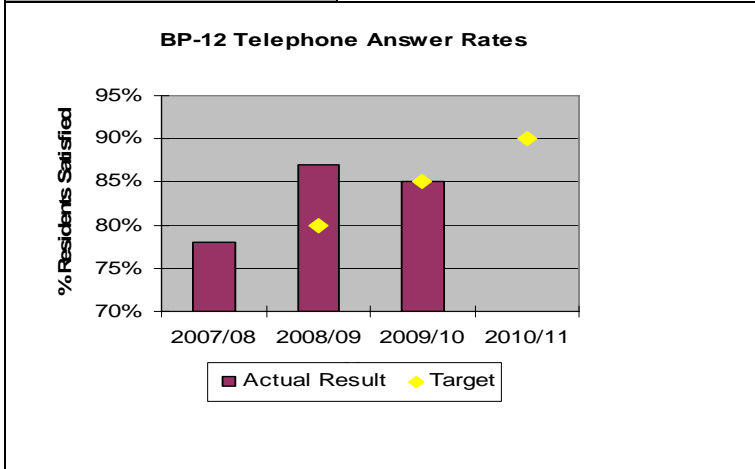




Why is this a priority	Through a better understanding of our customers, we will be able to provide better services and be a more customer focused organisation.
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The council aims to improve customer involvement, choice and satisfaction through the following four inter-related themes: We will:

- Increase choice so customers can access services in more convenient ways;
- Improve our services based on customer feedback;
- Develop joined up and person centred services designed around the needs of our customers; and
- Manage customer expectation and deliver on our promises.

Overall progress to date and outcomes achieved

Overall Summary
 Through its Customer Strategy Board, the council is developing a ‘One Council’ approach to Customer Relations, drawing together Customer Insight, Communications, Customer Services, electronic and other access channel development. This will build on good awareness and progress in some service areas and translate it into an improved corporate approach, including reducing the level of avoidable contact to the council, which has benefits for customer satisfaction and efficiency.

In the second quarter, the council has made some good progress overall against the PI measures for this Business Plan priority, continuing from 2008/09, when targets were exceeded and new stretch targets set for future years. The volume of self service continues to increase significantly overall. Performance on the handling of complaints and letters within stated standards is improving on last year, although letters are not quite yet achieving the target for 2009/10. Email performance has fallen in line with increased demand linked to the economic downturn, which has also impacted on overall telephony where answer rates have fallen slightly from quarter 1 to quarter 2. Some services such as Council Tax have experienced significantly increased levels of customer contact linked to the economic downturn. The percentage of contact which is of low or little value is reported annually as NI 14. Whilst this is not included in the mid year PI summary overleaf, action plans have been developed and are being monitored across the council.

- Achievements since the last report**
- Go live of several projects improving choice and access for customers, e.g. bidding for council properties and paying for school meals.
 - Opening dates agreed for two Joint Service Centres in Chapeltown and Harehills, jointly provided between the council and NHS Leeds.
 - Positive Ombudsman letter for 2008/09 praising the council’s liaison on escalated complaints.
 - Customer Master Index links customer data in CRM Leeds and Housing ICT systems. This is an important first step in the council using a ‘single view of the customer’ to improve services.

Challenges/Risks
Challenge - The economic downturn has increased the customer demand for council-administered benefits and in the number of customers having difficulty making regular payments to the council.

Council / Partnership Groups	Customer Strategy Board, Chief Officer Business Transformation, Head of Corporate Communications.		
Approved by (Accountable Officer)	Paul Broughton	Date	26 October 2009
Approved by (Accountable Director)	James Rogers	Date	9 th Nov 2009

Improvement Priority – Improve customer involvement, choice and satisfaction

Accountable Officer – Paul Broughton

Key actions for the next 6 months

	Action (Desired Achievements)	Contributory Officer/Partner	Milestone / Actions	Timescale
1	Increase choice so customers can access services in more convenient ways.	All CSB members and project leads	1 Implementation of Interactive Voice Recognition to allow customers to complete simple transactions by phone 24 hours a day, starting with choice based lettings and then other services to follow. 2 Developments in self service for key services (library book loans, blue badge permits) and wider improvements to the council website.	1 Jan 2010 2 Ongoing
2	Improve our services based on customer feedback.	All CSB members and project leads	1 Improved customer insight and intelligence linking citizen consultation and engagement research to customer preferences, profiles and life events. 2 Research on the 'customer experience' for people claiming council-administered benefits.	1 Ongoing 2 Jan 2010
3	Develop joined up and person centred services designed around the needs of our customers.	All CSB members and project leads	1 Development of a Customer Focus Vision/Strategy. 2 Progress of Electronic Service Delivery, Housing ICT +, Council Tax/Benefits/change of address and allied programmes, and realisation of customer and financial benefits identified in business cases. 3 Progress of end to end process reviews for Social Care to provide more joined up working with Customer Services.	1 Ongoing 2 Ongoing 3 April 2010
4	Manage customer expectations and deliver on our promises.	All CSB members and project leads	1 Development of cross-council action plans for reducing avoidable contact, and linking them to other insight and data to improve end to end service design. Action plans for reducing avoidable contact reviewed and shared at council-wide workshop 2010. 2 Introduce regular reports to key stakeholders on the level of repeat contact.	1 April 2010 2 Ongoing

Performance Indicators

Performance indicators aligned to this Improvement Priority

Ref.	Title	Owner	Frequency & Measure	Rise or Fall	Baseline (2007/08)	2008/09 Result	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Quarters 1 + 2	Current Predicted Full Year Result	Data Quality
BP-08	Volume transactions through customer self service	Customer Services	Quarterly Number	Rise	467,054	1,058,555	1,250,000	968,960	1,900,000	No concerns
BP-09	% of complaints to the council that receive a substantive response within 15 working days (or other stated service standard)	Customer Services	Quarterly %	Rise	69%	72%	86%	87%	86%	No concerns
BP-10	% of letters from the public that receive a substantive response within 10 working days	Customer Services	Quarterly %	Rise	N/A	85%	90%	89%	89%	No concerns
BP-11	% of customer emails sent to publicly advertised email addresses that receive a substantive response within 10 working days	Customer Services	Quarterly %	Rise	N/A	93%	95%	81%	81%	Checklists currently being revised
BP-12	% of telephone calls answered as a proportion of calls offered	Customer Services	Quarterly %	Rise	78%	87%	85%	85%	85%	