

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 5th January 2012
Report of: Paul Bayley, Customer Services and Libraries Manager
Subject/Title: Customer contact volumes in response to north waste transformation and silver bin roll out

1. Report Summary

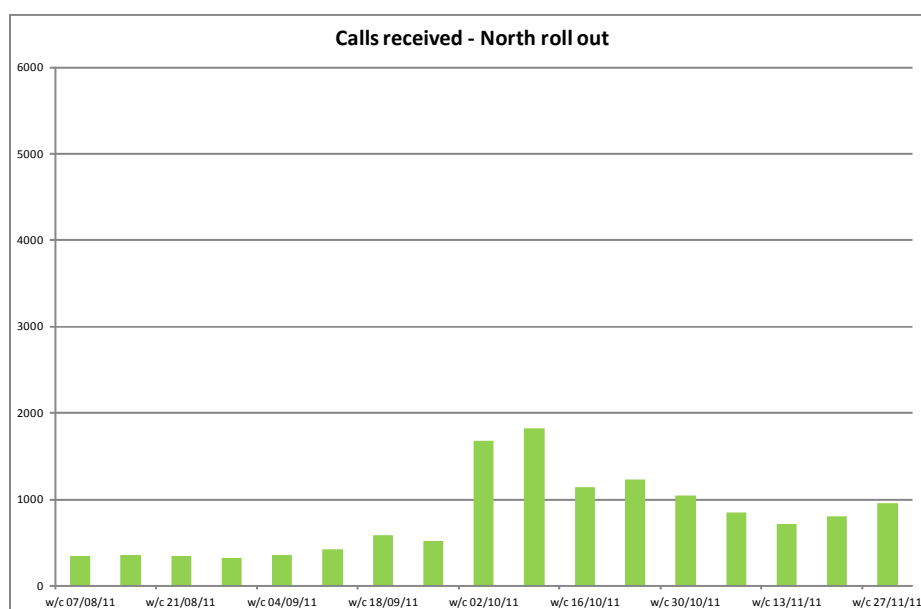
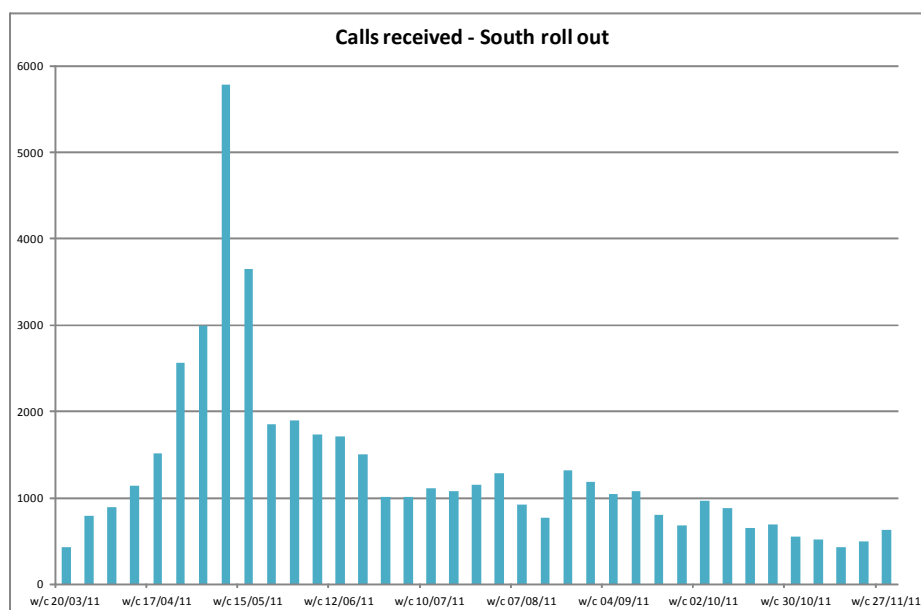
- 1.1 This report provides an update on Contact Centre performance during the waste transformation and silver bin roll out to the north of the borough. Call volumes and customer wait times have been much lower compared with the south of the borough following implementation of many of the lessons learned from that experience.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Customer Services Manager presented an update on Customer Services to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee in September 2011. A section of the presentation, and subsequent questions from Members, focused on the extended wait times that customers were experiencing when calling the Contact Centre at that time. The primary reason for the poor performance was the increased call volumes as a result of the waste transformation and the silver bin roll out in the south of the borough.
- 2.2 The Committee requested that a report be produced by the Customer Services Manager within a month of the roll out of silver bins in the north of the borough, on contact centre performance and present it to the Committee.
- 2.3 The call volumes for the south waste roll out were unprecedented. In June and July 2009 we received 6,350 calls following changes to waste and collection affecting all properties in the south of the borough. We received 29,000 calls in the initial three months of the south waste roll out in 2011. One of the main drivers for the high call volumes was that the LLPG dataset used to map the new collection routes was incomplete and so we received many calls from the same customers who did not receive any collections for several weeks after the new routes were introduced.
- 2.4 A review of lessons learned from the south roll out had already been undertaken to inform plans for the north waste roll out and some key changes were implemented that were expected to reduce customer calls:
- Improved communications in advance of the roll out with a particular emphasis on the website for the most up to date information
 - The recruitment of 12 Customer Service Advisors (CSAs) into the Contact Centre on a short term basis to handle the expected increase in calls
 - The development of the CRM system to be used by both the Contact Centre and the Waste teams to enable improved tracking of a customer request

3. Customer Impact

- 3.1 The volume of calls received from the north of the borough has been much lower. The peak weekly call volume was 1,824 compared with 5,785 during the south roll out. As can be seen from the graphs below, the duration of the call peak was also significantly shorter with weekly call volumes exceeding 1,000 for only 5 weeks following the start of the new collection rounds on 3rd October, compared with 23 weeks for the south which also started earlier with the delivery of the silver bins from 11th April. Call volumes relating to missed collections and missed assisted lifts remain higher than before the new collections rounds but the Waste team are continuing to work to reduce these.



- 3.2 Improvements to the waste and recycling pages on the website played a key role in reducing call volumes for the north roll out. 34,616 customers checked their collection day calendar online during the roll out. 71% of customers who

chose to 'rate this page' for the waste and recycling content and online services during this period rated it as 'good'.

- 3.3 Customers did experience extended wait times during the first few weeks of the north waste roll out. This was partly due to continued high volumes of calls from south customers which remained above 1,000 per week during the first few weeks of the north roll out. It was also due to the learning curve associated with the new recruits in the Contact Centre and the implementation of the CRM system. Call durations quickly reduced, however, as the experience of the new CSAs and familiarity with the new system increased resulting in reduced wait times for customers.

