

Gateway Services

Electronic Channels – telephony & online

BACKGROUND

- Electronic channels provides the telephone (020 8379 1000) service for the Council and will increasingly be providing customers with assistance to self-serve online, as more and more online services become available – such as using web-chat to assist customers having questions while using Enfield's website.
- Currently the telephone team deals with a wide range of enquiries about all Council services. For example: basic Council Tax and Benefit enquiries, Housing enquiries (including repairs), Rubbish and Recycling issues, Environmental issues, Planning, Registrars bookings, Informed Families.
- It is our aim to deal with as many calls at the first point of contact as possible, although sometimes we will need to pass the enquiry to one of the service area teams to resolve. We keep a record of this, so can trace the enquiry if the customer has to call back.
- Resolving as many enquiries at the first point of contact within the Call Centre as possible can lead to longer call handling times. This is while the Customer Service officers work through the customer's enquiry to its conclusion and reduces the need for customers to make repeat calls.

PROGRESS

- More online functionality is being made available in coming weeks, such as being able to book appointments for the Registrar's service, Rent account information for Tenants, Benefits and Council Tax information for customers. Future developments will continue to bring more services online for customers.
- We strongly encourage all residents to sign up for an Enfield Connected account to enable them to use online services at a time and place that suits them. If customers can use and have access to the internet, an Enfield Connected account will be the best way to access the majority of Enfield Council's services
- For those customers who cannot use, or do not have access to the internet we recommend visiting one of the four main libraries – Enfield Town, Edmonton, Palmers Green and Ordance, or an access point, such as the Civic Centre, where staff will be able to offer assistance to enable customers to self-serve
- The telephone service will remain in place for those services that are not yet online, or for those who have an emergency or complex issue and are unable to use self service.

RECRUITMENT

- Recruitment to all vacant posts within the Electronic channels team is almost complete – we are phasing the start dates for new staff to ensure they are fully trained before being put on the 'phones
- Training is extensive to ensure that data protection and safeguarding is in place for customers as well as good service knowledge. Due to the very wide range of services the Council offers, it takes several weeks for a new Customer Service officer to complete their training and be confident to deal with customer enquiries
- We start up to 10 staff at a time to minimise the impact on the remainder of the team to allow them to continue to deliver services to customers. Part of the training involves shadowing with a more experienced officer, so we limit the numbers being trained to reduce the impact of the training on customers.
- The first group of new starters are in training now, the next group will start before the end of April and the final recruits will be in place by late May 2016. As each new group of staff go onto the 'phones, customers will begin to notice an improvement in call waiting times.

Vicki Morgan, Head of Electronic Channels – Gateway Services Finance, Resources and Customer Service