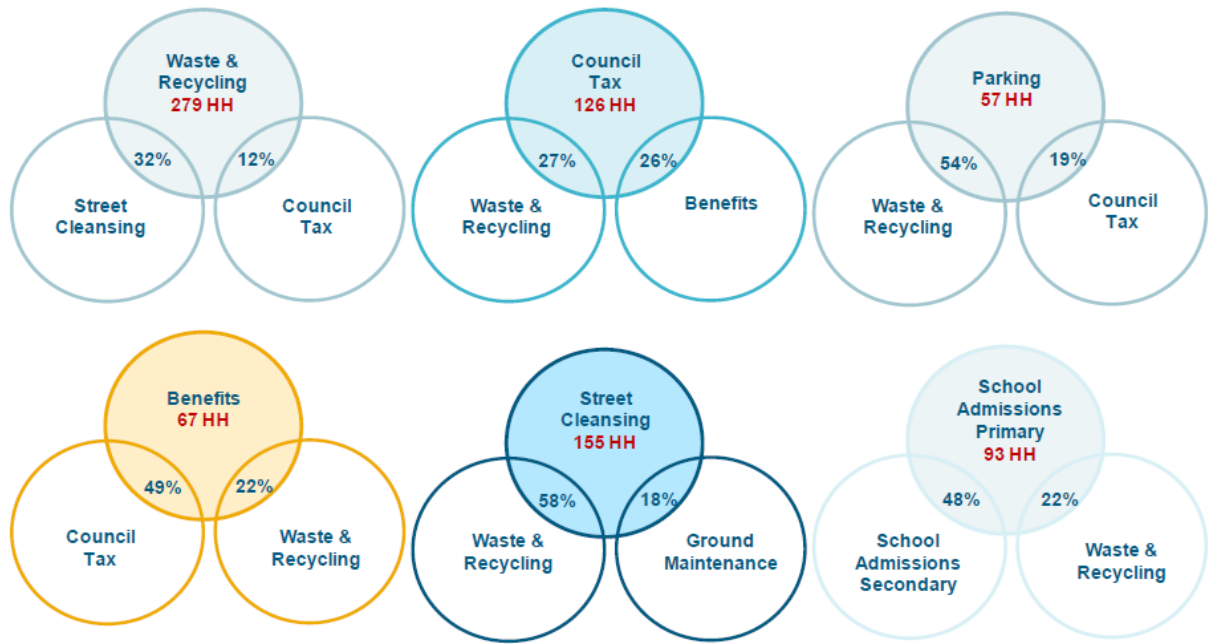
Given this profile, it is not unreasonable to assume that the prospects for moving to a “digital by default” is as good in Barnet as it is likely to be anywhere else in the country and that we should not be afraid to lead the way in this respect.

4.7.3 Investigation into clustering

The CSG Insight team have completed a number of investigations into those residents who frequently contact the Council and any clusters of services that these individuals contact the Council about.

These investigations show that the 20% of contacts are made by 5% of the customers. Some of the clusters of services used by this 5% are shown in Figure 14; the aim being to show where the same person contacts the Council for multiple services. Again, this is focused on data that is currently available in Lagan CRM, so is not comprehensive. It is interesting to note that 58% of people whose main reason for contacting the Council is street cleansing will also contact us about waste collection and recycling. This can help inform how customer services teams are structured and how online services are grouped, so that customers can perform multiple transactions with ease.

Figure 14: Contact Clusters



5 UNDERSTANDING THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE COUNCIL'S DELIVERY UNITS

The following sections were seeking to answer the following questions:

In terms of delivering the 2020 vision:

- Where are Delivery Units now in terms of customer satisfaction, performance, channel shift and efficiency;
- What plans do they already have in place that will impact this;
- What opportunities exist for further progress;
- What barriers need to be removed to accelerate progress.

The sections below are a summary of where we are to-date in answering these questions and there are significant differences between Delivery Units in our ability to do this. This is due to a number of reasons such as:

- Data does not exist or it is simply too difficult to extract;
- The timing of this work clashed with other priorities so engagement was difficult;
- The data to answer the questions is split between too many systems.

5.1 Adults & Communities

5.1.1 Main services provided

Social Care Direct, a service that is part of CSG Customer Services, is mainly accessed by telephone and is by far the main form of contact for enquiries, with customer wanting to speak to someone and resolve queries. These queries generally refer to information and advice as well as assessments. Segment1 contact is preferred because, for example, carers tend to seek help when they reach crisis point. In social care there will always be a need for direct phone channel or face to face due to nature of the work

Adults and Communities have a referral management team for Adults (residents aged 18+) who need support with their social care needs. The service covers giving information and advice, dealing with requests for assessments (including carers' assessments), providing support to carers, reviewing and making variations in care, ordering equipment and raising safeguarding alerts.

5.1.2 Main customer types

Customers can be adults in need of social care or their carers. Some adults have never used social care services but following a crisis need support – some for the short term, some for the long term. For example, an older person who has had a fall.

Carers tend to access services at crisis point when they feel overwhelmed by their situation.

People with learning disabilities have generally been receiving services for a long time and are known to the service.

Some adults have long term conditions and have also received services over a long period of time.

5.1.3 How services are currently delivered

The most popular contact method is by telephone, and is often used by carers in crisis as an immediate means of discussing their situation, or by people needing advice about information services and providers.

Carers also use face to face contact when in crisis and this channel is also used when seeking information and advice.

Email is mostly used by professionals, for example by GPs.

The web access channel is used, but there is a small uptake. It is thought that service users perceive it as difficult to use and not interactive, because there are few transactions available.

The following graphs give the contact information for Adults and Communities based on their own data relating to contacts to Social Care Direct. Figure 105 shows the access channels used by Barnet residents to contact this delivery unit between August 2014 and April 2015. Figure shows the first contact resolution percentage for the six month period between January and June 2015.

Figure 105: Total contacts from August 2014 to April 2015 (35, 452 contacts)

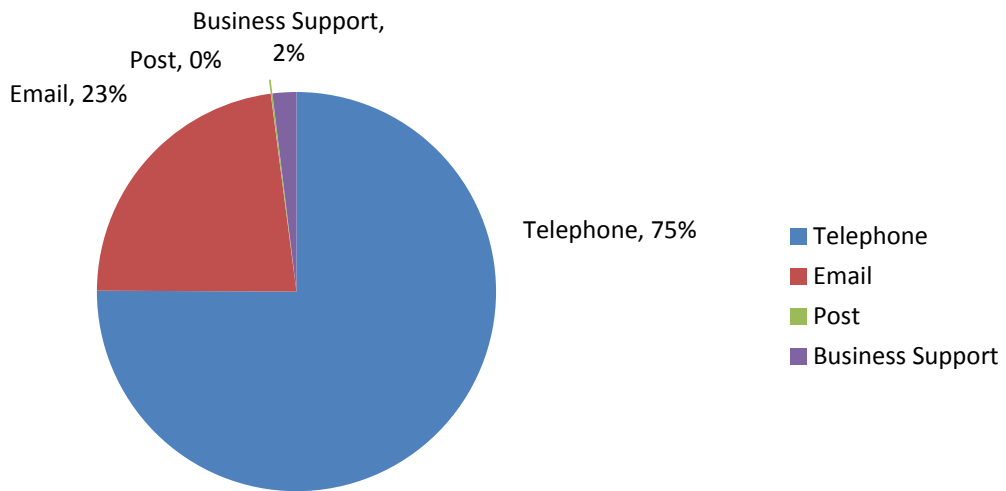


Figure 15 shows that the majority of contacts to Social Care Direct are by the telephone access channel (75%). It should be noted that the average call time is approximately 5 minutes during the period August 2014 and April 2015 (this average takes into account calls that last more than 45 minutes which would drive up the average call time).

Figure 16: First Contact Resolution Percentage

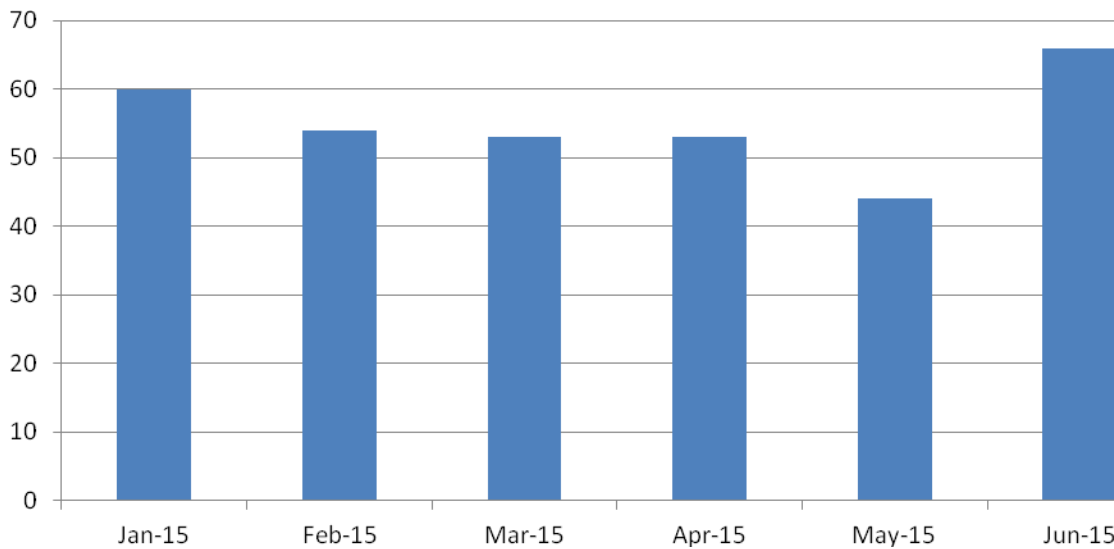


Figure 16 shows that around half of the telephone calls received between January 2015 and June 2015 were resolved in the first contact. The information supplied by Social Care Direct in relation to number of first contact resolutions by telephone suggests that there is a potential to make a shift towards providing information and early assessments digitally. This would have a potential to generate savings and may also improve customer satisfaction.

5.1.4 Current position

- There is a website that customers can access, though the structure is a little flat with not much functionality behind the webpages.
- The website is currently is complex and difficult to manage and not fully accessible for all client groups, for example those with learning disabilities. Webforms for straightforward transactions are not available – to make a statutory complaint, request an assessment, a piece of equipment, or carers assessment for example. The webforms there are do not integrate with current case management system so information has to be inputted again.
- There has been a lot of investment in IT with the Adults & Communities delivery unit and a web portal is being developed, similar to the Council's My Account. This would allow for self service, community interaction and interaction with other related services. It will be important that this functionality is accessible from, and supported by, the community participation database.
- One of the main challenges is the high proportion of older people in Barnet. It is often felt that the older people who require the service may not be as technically savvy as others. However, other research points to the fact that well educated baby boomers tend to do a lot online and where service users do not have these skills, the services are often accessed by younger family members.

5.1.5 Adult and Communities digital vision

The delivery unit's vision is to:

- Use digital means to drive residents away from using telephone as the first form of contact. Examples would be by improving information and advice available, allowing for changes of circumstances to be completed online.
- Review the end to end journey and see what parts of the journey would be enhanced by moving to digital solution, up to 40% shift to digital use would seem attainable
- Deliver an integrated solution, tailored to the need of the individual, with the individual as the starting point for the development of this platform, with a focus on life events rather than the service, utilising and integrating all information accordingly
- Available to customers on their chosen media – smartphone, tablet, computer
- Features like smart webforms will allow for self assessments
- GPS technology to allow customer to connect to others will similar interests and increase community engagement
- Live chats with professionals from Continuing Healthcare and the Council, such as social workers and occupational therapists.

5.1.6 Barriers to achieving the vision

The Adult and Communities vision would be for a whole life approach – to allow customers to retrieve the information to plan for later life rather than request formal help later. This would require an interconnectivity of service providers, and the development of information/advice hubs (from an alliance of providers). However, as yet there is no link to voluntary organisations who are commissioned to offer information and advice on behalf of Adults and Communities.

We know that:

- The website is complex and difficult to navigate for many adult social care customers, with the result that most contacts relate to requests for information and advice
- Website forms are flat forms, have limited functionality and do not provide automated help for completion
- Website forms do not integrate with back office systems

In relation to My Account there are no service features currently available through My Account for Adults and Communities. However, it is intended that the Community Participation Strategy will deliver more community activity and through the implementation of Mosaic (Case Management software), it is planned to increase the number of online transactions. In process is the development of a web portal, which will provide opportunities to self-assess and view client records – both available to service user and family carers to access, amend and view – but also to extend to professionals (planned for 2016).

5.1.7 Future plans

Plans include providing a ‘seamless’ online experience, supporting multi-channel access and choice.

Through Mosaic, completed online forms will directly upload to the client record enabling a smoother and faster process for professionals and clients.

The online portal will offer an ‘intelligent’ online assessment to guide people – linking to Social Care Connect (online database).

Moving more of the straightforward transactions online should reduce the number of phone calls to Social Care Direct – freeing up time on the phones to deal with more complex enquiries.

There is also a need to consider alternative delivery models with face to face assessment e.g. information and assessment hubs (community hubs) with an alliance of information and advice and assessment providers, so people can get a service under one roof rather than having to go to different providers for different services.

5.1.8 Opportunities

The main opportunities for Adults and Communities to become digital by default are therefore as follows:

1. Eligibility Checker

This is about implementing functionally rich webforms, which will ask a series of questions of the applicant, with a response which will qualify their likelihood of a funded care package. This will allow data to be collected once (at the point of entry), rather than twice (at the first point of contact and then again at the assessment stage). Giving the customer an expectation of whether their application/assessment would be likely to be approved is likely to reduce both contact demand, and demand for services. The scope of this initiative will apply to any adult and will deliver the following benefits:

- Avoidable contact
- Avoidable cost
- Managing expectations

In order to assess the timescales a technical assessment and legal checks would need to be made. However, Southampton has implemented this solution already. The programme would mean that citizens would:

- See links to free services
- Be able to create a segmentl plan for services
- Have a view across services
- Be able to see the available slots for advocacy services.

