

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET: 10th November, 2011

Parish & Town Council Hotline – Review of Pilot

REPORT OF : Head of Leisure, Libraries & Customer Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Parish & Town Council Hotline (P&TCHL) was introduced on 31 January 2011 to address concerns expressed by the Parish & Town Council's that the Council does not always respond to enquiries/service requests.
- 1.2 The P&TCHL was initially launched for a six month trial period, which was extended to allow new Parish & Town Council Clerks and Chairs to become familiar with the service following the local elections in May 2011 and before asking them to comment on it's success or otherwise.
- 1.3 797 Parish enquiries were received between 31 January and 31 August 2011.
- 1.4 Of the 793 enquiries due for a response, 698 (88%) were responded to in 10 days. These responses vary from work being complete or advice of work to be programmed. All enquiries are monitored until final completion of works and Parish's are kept informed of progress at key stages.
- 1.5 Of the 95 cases that were not responded to within 10 days, annual leave and competing priorities were the main reasons for delays in responding.
- 1.6 The top five issues raised by Parish and Town Council's related to potholes, street lighting, street cleansing, tree and shrub issues and fly tipping.
- 1.7 A satisfaction survey with the Parish and Town Council's, following the initial trial, showed that 93%, of those that responded, felt it was easy to register their enquiry or request for service; 77% submitted those enquiries electronically, 93% stated that they were satisfied with the way that their enquiry was handled and the time it took to deal with their enquiry. 100% stated that they were satisfied with the outcome of their enquiry. (**See Appendix A** for a further detailed breakdown)
- 1.8 Positive comments included: noticeable improvement in response times; kept informed of progress throughout; beneficial when the Council is going through a restructure and roles/officers are changing. One area of dissatisfaction related to the loss of personal contact with officers however this is not reflected in the satisfaction scores in Appendix A.
- 1.9 Most Parish & Town Council's with the exception of two small parishes are using the system albeit to varying degrees, **see Appendix A**.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the information within this report and the success of the pilot period and agree to move from a pilot project by mainstreaming the town and parish council hotline as part of the core offer of the Councils Customer Service Team and the wider Council.**
- 2.2 Service Heads to continue to identify areas for improvement following the receipt of enquiries and service requests from Parish & Town Council's and look to improve response times where improvements are required See Appendix B.**

3.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	The information within this report impacts on all council priorities.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	The Parish & Town Council Hotline is open to all parish and town council's and thereby, indirectly, all of their constituents.
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	No	The costs associated with administering the hotline is in the form of officer time. This is met from within existing budgets.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report, however compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The council's robust feedback mechanisms support the council to maintain its reputation by being responsive to our customers concerns and implementing service improvements as appropriate.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	The Parish & Town Council Hotline is available to all parish and town council's and via various access points including web forms, telephone and email and face to face contact at Civic offices.

4.0 INFORMATION

- 4.1 With effect from 31st January 2011, Parish & Town Council's were requested to direct all enquiries/requests for service to the Customer Quality Team (CQT) in line with the requirements of the pilot phase. This could be done by either ringing the Customer Quality Team on 01952 382006, emailing customer.quality@telford.gov.uk or through on line request forms on the Council's website. This was briefed to the Clerks and Chairs of the Parish & Town Council's electronically and through attendance at a number of meetings e.g. Parish & Town Council Group Meeting etc.**

4.2 Council officers were advised that if they received an enquiry directly from a Parish or Town Council, they should redirect that enquiry to the CQT, so that the enquiry can be recorded and managed in accordance with the new service.

4.3 All enquiries are recorded to allow the CQT to case manage the enquiries, ensuring that they are correctly allocated, progress chase responses and escalate cases where responses have not been issued within the agreed target of 10 working days.

5.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.1 The Customer Quality Team have been asked to investigate two developments, the ability to attach photo's and the ability to log multiple enquiries. We are currently investigating this with our software suppliers.