2. Email to webform

Currently, 25% of contacts into Adults and Communities arrive by email and from professionals. The aim of this initiative is to force professionals to make structured submissions, such that full information is provided right first time and that good quality management information can be collected about referrals at the contact. It would be ideal if these forms could be designed such they fit into the Mosaic system. The new case management system (Mosaic) implementation is to be completed in 2016 and this could be looked at as an addition after that. Benefits will be for both professionals and internally for processing referrals.

3. Webforms

Completing online forms, for example, a carer's form, allowing residents to start the process themselves, before completing it with their care professional.

5.2 Assurance, Elections and Electoral Registration

5.2.1 Main services provided

Assurance

The work includes managing Governance, Internal Audit, assessing Corporate Risk and corporate anti-fraud (CAFT) initiatives.

Elections and Electoral Registration

The team administer the electoral register and support the elections process, including canvassing citizens who are eligible to vote and reissuing lost ballot papers.

5.2.2 Main customer types

Assurance

Main customers are internal managers and members. The nature of the service means that there is generally not a great deal of contact with residents, other than those who submit public questions and speak at committees.

Elections and Electoral Registration

The team interact with everyone entitled to vote in Barnet.

5.2.3 How services are currently delivered

Assurance

Most contacts are via email although customers, members and officers also use the barnet.modern.gov.uk microsite. The website is self-serve, for information and advice, committees and decisions, and there is information about which named officers can help if needed.

There is a generic email address for public to use, but this is not used very often. There are a few phone calls received around the time of key Council meetings, but only about 10% of these are from the public. The main face to face contact with the public is at public committee meetings.

Elections and Electoral Registration

Elections have a dedicated direct telephone number, provided by CSG in recent years, for 6 weeks before an election.

All electoral data must be held and managed by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and/or Returning Officer (RO).

Throughout the year there are few face to face transactions, less than half a dozen per day. In the immediate run-up to elections, there are higher numbers of transactions that involve reissuing of postal ballot papers for people who have lost them, spoiled them or didn't receive them. Legislation requires that electors pick up their replacement postal ballot papers in person.

For the email channel, there is a spike at election time and these contacts are managed on an ad-hoc basis by the CSG call centre team, of which a high volume are directed to the elections team.

In terms of post, 150,000 canvas letters are sent out asking house occupants who is eligible to vote at their address. By law, this must be done by post. Chase up letters mean that in total 270,000 interactions are made this way. Customers can access their information and register to

vote online using central government's election management software, but the initial reminder is still required to be sent by mail.

5.2.4 Current position

The services have limited face to face contact with customers. Assurance uses Twitter; the service is pushing the online strategy and a lot of the content is live already.

5.2.5 Assurance, Elections and Electoral Registration Digital Vision

Assurance

Low volumes of calls are received.

Elections

For new residents who are (or become) 16 or over, other Council services could provide this data to the elections team, to enable some elements of the paperwork to be reduced.

5.2.6 Barriers to achieving the vision

The Assurance team deal with a low volume of cases, so a business case would be difficult to construct to invest in digital self-service.

For Elections and Electoral Registration, the barriers are the requirement to agree data sharing agreements, even for services within the Council. If this could be achieved there would be a high benefit in reducing sometimes complicated paper trails. This may have been trialled elsewhere, for example in Harrow, but requires investigation.

5.2.7 Future plans

The main plans are to look at ways of automating the transfer of data to/from the service and to do this by agreeing data sharing agreements where practical.

5.3 **Barnet Homes**

5.3.1 **Main services provided**

Barnet Homes manages a total of 15,445 properties on behalf of the Council, including 10,362 secure and non-secure tenancies, 3,662 leasehold properties and 1,421 temporary accommodation units for homeless households. This represents approximately 40,000 people and 10% of the households in Barnet. Barnet Homes deal with queries regarding a range of topics, including:

- Empty property management and lettings
- Repair, maintenance and cyclical works
- Estate management and caretaking
- Rent and service charge collection
- Tenancy, lease and anti-social behaviour management
- Stock capital investment programmes
- 'Right to Buy' process administration
- Community engagement initiatives in addition to the housing management function

Barnet Homes also delivers the Housing Options service which manages housing applications for both social housing and temporary accommodation under housing law. In 2014/15, 3,089 new applications from households who had a housing need were assessed by staff in Housing Options in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme and homeless legislation. There are also many households who do not meet the threshold for housing but to whom Barnet Homes is legally required to give advice and assistance. The types of enquiries received by Housing Options include:

- Customers Legal rights in their accommodation and tenancy sustainment
- Access to social housing
- Access to the private rented sector
- Suitability of a customer's current accommodation – medical needs, overcrowding, safeguarding issues
- Other housing options – sheltered properties for the elderly, adaptations to help a customer remain in their home, trade downs from larger homes to smaller properties, emergency accommodation for the homeless
- Temporary accommodation – location not being where the customer wants to live, property condition and repairs, anti-social behaviour and rents

5.3.2 **Main customer types**

Services that are increasing in volume are provided for:

- Homelessness
- Rent & debt enquiries (due to welfare reforms) to include:
 - Benefits issues
 - Welfare benefits advice
 - Financial inclusion advice

- Rent arrears

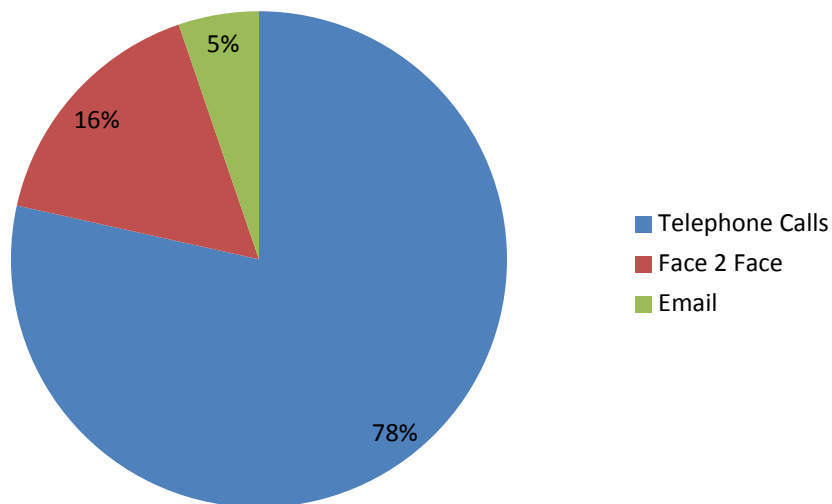
A hangover from the past is where people were encouraged to contact the Council. Now that the eligibility criteria has been increased, fewer people can be helped, whilst at the same time rents have increased over recent years and disposable income is being squeezed.

Trends of reduced demand has been seen in the areas of repairs and maintenance and anti-social behaviour over recent years, due to reductions in avoidable contact mainly related to process improvements and policy changes.

5.3.3 How services are currently delivered

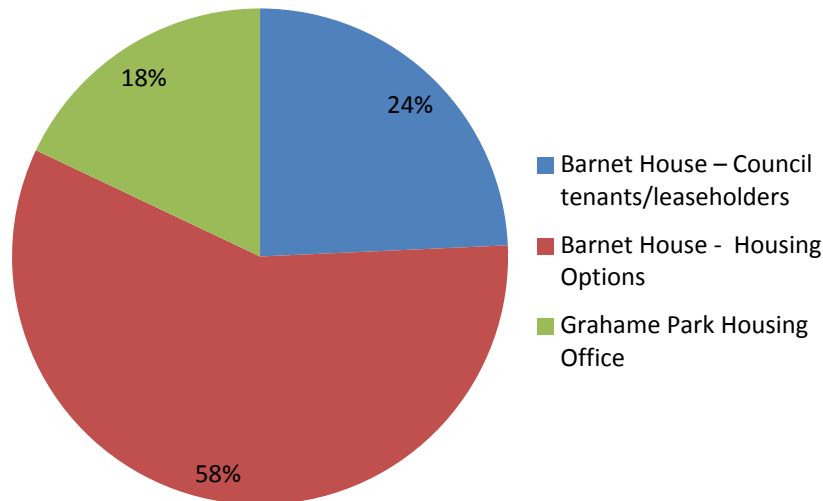
Barnet Homes have recorded their customer access levels for telephone calls, face to face and email in 2014/15 – there were a total of 171,084 contacts. The breakdown of these contacts is shown graphically in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Contact by channel for Barnet Homes



Currently customers can access Barnet Homes' services face to face at both Barnet House and Grahame Park Housing Office. The total footfall for these offices is shown in Figure 12.

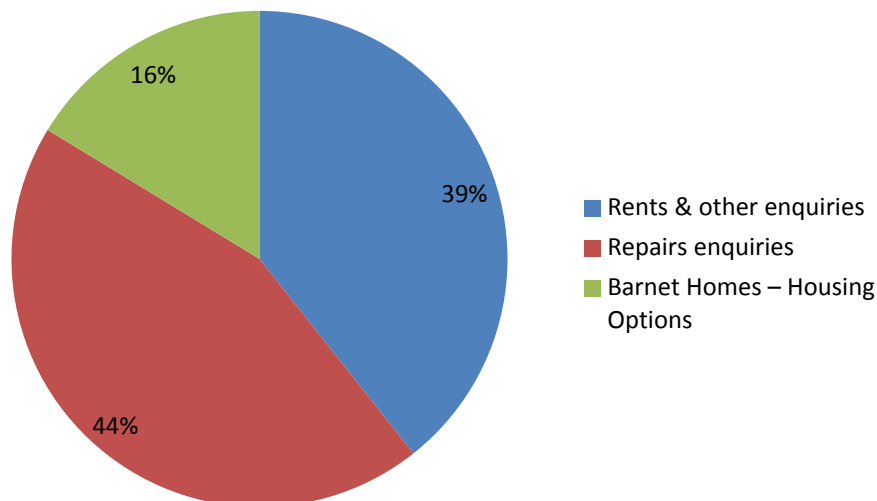
Figure 12: Face to Face contact reasons



Use of these offices will be subject to continued review as regeneration schemes progress.

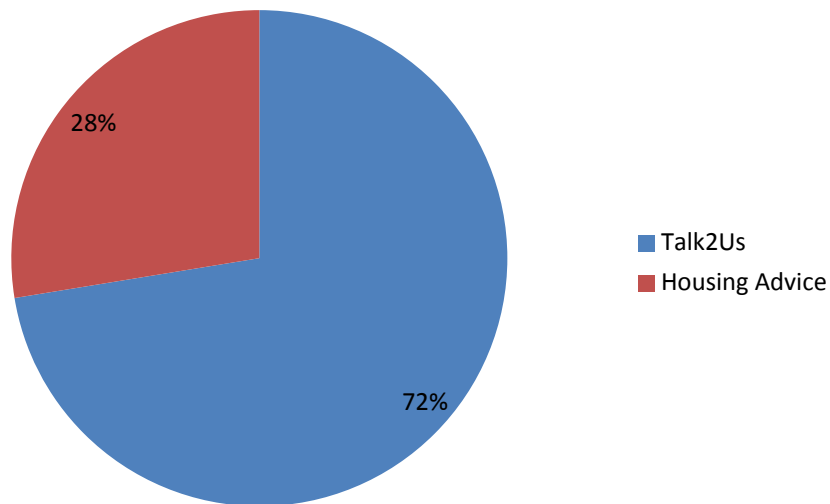
Telephone access is provided by the Barnet Homes contact centre which manages Council tenants and leaseholders and the Housing Options contact centre which deals with housing applicants. Call volumes and the breakdown of reasons for calls are shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Telephone calls to contact centres



Email correspondence is captured via two channels; the Talk2Us mailbox which captures mainly Council tenant and leasehold enquiries; and the housing advice mailbox which responds to housing options enquiries. A limited amount of correspondence is also sent by post which is scanned into our document and record management systems. Volumes of emails for the two mailboxes are shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Email contacts



Customers can access information and policies via our website but at present there is limited functionality with regards to webforms apart from logging a complaint.

5.3.4 Current position

Barnet Homes is currently running two separate telephone contact centres, one for existing tenants and leaseholders to report issues with repairs and other tenancy issues and another for Housing Options, which delivers housing advice and also serves as a first point of call for applicants wishing to make a homeless application. This is mirrored at reception at Barnet House, with one reception for Council tenants and another for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

It is important that Barnet Homes and the Council get these services right for a number of reasons:

- Customer satisfaction is at risk if customer service is not good
- Many of the services must be delivered in accordance with specific timescales and standards in accordance with requirements of statute
- Significant damage could be caused to the Council assets if repairs are not dealt with correctly
- Legal challenges and judicial reviews could be brought against the Council if it does not meet its homelessness duties.