Report prepared by Helen Ward, Customer Quality Manager, 01952 382507

Appendix A

Parish Single Point of Contact – Satisfaction Survey 2011

Introduction

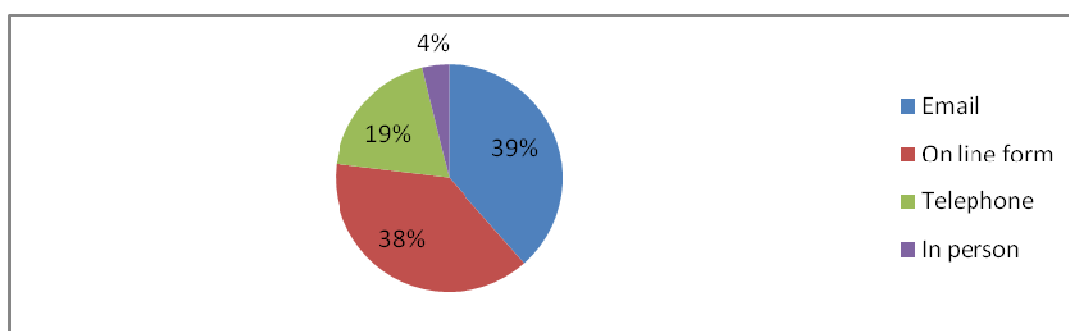
Following the implementation of the single point of contact for Parish's it was agreed that a satisfaction survey would be undertaken to establish any improvements required.

Only 2 parishes have yet to use the single point of contact service: Eyton Upon The Weald Moors and Preston Upon the Weald Moors

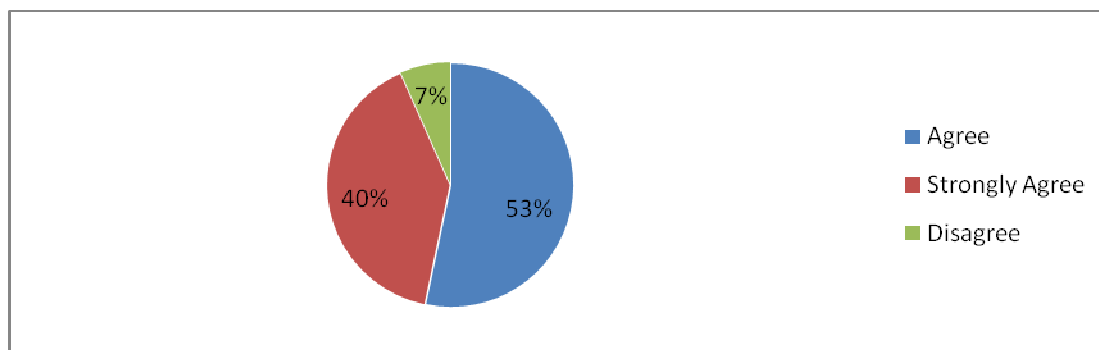
Of the 25 surveys 15 were returned; a response rate of 60%.

The results of the survey are detailed below.

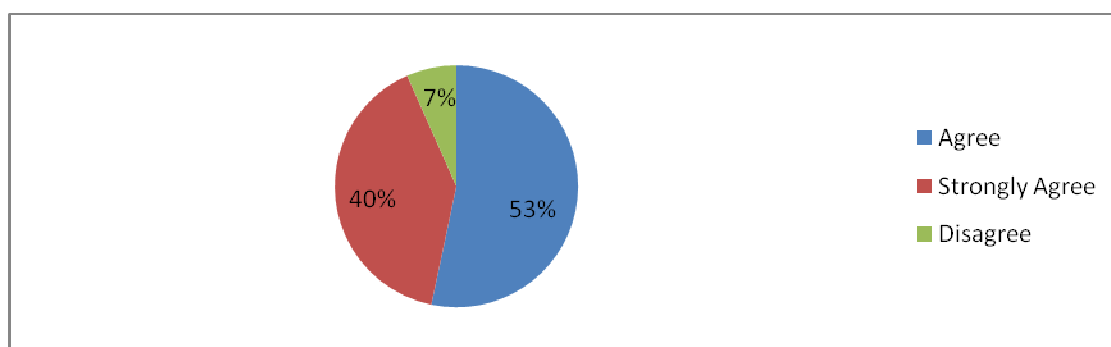
1. I made the enquiry to the Customer Quality Team by:



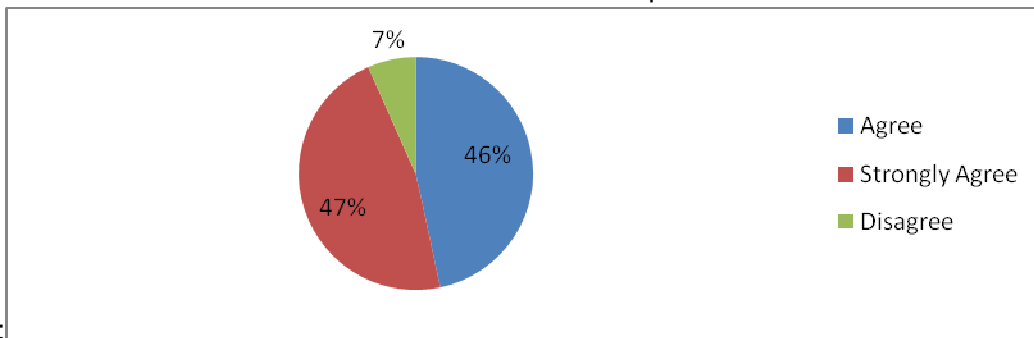
2. It was easy to make my enquiry :



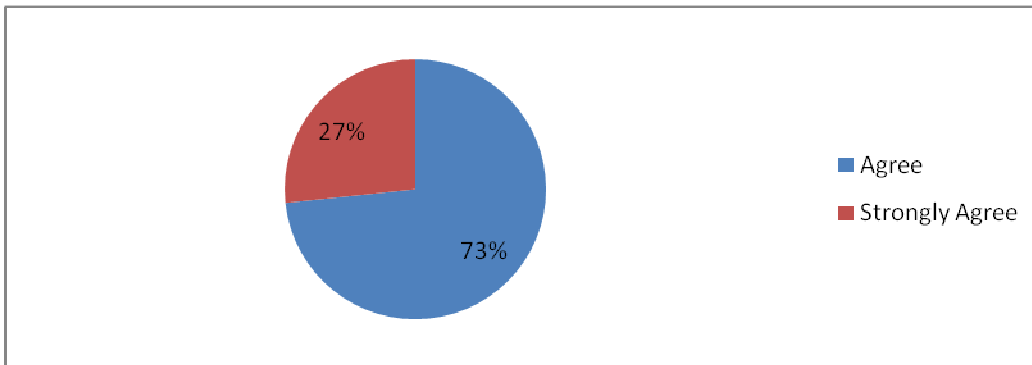
3. I was satisfied with the way the Council processed my enquiry:



4. I was satisfied with the time it took to receive a response



5. I was satisfied with the outcome of my enquiry:



Comments

- Noticeable improvement in response times
- Kept informed throughout and get an answer even if not the one you want
- Pleased it is continuing after the initial trial as beneficial
- Everyday matters are fine – those that are more complex would be better resolved by personal contact with officer leading on the issue
- Those officers that are good are still good – those last minute are still last minute
- System is excellent – largely due to being so poor before
- Miss the personal touch with officers
- Initial acknowledgement made immediately but then can take up to 10 days for response
- I was concerned that previous good working relationships with individuals would be disrupted but my requests appear to be getting to my usual contacts so referrals is working well. There is a benefit in the context of the changes taking place and where new people are picking up responsibilities I find out who the new contact is!
- The one area of dissatisfaction was around preferring the previous system of making contact direct with officers

Improvements

1.	Would like facility to attach photos	This is under development and will keep Parishes updated.
2.	Would like facility to log multiple enquiries without having to keep going in and out of website	Have raised this with our website supplier and will keep Parishes updated.