There is currently very high customer satisfaction with both contact centres and receptions and has been since transfer to Barnet Homes. In Q4 of 2014/15, customer satisfaction levels were as follows:

Figure 15: Customer Satisfaction

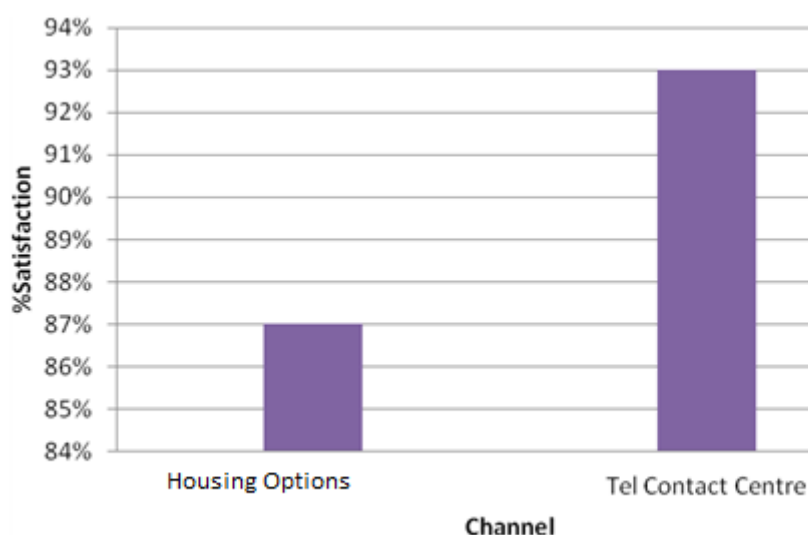


Figure 15 shows that Barnet Homes is currently delivering an effective front-line service for Barnet residents.

For Council tenants reporting repairs, it is crucial that their issues are resolved efficiently and effectively. By co-locating the call centre, contractor staff and the repairs team, if Customer Service Officers are unsure of the urgency or seriousness of a repair, they can speak to an Operational Inspector or a member of the Repairs team face to face and get a quick resolution to an issue. This reduces the risk that repairs diagnostics are incorrect and decreases the chance that repairs could be left to cause significant damage to a property or the Council's statutory obligations not being met. Furthermore, it decreases the chance that repairs are marked as urgent (and therefore cost Barnet Homes and the Council more) when they could be dealt with in a routine way.

Furthermore, it is important for Housing Options to have a robust front-end in order to ensure that Barnet are meeting their homeless duties as well as maximising the opportunity for early intervention and prevention. Through the current call centre set-up, Housing Options Officers receive specialist training in housing law and immigration law in order to guarantee that residents are being provided with the correct advice and assistance, therefore reducing risks of legal challenges to Barnet.

5.3.5 Barnet Homes digital vision

Understanding demand and the reasons for customer contact is essential to drive forward the review. Barnet Homes will be mapping out each service area to inform us of the priorities for customer service delivery with the understanding that they are restricted by areas such as the physical environment of Barnet House and technology that would be required to channel shift customers to web based services. For example, Barnet Homes have identified that leaseholders tend to be well connected and are the group most likely to channel shift to web based services which can be provided 24/7 and allow them to self-serve, and that the homeless, rely heavily on smartphones for their communication needs. However, there is also a need to manage risk associated with directing customers away from face to face in relation to fraudulent housing applications, debt management and assisting vulnerable homeless customers.

5.3.6 Barriers to achieving the vision

A disproportionately high proportion of Barnet Homes' customers do not have access to the internet. This client group tend to be over 55 years of age and less likely to be in the job market. This group often has no desire to change their ways and is happy with traditional contact channels, including face to face and telephone. For this group, a shift to digital by default would require significant behavioural shift and they would not be considered an early focus.

5.3.7 Future plans

Barnet Homes will be conducting a project review into the possibility of bringing together the two current call centres which sit within the business. The project review will explore the feasibility of bringing efficiencies by combining the two contact centres whilst maintaining specialist officers who can handle housing advice and assistance as well as more complex repair and tenancy issues. Quick wins have already been identified in merging the face to face service at Barnet House and channel shifting some customers to the contact centre as well as having one email channel via Talk2Us.

'Keyfax' scripting is already being successfully used for the repairs diagnostic service and a project is underway to introduce Keyfax across a range of services including neighbourhood management, income collection and housing options. Keyfax will help to deliver consistent and accurate advice so that customers get a full range of available options. However, Barnet Homes will need to ensure that we continue to provide effective housing options triage so that the organisation is not at risk in terms of not taking homeless applications and making unnecessary appointments for those that do not have a housing need.

The current website functionality is a bit flat and complex to navigate and is currently under development. A customer portal will be developed for customers to access web based services and forms including rent and service accounts, repairs orders and reporting anti-social behaviour which will be promoted to customers as a primary means of access. This will include options for customers to correspond by web chat.

Face to face customer access will be compressed whilst promoting contact centre and web access.

The roll out of mobile working will continue with iPad and more remote access to software applications including our housing management system through the use of mobile working software called 1st Touch. This will also allow workers to respond nimbly when dealing with customers face to face in the community, and complete numerous transactions at the first point of contact or customer request.

5.4 CSG – Customer Services

5.4.1 Main services provided

Customer and Support Group is currently responsible for the delivery of the Customer Services function that provides the initial first point of contact for most customers where there is not an existing case, including switchboard services and providing a contact centre for all enquiries, service requests, applications for services, payments etc. The services and volumes (which include projections for year 3) are shown in table 3 below.

Customer Services provides first point of contact for phone, email, face to face, and online enquiries, this includes customer contact for Revenues & Benefits and is based in Coventry as Capita's local government shared service centre; and Adult Social Care (also known as Social Care Direct) which are based in Barnet.

Customer services works alongside the Revenues & benefits back office functions that are based in Blackburn, and through the delivery of face to face services for new claims in Barnet.

Table 3 – Annual telephone contact volumes at contract start and target reductions by year 3

Services	Contact Reduction	Inbound Contacts Year 1	Inbound Contacts Year 3
Adults Social Care	46%	46,380	25,045
Youth services	30%	12,960	9,039
General enquiry/Switchboard	70%	330,624	99,534
Registrars	23%	32,596	25,074
Street Based Services	57%	65,149	27,965
FYI	24%	8,143	6,230
School Admissions	23%	51,863	40,026
Assisted Travel	52%	40,509	19,434
Parking	67%	96,228	32,044
Council Tax	49%	161,278	81,566
Housing Benefits	34%	120,531	79,400
Total	54%	966,262	445,357

5.4.2 Main customer types

The majority of contacts are from residents or businesses in Barnet. Currently, the highest demand is for switchboard services accessing back office services, followed by Council Tax and Housing Benefits, and issues relating to waste collection and street cleansing/roads.

5.4.3 How services are currently delivered

The contact centre is based at Coventry, with a walk in centre available at the Burnt Oak centre and Barnet House for face to face contacts. Contacts relating to Adult Social Care from residents and professional telephone contacts are directed to a specialist team based at Barnet that works alongside the Adults Social Care front door assessment team – Social Care Direct.

5.4.4 Current position

CSG provides a full end to end service for the following Council Services: Council Tax collection, Housing Benefit claims, Parking permits and payment of Penalty Charge Notices, assisted travel services (i.e. Blue Badge, Freedom passes). This enables opportunities for further first point contact resolution. The complex processing for Revenues & Benefits takes place off-site at Blackburn, and the Blackburn team work closely with Coventry using the same workforce and workflow management systems to enable cases to be managed at the most effective place.

Customer Services aims to deliver services as efficiently as possible, whilst focussing on customer satisfaction, customer advocacy for those needing additional support, and resolution at first point of contact with a customer services advisor. In order to make the services as operationally effective as possible, customer who can self-serve are encouraged to through the automated switchboard, self-service options on the phone lines, and directing customers to the website where at all possible. The aim of this strategy is to ensure that wherever possible, customers can access the information directly themselves without the need for a customer service advisor acting as an intermediary. This creates further efficiencies that are already being delivered through the CSG contract, and enables the service to focus on those customers who most need additional support.

The Council's current channel shift targets are based on a) customer's propensity to shift to a digital channel (i.e. it excludes customers who are digitally excluded) and b) the available digital services for each Council service. Customer Services works alongside services to identify areas for improvements, e.g. In 2016 there is work planned with Revenues & Benefits, ICT and the retained Council services. This approach to continuous improvement will support the Customer Access Strategy in identifying the next generation of digital solutions to help customers help themselves, and to enhance case management. Use of knowledge management tools including the content on the website will enable customer service advisors to provide information, advice & guidance without needing to be passed off to specialist staff. The focus of service improvements is to increase the number of contact types that can be resolved at first point of contact and our continuous improvement plan

In 2015 there has been considerable investment in customer service operational productivity, and customer experience management, and in 2016 there will be a greater emphasis on ensuring that the customer data captured is used to inform customer insight into repeat contacts, avoidable contact and how to better manage demand.

Where at all possible, the customer service advisors are empowered to resolve enquiries at first point of contact, and there is a programme of work to challenge services to simplify and automate processes. This includes developing more information and guidance on the website so that customers can resolve issues themselves. The contact centre can then focus more on those customers unable to self-serve, or where their enquiry is more complex than a self-service transaction

5.4.5 CSG digital vision

CSG Customer Services has a clear vision to lead on customer services for Barnet, providing the capacity and capability to advance the Council's digital customer design principles that were agreed as a result of over 700 hours of face to face interviews with over 100 residents in Barnet in 2014. These principles direct our approach to the delivery of customer services to achieve the 2020 vision for Council services, and service outcomes.



These design principles were used to develop the My Account look and feel, and are going to be used to develop the customer journeys to provide a digital end to end service design. A key part of the Customer Access Strategy is to ensure that services are designed to enable customers to make full use of digital channels and traditional service delivery for those digitally excluded.



In 2016 customer services will continue to be focussed on customer satisfaction, customer advocacy, and resolution. Whilst the majority of contacts will remain to be by phone for the next 3 years, the direction of travel is to identify the best set of digital solutions that will empower residents and businesses to solve issues for themselves, and to ensure that requests for services, including payments, case management enquiries and applications for services are handled efficiently and effectively.

The aim of the service is to ensure that where customers need additional support or advocacy - the necessary additional support is provided to ensure equality of access to services, and quality of service delivery.

Our programme of work to re-design services to maximise systems & processes will make full use of insight and analytics. Our approach to business process management is to use customer behaviour, value add analysis and system efficiency to ensure services are design to what people will do and what the service needs them to do to maximise information, time and resources. The aim will be promote online digital services, and self-service

Customer services uses the principles of operational excellence to deliver value for money, with a strong focus on continuous improvement to drive up customer satisfaction, customer advocacy and resolution This approach has been successfully delivered in Capita's Life & Pensions business and uses advanced workforce management tools and expertise in contact centre management.

5.4.6 Barriers to achieving the vision

Areas for further development

The website needs to be developed as part of the next stage in digital maturity to ensure integration of the webforms into case management systems to provide the real-time updates and proactive alerts that customers now expect with an online experience. An example of this is the integration of the Revenues & benefits webforms into the case management system.

As part of the on-going continuous improvement, further development is required to simplify content and design pages based on what customers actually do, i.e. drive the user experience from typical and known customer behaviour.

Operational focus on identifying customers needing additional support can be complex, to ensure cases are identified as early as possible.

Our data captured highlights a high level of failure demand based on customers failing to get the service delivered to agreed timescales, or poor quality of service delivery,. There needs to be a focus on that to ensure that as services improve their digital services, areas where customers do not get a consistent experience are identified and addressed.

Additionally, Many customers prefer to call, even when they are able to access services online (e.g. Parking) so further work is needed on marketing services, ensuring customers see the additional benefit of accessing services digitally and addressing key concerns or customer complaints to continually improve the online digital experience.

5.4.7 Future plans

The planned changes in 2016 are:

- Revenues & Benefits business process re-design to maximise systems, best practice and standardising processes
- Delivery of a database of voluntary and community organisations in Barnet and integration with customer services to support customers in obtaining the support they need

5.4.8 Opportunities

Current opportunities for 2016 identified and in plan

- Implementation of a refreshed Revenues & Benefits case management system to better integrate web self-service webforms into the system, preventing unnecessary manual re-keying, and providing customers with more direct access to their information.
- Revenues & benefits to review all processes to become digital by default as a principle e.g. New Claims, noting that this does have an impact on the delivery of some of the measurements of KPIs. This will reduce the amount of face to face contact.
- Focus on failure demand, root cause analysis, to refine web content, telephone routing messages, and information provided to customers that cause further unnecessary contact (e.g. letters that do not provide all the required information)
- Further work to automate and improve delivery of parking, assisted travel, revenues & benefits that CSG has end to end responsibility for
- Working with services to identify areas where services could be fully delivered at first point of contact
- Implementation of the Lagan Mobile system that enables service requests for Street Scene issues to be directed to an operative automatically out in the field.

Further opportunities

- Further opportunity for service to enable customers to self-serve by online booking of appointments with specialists based on case management requirements
- Further process re-design to design out unnecessary handoffs to the Council, and more proactive business process management that provides proactive alerts to customers to prevent unnecessary contact
- Services design for the implementation of new IT (including digital solutions) systems for services, to include customer journey mapping to ensure the design matches the actual behaviours of what customers do, nudging customers to behave in a way that optimises the business operation and meets their individual needs in the most effective way, and reduced customer contact to that which is needed for the delivery of services
- Further personalisation of service provision, so that service levels can be managed to meet the circumstances of the case, and resources prioritised to those most urgent cases
- Further development of My Account to link up all forms used by a customer to access services, and to provide proactive alerts on status by the customers preferred channel, e.g. text, mobile messaging, email
- Further development of My Account to proactively notify customers based on preferences and known facts that the customer has agreed to be shared, that proactively inform customers of events relevant to their circumstances.
- Further development of the website to provide community dashboards of information relating to streets and roads and developments to prevent the need for calls unless there is a necessary reason for further escalation and service intervention.
- Further development of capability in Lagan as a digital customer experience management tool

5.5 CSG - Revenues and Benefits (further detail)

5.5.1 Approach to transformation

The current Revenues and Benefits service manages cases via telephone calls, emails/letters, and a new claims team in the two face to face centres. When the new website went live on 1 March 2015, a new online claim form was launched, enabling customers to make an application for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support online via the Council's website.

In 2016 the online provision will be improved to enable a greater degree of self service for customers via even more online access to their Council tax and benefits accounts alongside a suite of online forms that will integrate into the Council tax and benefits systems enabling customers to provide information pertaining to their accounts and removing rekeying of data.

The overall aim is to provide an enhanced digital service with customer account information available via My Account so that it can be accessed at a time that suites the customer, and thereby reduce demand for staff assistance. Once this is in place, customer services will be able to be more assertive in channel shift messages to customers.

5.5.2 Gap between current plans and the Council's vision

The service will be able to move forward and match the Council's vision in 2016 by implementation of the online webforms and account access available with the case management systems and integration into the Council Tax and Benefits system. The pace and scale of change will be supported by the Council's appetite to drive the channel shift and by the system suppliers' portal and forms delivering the required functionality.

The aim will be to have contact being made via webforms, self-service via a portal and calls being on an exception basis not as a default. The only face to face service run by the service is new claims. Following the implementation of the on line new claims forms the delivery of this service and a move to a digital by default approach is being discussed. Any move to a digital by default service will be supported by a service provision to those customers who are vulnerable and unable to access/utilise a digital service.

Channel Shift

Face to face is the current default channel employed for new claims and back office for updates to Council tax and benefits accounts based on information provided by customers. The establishing of a suite of integrated online forms will enable a channel shift in the delivery method for that information from email/phone call and letters to the structured and integrated webforms.

Prevention and Demand Management

A move to a 'digital by default' new claims service will reduce face to face demand at the customer service points. There also needs to be a review to see whether the provision of original certified documents to support claims for benefits can be reduced, without increasing the likelihood of fraud.

The aim of the business process re-design is to reduce telephone contact by managing customer's expectations better, improving information at first point of contact, and reducing the causes for contact. Online is essential to this as people will be better able to self-service, and have more up to date information my account, that prevents the need for advisor support for those able to self-service.

5.5.3 Future vision

Once the tools like IVR and richer functionality within the website is implemented, customers will be driven by the ease of accessing and using the transactional forms. The future web offering should be based around life events for all services. We will look to use insight and service statistics to see what customers access at first contact and the other services that they are likely to need to also access and promote these services to the customer.

In future the service will be able to drive the majority of new claimants online and enable mediated support for vulnerable claimants who cannot transact on line. N.B this will need the KPI amending to reflect the impact of a move away from current calculation methods of the KPI.

5.5.4 Key findings on web usage

Whilst there were 10,885 customers registered to use My Account by the end of September 2015, a minority had added their service specific accounts, as table 4 below shows.

Table 4 – My Account holders who have added their service accounts

Council Tax	Benefits	Parking	Libraries
2,405	622	951	345

5.6 Education and Skills

5.6.1 Main services provided

Access to school admissions, delivery of SEND services (Special Education Needs and Disabilities), school improvements and over 16 education.

5.6.2 Main customer types

Although the end customers are children, the service often communicates with parents, seeking to acquire necessary services and school places for their children.

5.6.3 Current position

Admissions

There is an online portal for school admissions, through which 98% applications are received using the e-forms. There is also a function for supporting documents (for school admissions) to be submitted via this online portal. However, most customers send their supporting documents via post. Further work is being carried to improve the user friendliness of this functionality. The online portal volume for in year admissions is 70% of the applications received. The service is looking to move on to an App to enable customers to apply for school positions via the App. Admissions appeals are now lodged online, active for in year. 90% of appeals are received this way. The admissions team are reviewing to make their online forms and system more user-friendly in order to achieve higher volumes via digital routes.

SEND and Inclusion – CSG, “Digital by Default”

The SEND and Inclusion team provide support and services to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and their families. Most correspondence is conducted through email. The next most numerous is phone calls. The website has an area dedicated to the Local Offer; this will act as a “one stop shop” where customers will be able to look up all information and services available for children and young people with SEND.

Post – 16 & Barnet Education, Employment and Training Support (BEETS) team

The Post-16 Team ensures that they fulfil the local authority’s statutory responsibility to ensure participation for young people aged 16–19, families, schools, colleges and training providers, and community groups. Young people tend to contact the service by telephone more so than email. Contact with schools and providers tend to be done through email. When contacting young people in a more formal way a letter will be used.

There is also a frequent use of social media, particularly Facebook and Facebook messenger. The Post-16 Team is making inroads with the use of social media. The BEETS team have their own Facebook page, which allows them to keep in touch with young people, and to advertise employment or volunteering opportunities, amongst other things. Facebook messenger is another useful tool as it allows the team to keep in touch with young people who may not have credit or reception on their phone, but have access to Wi-Fi.

5.6.4 Education and Skills digital vision

The vision for Education and Skills is to make greater use of Apps, for example, developing an App for access to school admissions and for post 16 education. There is also an aspiration to embrace social media, already used by the Post-16 team, to be used in future for school improvement.

5.6.5 Barriers to achieving the vision

The vision for Education and Skills to become digital by default must be tempered by the fact that for certain client groups, email or phone contact is preferred rather than attempting to transact over the web or use apps.

However, for many young people, the use of apps and social media are becoming the preferred methods of communication and embracing these channels is only limited by ability to agree and build a timely, solid IT supporting infrastructure.

5.6.6 Future plans

There are major improvements to The Local Offer being implemented at the moment. Included are:

- A dedicated mailbox, which can be used for sending in feedback, but can also be used by services to update their information.
- Major re-writes to the content to make it more web ready and user friendly
- Improvements to the directories to facilitate quicker searching
- Producing an online A-Z or “jargon buster”.

5.6.7 Opportunities

The service is looking into using WhatsApp, as it is a very popular mode of communication with young people, and again it requires no credit or mobile signal, only a Wi-Fi connection.

5.7 Family Services

5.7.1 Current situation

Family Services cover a wide remit of services with varied audiences and levels of engagement. These include the Families Information service (FYi), early years, and libraries as well as targeted and specialist services such as early interventions for children, young people and families, and social care and youth offending services.

The service has invested time in shifting information online where possible and whilst (apart from libraries) there are very few transactions as a service, these are all now available as either webforms or via external transaction portals where possible. This includes information for professionals from other agencies.

Due to the nature of the services delivered and the statutory framework surrounding these there is a high level of face to face interaction with children and young people at risk and their families, the majority of which takes place in people's homes or other venues across the borough.

The current situation can be summarised as follows:

- FYi statutorily offer a range of information about services available to children in Barnet, including universal services and childcare. The service is managed by CSG. All contacts go through the customer contact centre and online information is regularly updated. Family Services has an external online transactional portal for Futureversity which enables young people to apply for courses.
- The first part of an early year's transactional portal has been implemented to support the end-to-end process for the Free Early Education entitlement (known as FEE). When fully implemented it will be for parents and providers. Social Media is used to promote services in Children's Centres and for promoting FEE.
- The customer interface with libraries is well developed and use of the website, social media and apps is already established. Recent developments with the introduction of an IVR need further refinement to ensure that residents can access all the services they need.
- Twitter is used extensively to engage service users about activities, FEE, library events etc. Barnet Youth Board have their own Facebook page.
- Telephone calls to Social Care are all filtered by an IVR, and most calls will be automatically be directed to the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), which is the front door into services for both partners and members of the public. Other calls that do not need the MASH will generally be to named Social Workers, but all clients are given direct dial numbers, so this will be minimal.
- There is an online webform for professionals to make referrals and an online application for parents to apply for their child to be on the Disabled Children's Register.
- There is little face to face contact at Council buildings as most contact will be in people's homes, so that surroundings can be assessed as part of supporting families. Direct work also takes place with families who do not reach the threshold for Social Care involvement, and families are referred via MASH or Social Care. Any potentially high risk cases and Child Protection cases are held daily at Barnet House and managed by Family Services. It is unusual for client without an appointment to arrive at a Customer Access Point, but those who do are often in crisis, and will be dealt with accordingly.
- Face-to-face support for young people who have offended or are at risk of offending is vital, but sometimes very high risk, so secure space needs to be available at short notice to support some young people safely. As such, face to face venues will be required going forwards.

- Social care website information is generic, but with a specific multi-agency website for the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board. There is a separate campaign to target the recruitment of Foster Carers and Adopters, with Social Media campaigns.

5.7.2 Future development and opportunities

Compared with other Delivery Units, Family Services have few transactions with the public that do not involve direct casework and interventions. To deliver direct work going forward specialist customer access points will be required. Future service design and delivery is likely to require greater partner working, for example with health and housing, focused around geographically appropriate hubs.

The key opportunity areas are:

- Fyi – Where possible, online options have been developed to deliver non-casework communications and customer access. FYi is a priority development area both to improve the quality of current provision and to identify any potential for enhancements.
- Libraries – The service will continue to look at opportunities to deliver the library service in innovative ways (for example Openplus), and further development of self-service kiosks are planned. The Library Strategy is a key enabler of the Customer Access Strategy.
- Implementing next phases of transactional portals – Three external portals have been rolled out in the past year and the focus will be on embedding these and rolling out the second phases.
 - For early years places (FEE) parents already have access to a portal and the next phase is rolling out access for providers.
 - Partners involved in early intervention, including schools, can now upload Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs) via the secure online portal which then integrates with the case management system. The focus will be on embedding this.
 - For social care payments the secure online portal currently covers foster carer and other regular payments, and the next phases involve extending the portal to cover all client-related social care costs.
- Social media – Those using youth services have been identified as most likely to want to respond to social media. Social media is also being used to engage with foster carers and there is potential to grow this.
- Apps – The development of apps and other tools will be useful to gather customer feedback and enhance engagement with children, young people and families. This could include apps for children in care and care leavers, and for parents with under 5s. There is also potential for professionals to use apps that integrate with case management system as part of their assessment work with families. This will be heavily dependent on the IT Strategy.

5.8 Parking (run within the Commissioning Group)

5.8.1 Main Services provided

Receiving and responding to all parking, Blue Badge and Freedom pass related enquiries including telephone challenges pertaining to Parking Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), receiving and processing Permit applications, receiving and processing Visitor Voucher applications, receiving and processing Parking Suspension applications, receiving and processing Blue Badge applications and receiving and processing Freedom Pass applications and renewals.

5.8.2 Main Customer types

Residents and car owners who live, work, travel or drive through the borough.

5.8.3 How the services are currently provided

PCN queries from members of the public are dealt with primarily using an Interactive & Voice Response automation system (IVR). There is a 'closed loop' IVR process for callers wishing to contest/challenge their PCNs; the main reason being that there is a statutory appeals process in place for motorists wishing to challenge the validity of a PCN which has to be completed in writing, not by phone. It is a requirement that this process accommodates all requirements as set out in all related parking and other relevant legislation and in particular the Traffic Management Act 2004, which amongst other things is designed to safeguard the interest of the motorist by determining a structured process to be followed by all authorities.

Following some equalities concerns highlighted by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) in 2013, guidance relating to the legislation and parking process has determined that there should be adequate provision in place to allow a process of oral PCN representations to be made to the Council in circumstances where the vehicle keeper would struggle to communicate in writing by reason of his/her disability.

The current IVR facility includes an option for motorists who require additional assistance or support to speak directly with a member of staff. There is a similar arrangement in place for dealing with enquiries relating to permit applications, Visitor Vouchers and suspension applications.

5.8.4 Barriers to achieving the vision

Not all callers want to challenge their PCNs. The recent expansion of the IVR process to include additional support for certain customers in line with the Council's equalities duty will require further assessment of the extent to which it has fulfilled the intended purpose. It was also necessary to make the changes to allow other PCN related enquiries to be dealt with as not all enquiries can be accommodated via an automated response. Parking enquiries can be extremely diverse, however there is a potential that this could increase call volumes and hence resource requirements and therefore it will be necessary to keep detail records of all calls received to ensure that the changes are effective.

Some customers want 'human' involvement in their contact with the Council, and if they cannot get through to speak to a contact centre agent, may call Council officers, and/or Councillors instead, which is not the intended consequence.

5.8.5 Future Plans

Over the past 12 months a number of changes have been made which has improved the customer journey and allows customers to self-serve. Those who do so will benefit from a simpler and quicker transaction. We need to promote the benefit of the changes which have already been implemented and to continue to review areas that could be improved in the future. Although the changes have led to the majority of transactions being possible by implementing a 'digital by default' approach for parking, support for customers and service users who are unable to utilise the self-service facility is still necessary.

5.9 Re Ltd

5.9.1 What Services does Re provide and how

Re Ltd is a joint venture company between Barnet and Capita plc, formed in October 2013 as a result of an outsourcing exercise. Re has ambitious growth targets to deliver the contractual benefits back to the Council so needs to develop a target operating model that facilitates this.

The services currently delivered through the partnership, along with the key volumes, are shown in table 5 below.