List of responding Parishes

- Church Aston Parish Council
- Great Dawley Parish Council
- Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council
- Ketley Parish Council
- Lawley and Overdale Parish Council
- Lilleshall, Donnington & Muxton Parish Council
- Madeley Parish Council
- Oakengates Town Council
- Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council
- Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Council
- The Gorge Parish Council
- Wellington Town Council
- Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council
- Roddington
- Anonymous – hard copy with no identification of Parish

Parish Report

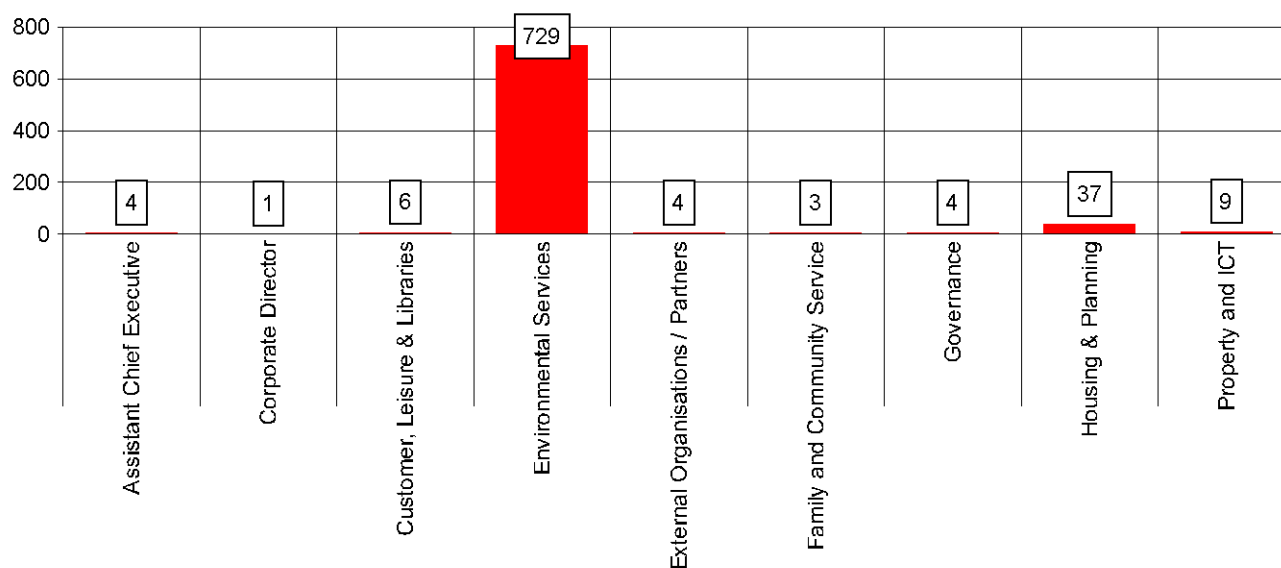
Performance information January 31 2011 – 31 August 2011

Overall Performance

Of 797 Parish Enquires received, there were 821 associated issues.

Of those received, 793 were due for response and 88% (698) were responded to within the target of 10 days.