Table 5 – Re’s services and key volumes

Service	What are the services and how are they provided?	Channel breakdown (where known) Per year Based on Q1 data 2015/16	Comments
Building Control	<p>The primary function of the initial customer contact is advice and to book an appointment. Once an appointment is made the key relationship is with the building control inspector.</p> <p>The front office will process enforcement related customer enquiries, which will be reviewed by the building control inspectors.</p>	<p>32,000 calls 2,300 logged requests</p> <p>24% e-mail 46 % webform 30% phone</p>	<p>This is a key income generating service that already operates in a commercial market. Therefore quality of client engagement and speed of service is vital. The aim is to build good relationship with builders who are often the main customer.</p>
Planning/ Development Control	<p>The primary phone contact is seeking advice on either how to navigate the web to submit an application or how to comment on an application. Once an application is submitted, the key relationship is with the allocated planning officer. A key challenge for the service is a big increase in demand over the last 18 months.</p>	<p>50,000 calls 7,000 e-mails/webforms 8,190 Applications 938 Tree requests 1,600 Enforcement Cases</p> <p>Total – 9,128 – increased from 7,627 in 2013/14</p>	<p>Like building control this is a key income generating service. It has developed a number of new services in the last 12 months (expanded pre-planning advice; fast-track service; consultancy service). All of these have proved popular. A key concern for the service in the London context is staff recruitment and retention.</p>
Highways	<p>A high visibility service undergoing a big programme of change – with significant investment to move from a less reactive to a more planned service. The transition has caused some pain, particularly with the need to</p>	<p>28,500 calls 10,300 service requests broken down as: 54% phone 20 % e-mail</p>	<p>The introduction of Report-It provides a useful tool to support channel shift. The key opportunity to reduce call volumes is to provide residents with more timely updates on what is happening to all</p>

	better manage customer expectations. The reactive volumes have grown.	26% webform	ready logged services requests.
Environmental Heath (Housing, Care & Repair, Environmental Protection, Pollution)	A complex set of services, branded under one heading. More work is needed in this area to map the customer journeys to better understand the opportunities to increase online take-up.	18,000 calls 4,800 Service requests a year 40% Phone 37% e-mail 23% webform	Care and Repair and Empty properties are growing services with potential to expand.
Noise & Nuisance	This is a highly seasonal/weather dependent service where managing expectations is key. The percentage of requests via phone is not surprising given the nature of the service where people want an immediate response to an incident that is happening at the point they report it.	3,000 calls 2,400 requests 64% phone 21% e-mail 11 % webform	The technology to support this service is being reviewed.
Pest Control	As this is an income generating service, as the service hub takes the payment and makes the appointment, until improved online payments and bookings are available, phone is the most cost effective way to deliver this service	4,500 calls 1,000 requests 67% Phone 13% e-mail 20 % web	This service now operates beyond Barnet.
Land Charges	This service delivers searches, mainly for lawyers who are conducted them on behalf of residents buying/selling home.	2,600 calls	An income generating service.
Trading Standards	The vast majority of requests now go to consumer direct, rather than the Council.	240 calls 2,600 service requests 78% phone 10% e-mail 12% webform	
Licensing	Probably the service, nationally, that has had least investment through the e-gov programmes. Most forms are accessed from the .GOV.UK website, but are not "smart" forms and have no ability to integrate into back office	5,700 calls 840 service requests 3% phone 24% e-mail	The aim is to develop a national centre of excellence for this service.

	systems. Re have looked at the high volume forms and is reviewing options for greater automation	73% other	
Hendon Cemetery & Crematorium	1,000 cremations per year	In general, residents interface with this service via funeral directors, other than visits to the cemetery to visit graves after a burial has taken place.	
Regeneration	This does not have a direct customer facing interface as the majority of interaction is with developers. The resident involvement side is in the main through the planning process.		

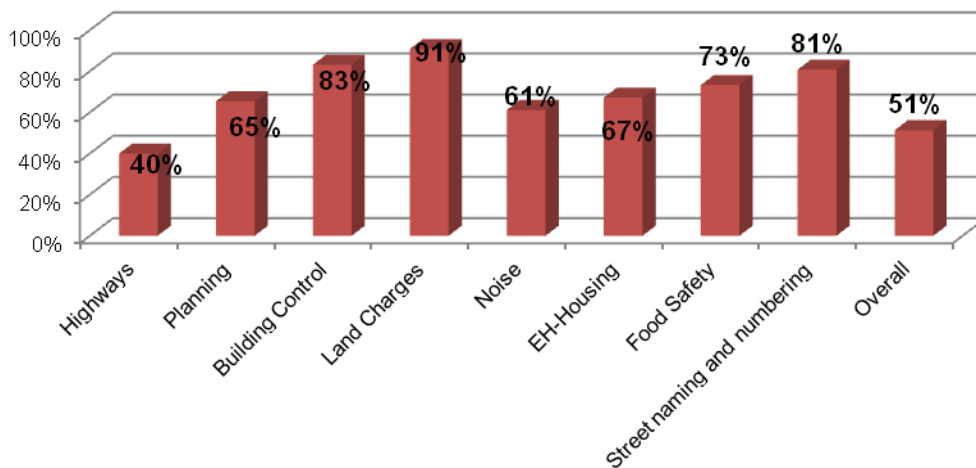
5.9.2 What do customers think about those services

Measuring Customer Satisfaction across Re services is a 'Super KPI' aimed at providing a continued focus on customer service throughout the full 10 year life of the partnership contract. When the service was transferred to Re in October 2013, there was no historic customer survey data against which to measure customer service.

Since the pilot collection of data (Feb 14 to May 14) from the period June 2014 to March 2015 over 11,100 surveys have been sent out, with an overall response rate of 12%.

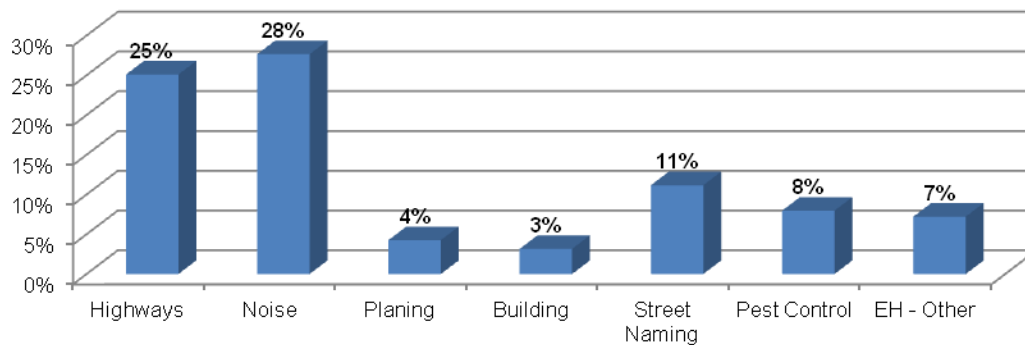
The results - % customers satisfied - up to March 2015 are shown in Figure 1622. This acts as a baseline against which improvement can be measured going forward. As this was the first year of data collection, it was the first truly reliable data that was sampling actual customers of the services, close to the point at which they had experienced the service.

Figure 16: % satisfaction by service



The survey response rate per service is shown in Figure 17. This clearly shows that response rates are hugely variable; a fact which can be explained mainly by the nature of the services being delivered.

Figure 17: Percentage of survey responses June 14 to March 15



Highways – a very high volume of surveys were sent out with a correspondingly high response rate reflecting the level of activity in this area (around 1,000 service requests per month) and the fact that this is a very resident focused service. This service is by far the highest area of service concern during the year and the main focus for service improvement undertaken by Re. The recent introduction of automated emails being sent to users of the service once work has been undertaken will ensure that surveys reach residents far more quickly.

Planning/Building Control – the much lower response rate for these services reflects the fact that the user group being surveyed is often the same – as most applicants use builders/ agents users are receiving multiple surveys. So while there was a good response initially this has dropped off during the year. To counter this it may be more appropriate to identify people within this group and only survey them twice/three times a year.

Noise/Pest Control – Resident-facing services tend to generate higher response rates as shown by these services and in particular in Noise.

Environmental Health - Other – This covers a wide range of services (such as housing), which often cover enforcement related activities. It has been hard to determine the exact end point of the service delivery process following which the survey will be sent out; thus response rates have been consistently poor. A concerted effort was made during March 2015 to increase user survey returns. Work needs to take place to identify a way to better integrate the survey process into the service supply chain and to learn from the changes made to do this in highways and planning.

As an additional incentive to users to complete surveys; from March Re has committed to donate 5p to our local charity for every completed survey returned.

The questions asked for each service are shown in Figure 24, the examples being for planning and highways for June 2015. The questions cover the full end to end customer journey and provide the service with detailed feedback on where improvement effort should be provided.

Figure 18: Planning Customer Satisfaction – by question

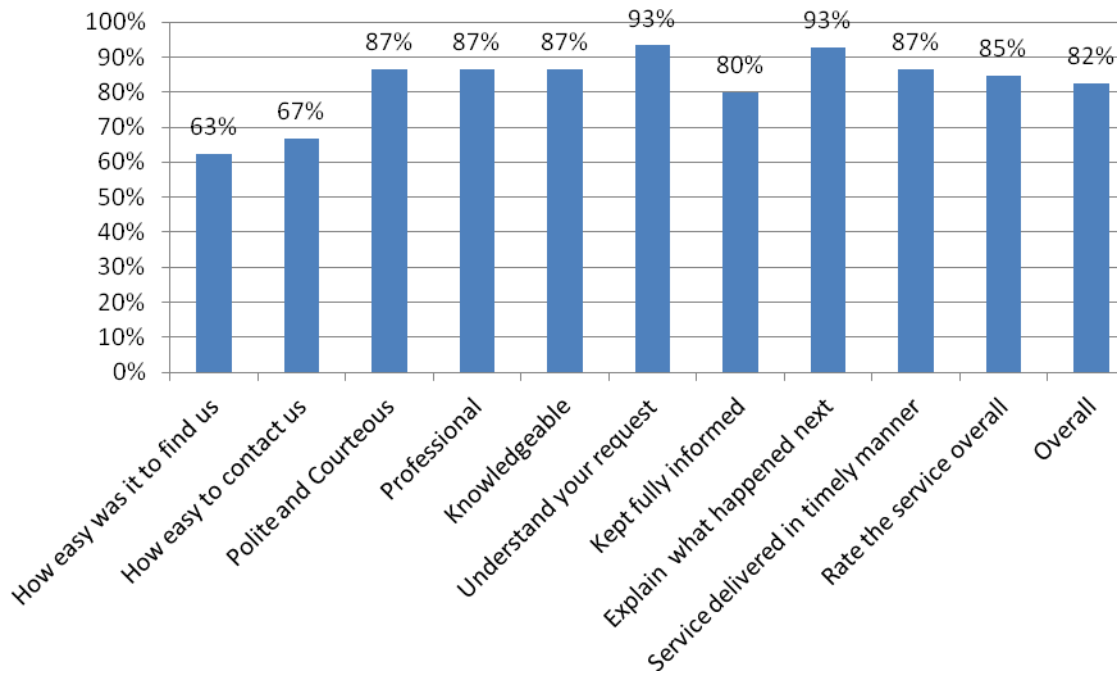
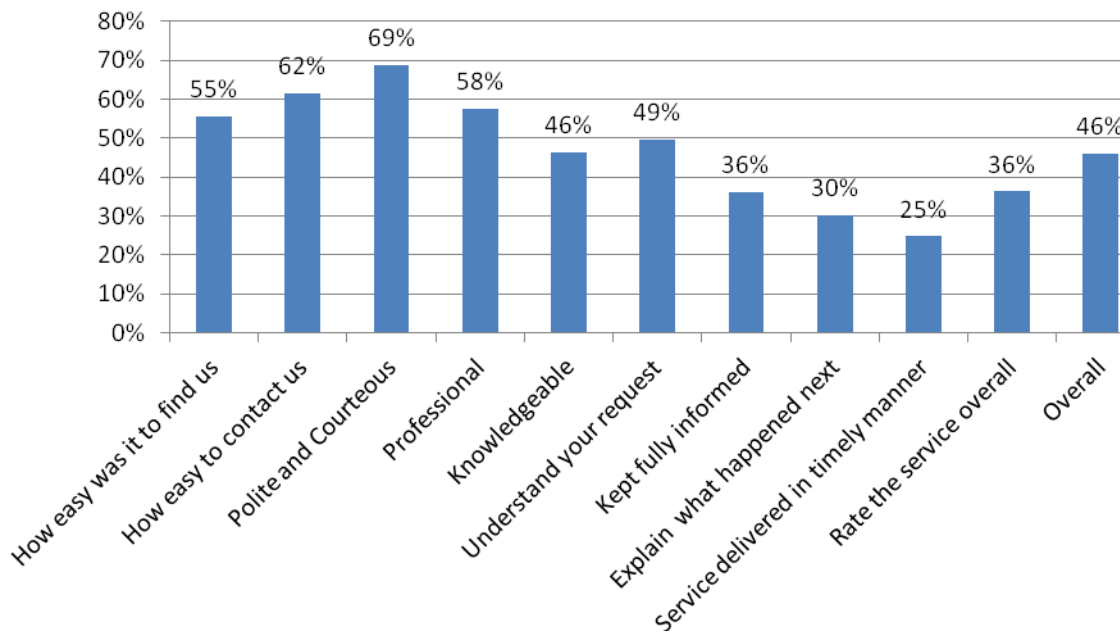


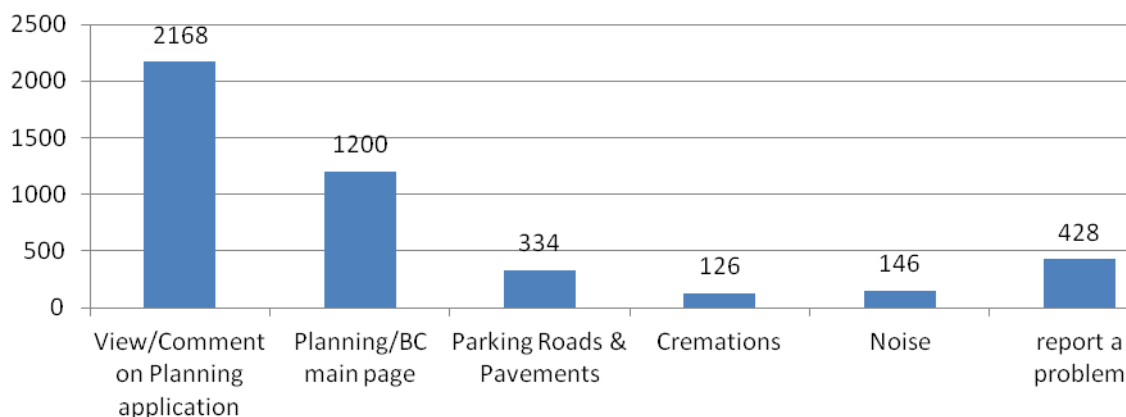
Figure 19: Highways Customer Satisfaction

Highways Customer Satisfaction



In terms of Web presences, all Re pages were re-written as part of the gateway project and launched in April 2015. Since this re-launch, Figure 6 shows the average weekly views for the top 5 Re pages. All other pages score less than 100 views per week, with most considerably less than this (10-20 range).

Figure 20: Page views per week



The monthly web-based GovMetric data shows that despite the re-launch of the website, the highest visited Re pages, Planning, still attract the most criticism although the volume is small relative to the number of actual visits. There are normally around 5-10 negative comments per month. When looked at it detail, they do not always relate to the actual web page, but some aspect of the service, but are using the opportunity of the GovMetric comments system to make a point. However, even allowing for this, we do know that a significant number of telephone calls occur after a customer has failed to easily find what they want on the web.

5.9.3 Future Plans For Re services

A key commitment in the contract was to provide an IT platform that would support improved customer services. This has been delivered with an investment cost in excess of £2m.

All the main services have been subject to complete IT refreshes during the first year of the contract and this has enabled in improvements in processes, particularly in highways. A key customer complaint had been the lack of feedback on what is happening with road and pavement repairs. The new IT now enables the service to send automated updates to customers to keep them better informed. Specifically, Re have invested in integrating Exor, the highways system, with Lagan so that when residents use the online 'Report a problem' function, the service request is communicated directly into the Exor system. This only finally went fully live in July 2015.

As with other Capita services, Re services are being reviewed to see if greater synergy can be achieved by developing national centres of excellence, as has been done with Revenues and Benefits. The intention being to look across several contracts and develop best practice operational models for the full range of Re services. This would then mean that business cases for improvements, in areas such as licensing, are more likely to be viable.

This work is at an early stage and will also have an impact on how the customer interface is delivered.

It is proposed that a full set of proposals be presented in early 2016.

5.10 Street Scene

5.10.1 Main Services provided

- Waste and recycling
- Green Streets (street cleaning, parks, removal of fly tipping, removal of graffiti, grass cutting etc.)
- Transport – Procurement and maintenance of some 200 Council vehicles and the passenger transport service which transports almost 1000 vulnerable service users each working day

5.10.2 Main customer types

These services are universal, provided to all who live or work in the borough.

5.10.3 How services are currently delivered?

Street Scene provide Waste & Recycling, Street Cleaning, Parks and Open Spaces, and the Council's Fleet and Passenger Transport services. The majority of these services are universal. Passenger transport is the exception; the main contact with these customers is via SEN team in Education and Skills and through the Adults & Communities Service.

Waste & Recycling deliver a weekly collection of recyclable and waste materials to 141, 000 homes in the borough and over 2000 businesses. The service also collects food waste and garden waste. Almost 80% of residents rate the service as good or excellent, the highest satisfaction rate in London. Not much work is done via digital channels. However there is potential to review all processes and introduce new technology.

The web already works well for informing customers of refuse and recycling days. Requesting a service or reporting a problem is currently more difficult and receives mixed reactions. The major dissatisfaction comes from the small number of issues where the service fails to deliver what is requested and then takes too long to resolve.

Citizens can log on to the Council website and find basic information such as dates for refuse collection – which is updated automatically from a back-office system. However, the information provided is limited.

5.10.4 Opportunities

The vision is to work more like BT or British Gas – where our field workers get automated jobs and do not need to return to base.

The service could digitalise the most common process – where citizens report a missed bin collection. Currently citizens call the contact centre; the call is logged and sent to the collection centre, who write out a ticket that is printed for someone to use to collect the bin the next day. This could be automated so citizens could log on and report the problem automatically to reduce cost and streamline the process.

The use of RFID technology or automation to report full bins could be considered depending on cost.

The service is planning to implement a new digital solution – including a change to Lagan– which will allow citizens to report common problems directly and get an email/text acknowledgement.

Barnet has a lot of 'friends' who maintain parks that could be more effective if they were supported by better systems that required less face to face contact. It is intended that this be considered as part of the community participation strategy, with a specific focus on the automation of the higher volume high volume transactions/cost areas first.

Regarding transport, parents/carers often phone in to cancel collections. There could be an email/text option.

Future plans include a transformation of the Lagan CRM system, which will improve digital by default significantly by getting many more transactions right first time. The planning stage is complete (with top level corporate support). CSG are working to support this to turn it into a reality. This plan will deliver significantly on the vision, whereby the majority of access to services will be digital.

6 REVIEW OF EXISTING FACE TO FACE (FACE-TO-FACE) SERVICE CENTRES

6.1 The Council's vision, as articulated in the Corporate Plan, is that, by 2020, the public sector will become more integrated in its approach to service provision, by co-locating in areas of need; pooling resources; sharing staff and assets; and developing joint solutions to manage demand and provide quality services. By 2020, the objective is that Barnet's public services will be commissioned jointly for the borough by the Council working in partnership with the NHS, Jobcentre, police, education providers and other local partners, and that those services which require face to face contact will be co-located in areas where there is need.

6.2 For residents, this approach will mean easier access to the services without having to deal separately with different agencies and, for the Council, it will reduce bureaucracy and generate efficiencies, with increased collaboration driving improvements in the way services are designed and delivered. The Council has already worked effectively to co-locate with other agencies in a 'hub' model in a number of areas, including:

Barnet Welfare Reform Task Force

- The Task Force, created in 2013, brings together Council housing advisers, Jobcentre Plus staff and mental health advisers into a co-located single team – based at Barnet House – to work with those impacted by Welfare Reform.
- The 'one-stop shop' approach has proved to be more effective than any single agency at engaging with residents because the different partners are able to reinforce each other's messages. Where one agency is unable to engage a particular resident, another might have more success. Depending on their personal circumstances, some residents have been more receptive to messages delivered by their local housing officer, a Jobcentre Plus adviser, or a Housing Benefit officer.
- The results have surpassed what the Council originally expected, with the Task Force successfully engaging with 96 per cent of Barnet residents affected by the Benefit Cap and helping more than a third (35 per cent) into work.
- This approach has also paid dividends to the Council and its local partners, with economic analysis showing that assisting over a third of residents affected by the Benefit Cap into employment returns savings of three times the money invested in getting them there.

Burnt Oak Opportunity Support Team (BOOST)

- The experience of the Welfare Reform Task Force told us that people's needs do not fit neatly within public service boundaries. Residents are often unaware of, or confused by, the breadth of support available to them, and they grow weary of providing the same information to multiple agencies.
- By creating a place-based 'Jobs Team' in Burnt Oak (BOOST) - which brings together the 'Love Burnt Oak' community group, Jobcentre Plus, Benefits service, Youth services, Barnet Homes and Health Coaching Support from Future Path - it

was envisaged that all the partners would work as a unified service for the benefit of the local community.

- The team provides face-to-face advice and well as contact over the telephone and through the use of social media. It was designed to be a model for the future, with coordinated local services delivered in areas of the greatest need using less resource.
- BOOST is based in Burnt Oak Customer Services Centre and the space is not owned by the Jobs Team or seen as the Jobs Team's office. It is a shared community space with an informal feel - training and outreach activities make use of other community settings such as the Burnt Oak Resource Centre and Barnfield Children's Centre.
- Since the service went live in May 2015, a total of 225 people have signed up for support and 75 have found employment.

6.3 These case studies demonstrate that the provision of face-to-face services through a model which brings together a number of related services into an integrated, co-located community hub can provide benefits for those that use the services on offer, as well as the Council. It is very much this approach that is being used to inform how Barnet's face-to-face services will be designed and operate moving forward.

6.4 In Barnet, there are currently two face to face centres with a footfall of c.125,000 annually, with around 45% of visits to Burnt Oak Customer Services Centre and 55% to Barnet House. Most of these visits are for housing benefits and Barnet Homes services, as Table 6 below shows. Whilst there will remain a need for face to face contact for those at risk of homelessness, and family services clients, and for Universal Credit claimants of pension age, there is scope to reduce the need for the remainder of visits. The introduction of Universal Credit as a web-only service for working age claimants has established a precedent with regard to moving benefits claiming online.

6.5 In November 2015 Customer Services successfully introduced a new approach to managing the face to face visits received relating housing benefits, Council tax, and general enquiries, offering a combination of assisted self-service and freephones to obtain advice from the contact centre or book an appointment on another day. This means that we have ceased to offer a 'walk in' service in the Council's face to face centres, except for rare emergencies. Barnet Homes is also exploring whether it can reduce the walk-in element of its tenant reception service at Barnet House. These changes are consistent with how customers expect to access services, as they give customers certainty over when and where they will obtain the advice they need, they reduce the queue times, and reduce the overall footfall because customers realise that they can more quickly obtain the information or advice or appointment that they require by using the telephone, email or the website options.

6.6 This model of obtaining advice via scheduled appointments rather than 'walk-in' is intended to become the main operational model for non-emergency face-to-face visits.

- 6.7 Services that currently require customers to physically present documentation for proof of eligibility and entitlement will be asked whether this can be done remotely either electronically or by post, and making the required process changes will be incorporated into the proposed face to face project.
- 6.8 The Council's Assets and Regeneration Committee agreed that as part of the Council's accommodation strategy, the Council would initiate a new build development at Colindale, with a view to breaking the lease at Barnet House or sub-letting from October 2017.
- 6.9 There is no current plan to close the Burnt Oak Customer Services Centre. Thus the Council has a choice about what should happen to the face to face customer contact that currently happens at Barnet House. To risk assess the impact, a review was undertaken to ensure that there would be sufficient provision to meet customer face to face demand following its closure. Through analysing the customer data and understanding the plans for the various services and Council buildings, Table 6 below sets out where the demand would be met. At this stage, this shows that the demand can be accommodated within the other Council buildings that are available. However, as plans for community hubs and multi-agency working develop, these new sites can be considered for certain services. All these proposals need further investigation and detailed design, and will be informed by consultation with the public, which will commence following the Strategy's approval by this Committee.
- 6.10 The detailed proposals around assisted self-service and document drop in libraries will be developed early in the new year and will need to recognise the implications of the libraries strategy which is currently out to consultation. The funding implications will be considered as part of the development of the business case for the proposed face-to-face changes.

Table 6 – proposed changes to services currently delivered at Barnet House

Service	Avg Barnet House visitors a day	Nature of current visits	Proposed changes
Housing Benefits & Council Tax	150	Appointments and mandatory document provision/certification. Walk ins being reduced.	Assisted self-service, document certification and appointments to be relocated to North Finchley and/or Golders Green libraries. This would promote additional footfall to these libraries, and utilise existing community assets that are geographically close to where the existing customers live.
Housing options and homelessness	50	Appointments and walk ins	Relocate appointments to the ground floor of the new Colindale Headquarters or a community hub in the west of the borough.

			This is a more accessible location for the majority of the client group. The venue / location for receiving 'walk in' demand is still to be determined, and the proposed end to end review of this service, and review of face to face, will look at how 'walk ins' can be reduced, as well as how web-based information and services can be improved.
Housing tenants and leaseholders	30	Appointments and walk ins	This is not a well-used service and Barnet Homes are looking at how improved web self-service as well as the existing telephone contact centre can meet customer needs without the need for a face to face reception.
Planning Office	25	Appointments and walk ins	Relocate appointments to the normal officer meeting rooms within the new Colindale Headquarters, and cease to offer walk ins. The need for walks ins is already reducing due to better availability of online documents.
Registrars (Birth and Death Certificates)	20	Appointments only	Relocate appointments either to Barnet Hospital or identify a better location for the service once a decision is made on the future of the existing office in Burnt Oak.
Welfare Reform Task Force	18	Appointments only	Re-location to follow the location of housing advice services offered by Barnet Homes.
Family Services (child protection interviews and conferences, youth offending meetings)	7	Appointments only	Relocate appointments to the ground floor of the new Colindale Headquarters or community hub as determined by the new operation model for the service.
Booked meetings	Unknown	Customer invited in for specific services e.g. SEN reviews	There are a number of meeting rooms that are booked by services for specific functions as and when needed. This will be captured by the Colindale Headquarters project

Table 7 – proposed primary use of council assets

Council building	Proposed primary use
Burnt Oak Library & Customer Services Centre	<p>The customer services provision will stay as it currently is, which is general information, advice, appointments, and document certification and receipt for Council services, predominantly housing benefits. However the footfall will be reduced through service re-design and increased use of the improved website and self-service facilities by customers.</p> <p>The multi-agency jobs team (BOOST) will remain in place.</p> <p>Subject to the proposed face-to-face and service reviews, and space analysis, from 2017 it may also include housing advice and homelessness and the welfare reform task group.</p>
Golders Green and North Finchley Libraries	<p>Assisted self-service for accessing all services available online, with particular emphasis on housing benefits and Council tax support; receipt and certification of customer documents used to prove eligibility and entitlement, with specialist scanning facilities; provision for appointments regarding housing benefits and Council tax.</p>
The new Colindale headquarters	<p>Appointment-based customer visits only. The exact mix of services will be subject to service design. Current proposals considered are for family services (child protection, youth offending), housing options and homelessness, housing tenants and leaseholders, and other statutory referral-based services.</p>
Colindale Barnet Centre for Independent Living & Library	<p>This new building may also be a site for those services that offer advice on a walk-in basis, such as those offered by Barnet Homes.</p>
Community Hubs (various locations)	<p>These are at an early stage, but a number of services are developing commissioning plans that involve the use of community hubs where this provides a more appropriate form of delivery. These will comprise a combination of third sector provision, partnership-based services (e.g. a multi-agency jobs team such as BOOST) and Council services that offer advice on a walk-in basis.</p>

Services currently offered via telephone and face to face

- 6.11 In the 12 months to September 2015, there were 58,430 visits to Barnet House and 36,364 visits to the Burnt Oak customer service centre recorded by CSG customer services. This does not include all visits to Barnet House to other services.
- 6.12 Whilst table 8 below shows that there are 11 different services that visitors may enquire about, in actual fact the visits at both sites are dominated by Housing Benefits and Council tax, with Barnet House also offering the housing options and homelessness service. The Housing Benefits service currently requires all new claims to be conducted face-to-face, and requires identity and eligibility to be physically certified by a member of staff as part of the claims process.