Parish Enquiries Received



Performance by Service Area

(Responded to within 10 days; of those due for response)

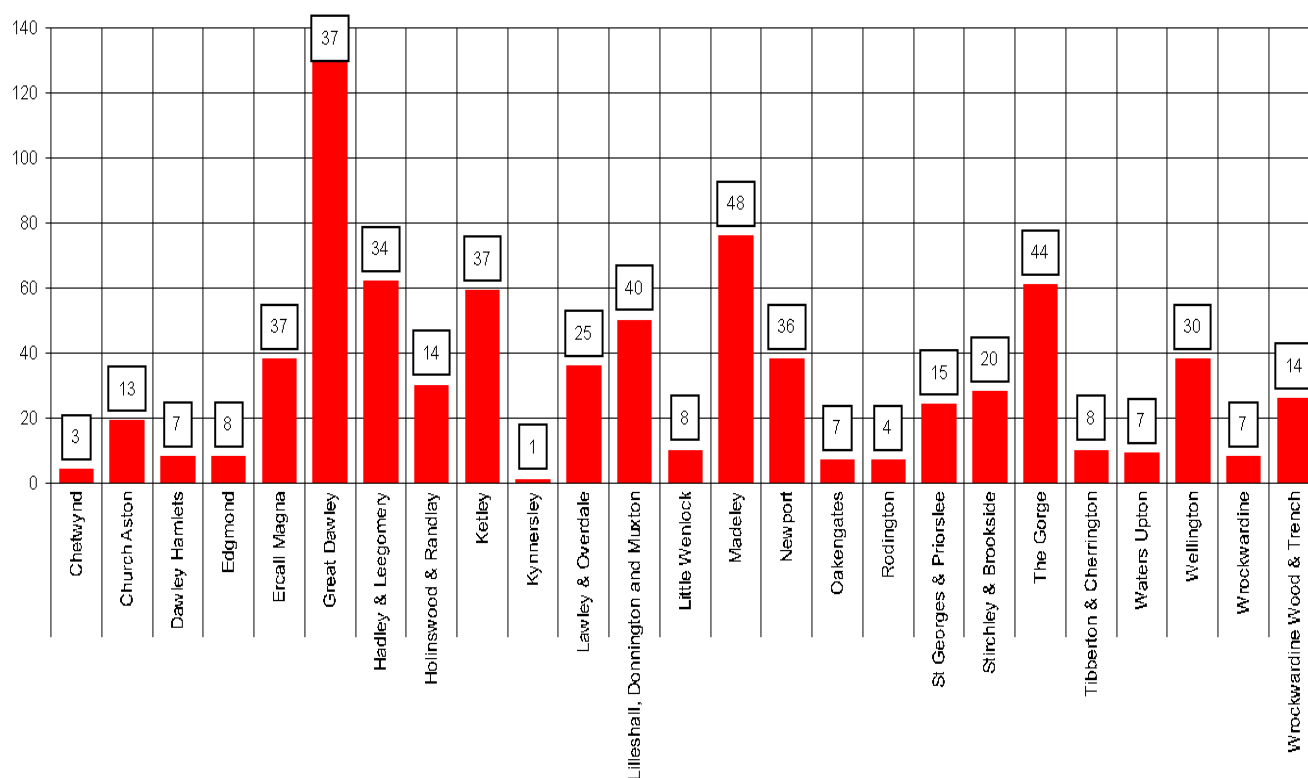
	% responded to in target	Number due for response in period	Number responded to in 10 days
Assistant Chief Executive	75%	4	3
Corporate Director	0%	1	0
Customer, Leisure & Libraries	83%	6	5
Environmental Services	89%	729	646
Family & Community Services	100%	3	3
Governance	50%	4	2
Housing & Planning	89%	37	33
Property & ICT	67%	9	6

4 enquiries received were referred to external organisations and are not included in these figures.

Top 5 Issues reported by Parishes

- 1 – Condition of footpaths (potholes)
- 2 – Street lighting (bulbs out/flickering)
- 3 – Street Cleansing (general rubbish/litter)
- 4 – Trees & Shrubs (overgrown/untidy)
- 5 – Fly Tipping

Number of Enquiries Reported by Parish



\\Btw.gov.uk\shared\cg_shared\Customer Strategy\Customer Quality Team\Portfolios, Parishes Performance.Information\Parishes\Parish reports\Parish Town Council Single Point Of Contact - SMT Report - 110902 V2.doc