Table 8 – current customer service provision and channel

Service	Telephone	Face to Face - Barnet House	Face to Face - Burnt Oak Customer Service Centre	Face to Face – bespoke
Customer services provision				
General enquiries	X	X	X	
Council tax & Council tax support	X	X	X	
Housing benefits	X	X	X	X ⁴
Street-based services (street cleansing, refuse & recycling, green spaces, trees, grounds maintenance)	X			
Parking	X			
Street Lighting	X			
Assisted Travel (freedom passes & blue badges)	X			
Highways (roads & pavements)	X			
Licensing, environmental health, pest control, noise & nuisance, trading standards	X			
Planning	X	X ⁵		
Registrars	X	X ⁶		X ⁷
School admissions	X			
Libraries	X			X
Families and Young Peoples' Information	X			
Youth Services	X			

⁴ Housing benefits claimants can ask library staff for assistance with filling out an application on-line

⁵ Separate reception

⁶ Separate to customer services

⁷ The main Registrar office is in Burnt Oak, a separate location to the customer service centre and library

Children's social care	X			
Adult social care (Social Care Direct)	X			
Housing tenants & leaseholder services	X	X		X ⁸
Housing advice, housing options, homelessness	X	X		
BOOST – multiagency jobs assistance			X	
Referral-only services				
Housing benefits – new claim appointments		X	X	
Welfare reform assistance		X		
Family services (including child protection)		X		
Special Educational Need services		X		

6.13 Whilst customer services operates over two sites, Barnet Homes housing options and homelessness service only operates at Barnet House. The proposal to move this to a location in the west of the borough such as Colindale or Burnt Oak would bring it closer to the areas that have the greatest deprivation in Barnet, so whilst it will be less accessible to those living in the east, the move is expected to benefit larger numbers of the service's main client group than is currently the case.

Projecting future face to face demand

6.14 In contrast, Housing Benefits customers have always had a choice of two locations serving different parts of the borough, so the planned closure of Barnet House in 2017 could have the impact of reducing accessibility if no alternative locations were to be offered.

6.15 As identified in the CSG Revenues & Benefits section of this document, there is significant potential for increasing the use of online and telephony self-service facilities for Council tax and Housing Benefits customers, and reducing the need for face-to-face. The rollout of Universal Credit - an exclusively online process - to working age claimants, will eventually reduce face to face support to that which is necessary for people who need help with the online process. Interaction for any complex cases will normally be conducted by phone rather than face to face. During 2017 families and couples will be moved on to Universal Credit, but at the time of writing the precise dates and impact is not known for this or subsequent rollouts. However the Government has no current plans to move claimants of pension age onto Universal Credit at all.

6.16 By the time of the proposed closure of Barnet House we can expect the following changes to have taken effect:

- a greater proportion of Housing Benefits customers not on Universal Credit will be utilising the phone and digital channels for support with their claim, due to improved services and improved support for customers in using them, as well as increased digital skills, supported by a Council digital inclusion strategy

⁸ Grahame Park housing office

- the process of dropping off eligibility and identify documents will be made more electronic, so that the Housing Benefits service places fewer demands on customers physically presenting their documents
- Universal Credit will have been extended to more claimant types, removing the need for physical documentation. Visits will primarily be from residents who need assistance to use the online system
- Limited population growth - less than 1% growth - with growth likely to take place amongst the section of population that does not require Housing Benefits

6.17 The net impact of this should be a reduction in face to face demand for the service, although the scale of the demand is hard to forecast precisely at this stage.

6.18 The borough-wide network of libraries offers a potential way to avoid reducing accessibility, and also support the Council's various additional objectives of co-locating services, maximising the use of public sector buildings, and maximising residents' use of libraries.

6.19 The analysis of the home locations of current Housing Benefits customers shows that there are two libraries that would offer accessible alternative locations when Barnet House closes, as the two maps below show – North Finchley and Golders Green.

Figure 19: Map of where Housing Benefits claimants live (the darker the colour, the higher the number)

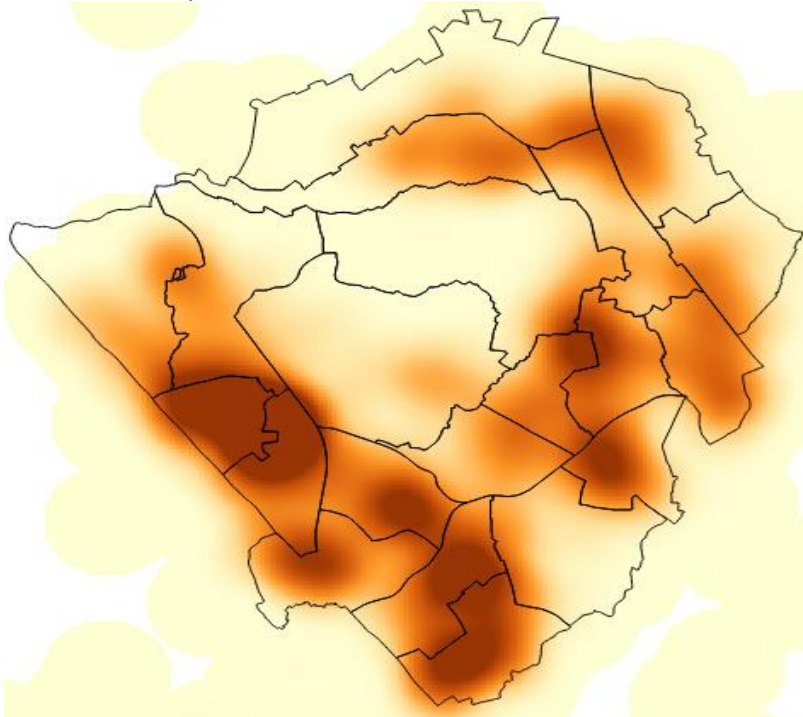
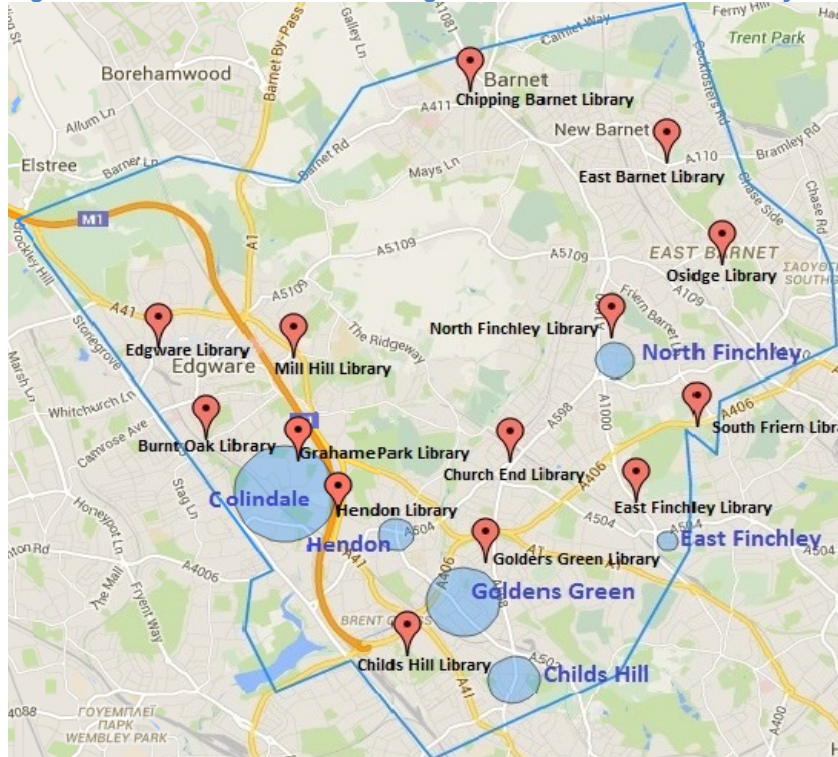


Figure 20: Concentrations of Housing Benefits customers and library locations



6.20 It is therefore proposed that the business case and initial feasibility study focus on the implications of using these two libraries for housing benefit services including document certification, assistance to use the website and My Account, and any face to face appointments required. Detailed proposals will need to be developed, taking into account the implications of the final library strategy. Any costs associated with using these libraries will form part of a business case for changing the face-to-face arrangements.

6.21 The same staff offering self-service support for Housing Benefits claimants should be able to support customers with accessing other online services, such as viewing a planning application online, and finding advice about housing options.

6.22 An additional benefit to customers is that, subject to the approval of the library strategy, these libraries will have extended opening hours⁹, making the service available at times more convenient to residents.

6.23 Evaluating options

6.24 The following options were also considered but rejected:

- **Closing the Burnt Oak customer services centre in addition to Barnet House** and so have no single customer access centre, but offer some services and self-

⁹ The current library strategy being consulted upon proposes that the opening hours for these libraries increases to 85 hours per week, although only 25% of these hours who have librarians or volunteers present

service support in libraries, and some appointments-based meetings for referral-only services at Colindale.

This was rejected for the following reasons:

- The housing options and homelessness service will always need to offer face to face support, which would not be well-suited to a library
- The customer service centre at Burnt Oak is a well-established place to offer advice and appointments related to Housing Benefits, and more recently, support with finding employment.
- The existing customer service centre at Burnt Oak is co-located with a library, which occupies the first floor. There is no plan to close this library, therefore moving customer services out of the ground floor would create a gap, without any saving on building running costs.
- There is insufficient space available in the Colindale building to accommodate projected demand for all face to face access.

- **Close the Burnt Oak customer services centre in addition to Barnet House, and have one customer access centre in the new Colindale building.**

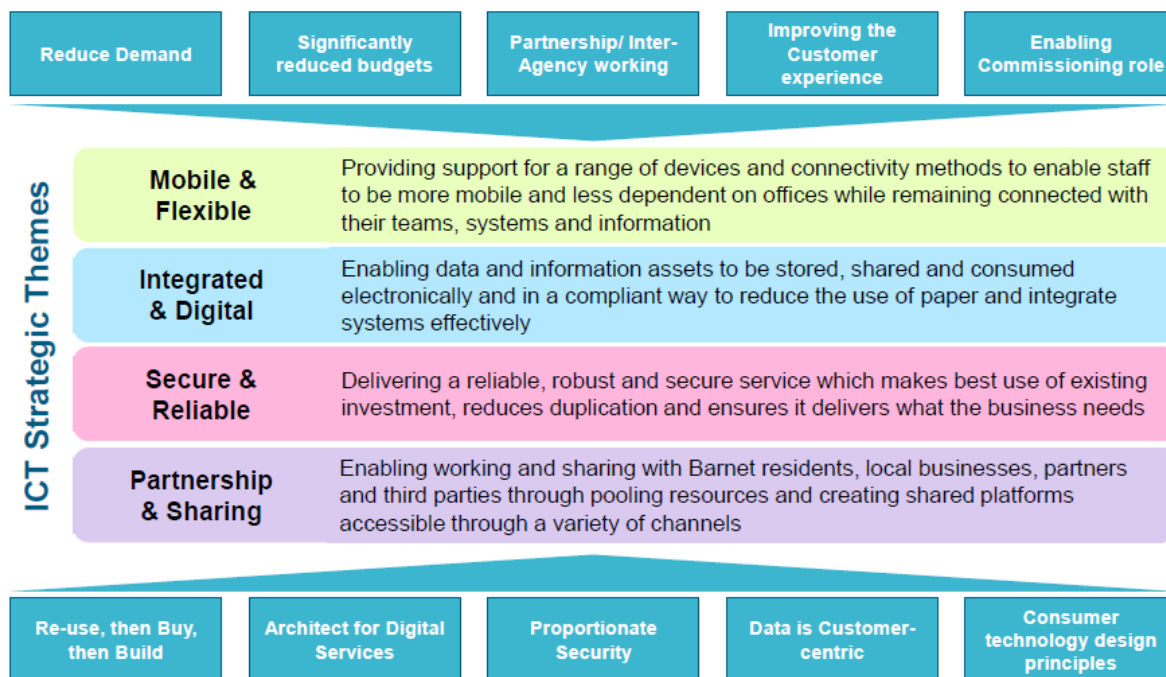
This was rejected for the following reasons:

- There is insufficient space available in the Colindale building to accommodate projected demand for all face to face access.
- The customer service centre at Burnt Oak is a well-established place to offer advice and appointments related to Housing Benefits, and more recently, support with finding employment.
- The existing customer service centre at Burnt Oak is co-located with a library, which occupies the first floor. There is no plan to close this library, therefore moving customer services out of the ground floor would create a gap, without any saving on building running costs. The customer service centre at Burnt Oak is well-established.

7 AN ENABLING CUSTOMER SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE FUTURE

7.1 The council has recently developed a new IT strategy that is built around a number of strategic themes. This document does not seek to replicate that work here, but to identify areas where they need to fully align. These IT strategic themes are shown below.

Figure 21: IT Strategic Themes



7.2 While all elements of the strategy will support enhanced and more efficient customer services, two particular themes are of significant importance:

- Integrated and Digital
- Mobile and Flexible

- 7.3 As the Community Participation programme develops, the “partnership and sharing” theme will gain in prominence.
- 7.4 While the primary focus of this Customer Access Strategy is to look at the interface between the public and the Council - the entry point into services – it has become clear, that for many services, the main requirement is now for improved level of integration between the public-facing aspects of the Council – the customer services centres and the website - and the services that receive the customer requests and deliver the service.
- 7.5 Therefore, while significant gaps occur in the front-end platform - mainly lack of web and app functionality – improvements to these in the absence of a proper integration strategy and understanding of the end to end customer journey, is unlikely to be effective in the delivery of channel shift, improved customer service and cost savings.
- 7.6 The IT strategic roadmap therefore sets a key timeline for implementing improvements in customer access. At the detailed action planning stage, the customer access and IT strategies must be aligned and the governance structure needs to reflect the significant overlap.
- 7.7 The IT strategy naturally provides a high level view of need which will be developed into a set of specific deliverables as a detailed implementation plan is developed. The following sections look at some of the more detailed requirements to enable improvements in customer services.

Web Infrastructure

- 7.8 The new website and My Account self-serve facility launched on 1 March 2015. The focus was on improving the functionality for the highest volume service transactions managed by CSG customer services. The project did not improve self-service functionality for Re services other than reporting road and pavement problems, and it did not improve self-service for Barnet Homes services as this is an entirely separate website. Nor did it improve self-service functionality for services relating to Adults & Communities, Family Services, Education & Skills or Registrars.

While the customer feedback shows some improvement of customer’s perception of the web, it is still the least used channel and the one subject to lowest satisfaction scores with only a 40% satisfaction rating compared to the phone and face to face which regularly score over 80%.

- 7.9 Across a number of services, the following barriers to improved online take-up have been identified:
- **Search** – The site covers such a large, diverse and complex amount of information, so the accuracy of the search is critical;
 - **Webforms** – there are two types of webforms – a) those created in Lagan CRM, which work well for services where CSG are the first point of contact and b) those created in Magnolia, the web content management system, which have very limited functionality. The latter forms are the main problem in that they simply result in an email to that has to be re-typed into Council systems, with no integration.

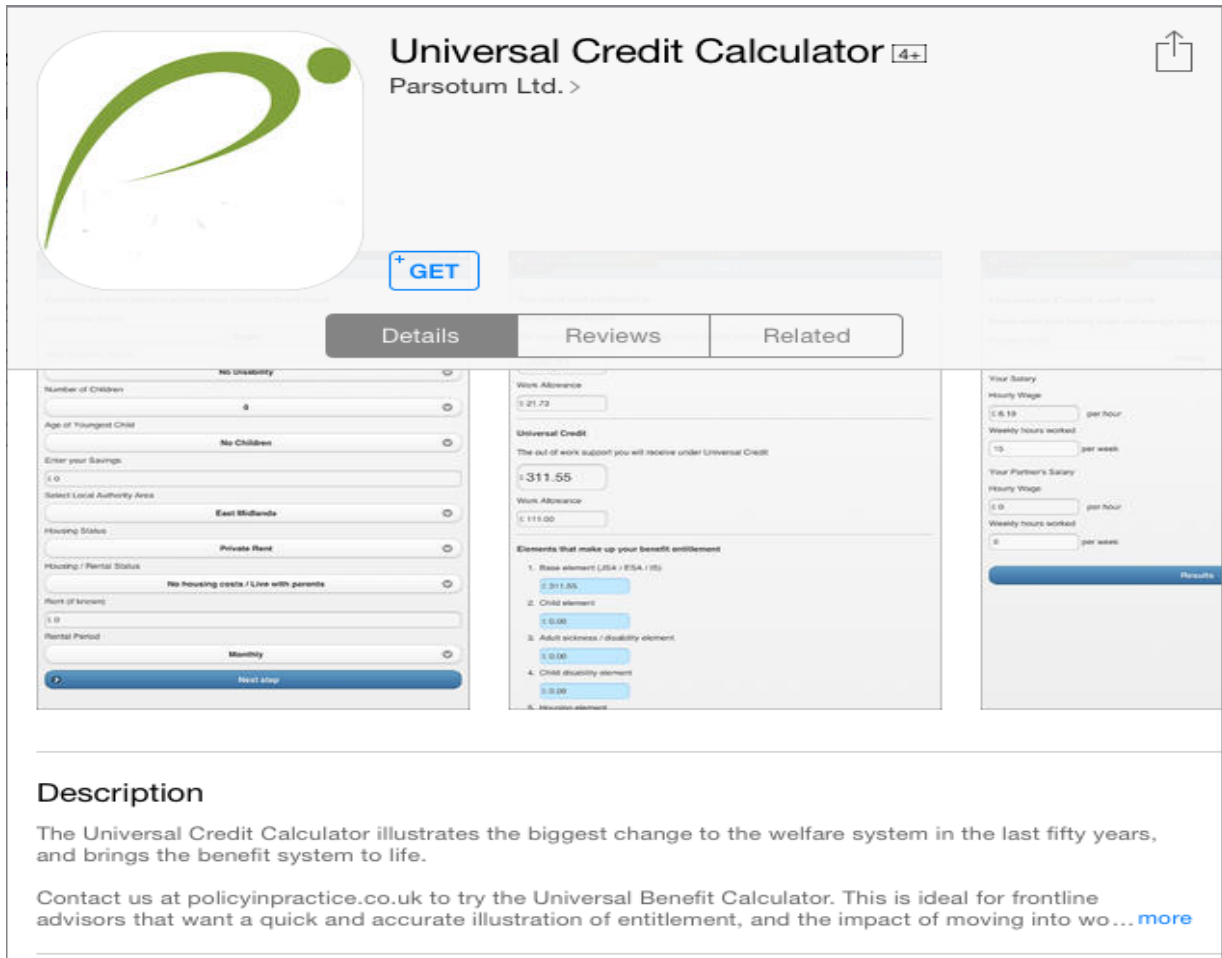
- **Payments** – this links to the issue of webforms. There is no easy way to create webforms that allow customers to pay for services at the end a transaction; each service is currently expected to commission/develop its own solution.
- **Bookings/Appointments** – there is no easy system for creating a booking or an appointment for a visit (e.g. book and pay for a football pitch, pest control visit, book an appointment with a social worker etc.)
- **Directories** – the current directory on the website does not allow staff to complete ‘bulk uploads’ of data and is therefore felt to be inefficient by the services that need to use it; there is no integration into the primary data sources meaning a lot of administrative work is required to keep them up to date. The aim is that forthcoming community participation database of voluntary and community organisations and directories will be integrate or replace the directory and have enhanced data and functionality.
- **Mapping** – much information is easier for customers if presented in the form of map – the lack of a corporate Geographic Information System (GIS) means that each service is having to develop their own solution meaning that the sort of functionality that users of websites would expect, such as adding and removing layers of data according to what you are looking for; clicking on a data item and it taking you to the data source etc.) are not available. This is scheduled for 2016 in the IT strategy action plan.
- **Integration** – this is when data from webforms goes directly into back office systems that have the functionality to trigger updates about progress of service request. The lack of updates is a key customer complaint.
- **Business Intelligence** – there is still a lack of good quality data across the whole system to support the development of robust business cases. Most service data is not in Lagan CRM, so an over- reliance on this data may lead to a misleading picture; BI, as outlined in the IT strategy, combined with “middleware” could fix this;

It is hard to see how significant further progress can be achieved unless these issues are addressed at a corporate level.

Apps

- 7.10 It is clear from the data in section 4.2 of this report that large numbers of people expect to be able to transact via smartphones and tablets as iPads. The current website is ‘mobile-friendly’, which means that the content layout automatically adjusts to the device screen size to enable readability. There is no reason why the numbers of smartphone and tablet users won’t continue to grow. There is already a Universal Credit calculator in the Apple app store (Figure0) and a new app is being developed to enable people to apply for Universal Credit.

Figure 30: Universal Credit Calculator



- 7.11 The use of Apps would represent a departure from the existing approach. The focus on My Account assumes that residents want to be able to access the Council for multiple services on a regular basis.
- 7.12 The move to Apps would require more of a focus on specific services, so for example the Council may decide it wants to have the following Apps aimed at very targeted groups of service users.
- 7.13 While the two approaches are not mutually exclusive – any app developed can be made available via the web – there may be significant cost differences in the two approaches. Seeking to build a single web infrastructure that covers a diverse range of services, with full integration into back office systems is likely to come at a high cost and take a long time. Bespoke app development tends to be more agile, but has the possible danger that the same infrastructure is replicated several times.
- 7.14 Table 9 below suggests some possible areas where Apps could add value.

Table 9 – potential uses for Apps

App	Key functions / Service
Barnet Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where can I get support and advice Applying for a licence

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying my business rates • Networking with other businesses in Barnet
Barnet Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where can I get help and advice? • What are my options? • What am I entitled to – self assessment function? • Book an appointment for a full assessment • Can I buy some short term care?
Barnet Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When is my bin emptied? • What and where can I recycle? • My bin was not emptied? • I need a new bin?
Barnet Volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What skills do I have to offer (self-assessment form)? • Who needs my help, where? • Book an appointment with the volunteer centre
Roads & pavements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing 'report a problem' functionality but with much better information about what is being done. • Highways works in my area • Application for a cross-over
Planning & building control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a planning application • Booking and paying for a building control officer • What planning is happening in my area? • Commenting on a planning application • Do I live in a conservation area?
Barnet health, sports and fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booking a football pitch / tennis court • Where can I exercise? • Running and walking routes in Barnet • I want to go running/exercise with other people – a fitness social network • Help losing weight and eating more healthily
Barnet Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying for a home • Logging and booking a repair • Paying my rent • My responsibilities as a tenant • Anti-social behaviour
Under 5 parents/carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do I get support? • Activities for parents with young children • Child care in Barnet • Health care for under 5s in Barnet
Barnet schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools in Barnet • Applying for a school place (primary and secondary) • Can I get help with school transport • My Child has special needs • After school activities (updated by schools)
Barnet hall and room booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where can I book space in Barnet? • Booking a community hall etc.

Telephony

- 7.15 The CSG service centre in Coventry has seen significant investment in telephony, and an expansion of interactive and voice responsive (IVR) services. However, this is currently not available to those calls that do not go to Coventry. Around 317,701 calls are received by the other two contact centres (operated by Re and Barnet Homes) and over 1 million calls are still received to Council desk phones, of which a portion will be from external customers.
- 7.16 Detailed planning for the new Colindale Council headquarters provides an opportunity to create a consistent telephony infrastructure.
- 7.17 As the proposed end-to-end customer journey mapping develops this should identify further opportunities to further rationalise telephony provision. RE specifically is looking at a new target operating model that will result in changes to current provision, probably during 2016.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 8.1 Barnet has a population that is ready and willing to support the Council in moving to a 'digital by default model. While it is estimated that 18% of Barnet residents do not either have easy access to digital options, or do not have the necessary skills or interest, this number will continue to reduce.
- 8.2 Despite the readiness of the population to do this, the vast majority (around 80%) of interaction is still via phone. The evidence that is available would indicate this is due to three key reasons:
- Lack of web functionality
 - Lack of follow-up when applying via the web or confidence that they will get a response
 - Easier to find a phone number and ask than to find the information on the web
- 8.3 Therefore, the data would support a strategy that seeks to invest in enabling many more customers to be able to transact online.
- 8.4 The root causes of the issues highlighted in this document would seem to be:
- Fragmented approach to infrastructure development;
 - Lack of an end-to-end understanding of the customer journey, meaning that even when it easy to get the information into the system, the lack of integration and work flow means the requests may get lost in a long queue with limited ability to update the customer on progress;
 - Difficulty in obtaining-system-wide data;
 - Key missing web infrastructure as outlined in section 6 of this report;
 - An assumption we must still make everything available via a person at the end of the phone;
- 8.5 It could be argued that ultimately this results from fragmentation in the way customer services is managed:
- There isn't 'one customer service' – there are many customer services, with three main contact centres, a few other mini-centres, and each Delivery Unit directly managing some aspect of customer service themselves.
 - A very partial view of customer access is being used to develop strategy and excludes consideration of the key elements of the service supply chain that ultimately impact customer satisfaction, because data is recorded differently and separately and there is no single source of the truth. CSG deals with a sub-set of Council services and for some of those services, only a part of the service supply chain.
 - Customer access issues are treated separately from service improvement (e.g. back office system development being delivered separately from web development).

- 8.6 While some services do have ongoing plans that will provide a more robust platform for customer service improvements – for example, Barnet Homes is planning a new web portal, Highways has automated customer updates - the Council will not achieve the ambitious targets in the 2020 vision without investment.
- 8.7 We know that 5% of service users are responsible for 20% of calls. A better understanding of this group would make a significant contribution to our ability to manage demand.
- 8.8 However, the work has identified ten areas of work needed to realise our vision:
- 1) Improve website information provision
 - 2) Invest in new website functionality (e.g. online bookings, maps)
 - 3) Pilot 8 'self-service only' services
 - 4) Ensure access for all - develop a Digital Inclusion strategy
 - 5) Simplify phone access - review the multiple telephone contact centres
 - 6) Simplify & automate processes so customers get a better experience, starting with 4 service areas, one of which should be an app pilot
 - 7) Expand the customer data reporting tool, so that all services are included
 - 8) Clarify the use of social media for customer services
 - 9) Develop the role of customer services in signposting customers to community groups
 - 10) Redesign and re-locate face to face services

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Savings

- 8.9 A target of £0.5m additional savings from CSG customer services by 2018/19 has been set.
- 8.10 The savings already being delivered by customer services via the CSG contract are significant - £10.8m over the 10 years of the contract. Given the high proportion of demand reduction this is based on, an average of 54% reduction - but up to 70% for some services - a savings strategy based on further demand reductions and channel shift is felt to be high risk.
- 8.11 Until a detailed business case is developed, it is not possible to provide, with any degree of confidence, a figure for savings that could accrue as a result this strategy. Therefore, more work is required to identify the savings required by the medium term financial strategy for 2018.