

HASS Customer advice and support (info advice and referral for adults and children’s social care)

Advice, information and referral services. The easy team have already worked with HASS on an interim review of the service designed to recommend improvements in the service. The service has identified that the benefits of inclusion in phase 2 would include a reduction in the time spent by social workers dealing with inappropriate referrals, faster assessments and production of care plans due to an increase in the amount of information collected at the initial enquiry stage, improvements in the information available to people who are not eligible for CYC services, increased accessibility of services due to improved call handling and online self assessments. The use of technology and new streamlined processes would help the service in performing an effective gate-keeping role and speed up customer assessments and care plans thus improving customer services. Children’s Services see Easy as a way of responding to local and national drivers toward Early Intervention to support vulnerable children and young people and their families. This would require improvements in the accessibility of advice and service provision. The development of a single point of contact through Easy would contribute to this improvement agenda enabling a more holistic opportunity for accessing higher quality information about services. Families in crisis or chaotic families may present discrete single-issue problems but behind that are often more interrelated issues and our response needs to reflect that complexity. In addition the development of electronic social care records has presented major implementation challenges to the authority. The first phase of easy@york has delivered speedy, electronic recording and transmission of data, collated through a clear step-by-step process. Applying those characteristics to the method by which we respond to children’s enquiries will enhance the efficiency and quality of the service.

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor :

- Advice: To provide a holistic approach to customers, “unpacking “details of customers enquiries and advising on options and sources of information; - housing advice (homelessness, private landlords, Housing Standards & Adaptations registrations for council and RSL housing), children’s and adult social care (blue badges, registrations eg deaf blind), handling queries or clarifications about existing services eg verifying housing registration forms, helping customers to complete form
- Information: To be proactive in providing information and advice about services the customer may not be aware of – going beyond the presenting problem; - similar range of areas as for advice function above plus voluntary, health and community sector services)
- ‘Gatekeeping’ to avoid sending inappropriate referrals to specialist teams – assessing the urgency of a situation, analysis of the need for further assessment, risk assessment and collation of available information to come to a judgement about whether to refer onwards; - homelessness presentations, Housing Standards & Adaptations, children’s referral and assessment team, adult social care – intake team, occupational therapy, hospital
- Referral: Provide a referral point for specialist services based on the requirements of that service – homelessness, children’s pathway and referral and assessment teams,

Volume and channels of customer access

- Current Customer visits – 11,000 a year
- Customer Phone Calls – 74,600 a year
- Customer letters/emails – 800 a year

Number of staff and budget per service

- Access to Services Manager – who also manages two other services
- Team leader 1 FTE

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- Advice and Information workers – 8.1 FTE

Budget is £270k of which £42.5 k funding from hospital trust for service at hospital.

Proportion of Access to Services Manager time – estimated @ 50% = £23k

Other relevant factors - e.g. perceived risks, other changes happening that might influence the timing.

Review of service currently being undertaken

Uncertain continued funding from hospital trust

Warden Call

Centralise call-handling facilities for the Warden Call service. This service already runs a 24x7 telephone service and it is felt that there are efficiency gains and customer service improvements possible by handling this as part of a bigger team. However due to the life critical nature of the service we would need to be able to guarantee a priority response to these calls above all others. A detailed review of the needs of the service and the suitability of handling these through the YCC needs to be undertaken before this service can be definitely included in scope. Further developments to shared, out of hours care services with Health may also change the face of the future service

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor:

- The service provides support & check calls to individuals and acts as an emergency response system for those who are connected on the 24 hour lifeline
- The wardens are available 24/7 7 days a week and there are 2,500 customers Mon- Fri. & approx 4,000 at the weekend. At the moment the Call Handling and the wardens are co-located for safety reasons and the IT system in use is not accessible across the network although this is due for replacement in the near future.
- The responses required range from 'just in case' irregular users to people with medical needs who may need responses within a few minutes to avert a major problem.
- The service centre acts as the physical base for access to many keys to customer homes that need to be available on a 24 hour basis

Volume and channels of customer access

- 78,000 calls per year

Number of staff and budget per service

- 26.7 fte staff, of whom 19 are mobile wardens, not call handling staff.
- Expenditure – budget is £800k of which £491k relates to mobile wardens.

The main developments affecting the service are:

- Telecare - sensors and a range of equipment that will be added to the basic lifeline service to manage people with complex care and high levels of risk
- Closer integration with NHS unplanned & emergency services to support people as an alternative to hospital
- Closer working with primary care & voluntary sector services as part of prevention strategy

It is the increasing complexity of care and range of services that mean we should be very careful about pulling this service into the next phase of Easy@ York without a very comprehensive & robust review to make sure the risk management that is the core of this service is not compromised.

Housing

Housing Management – Council House repairs, rents, general enquiries, applications and allocations. HASS have identified that there is great potential benefit by using easy@york to integrate elements of the housing service to create efficiencies and a more holistic customer service. A review of the Housing Repairs service is taking place over the next 3-4 month and easy@york is being invited to take part, to identify additional improvements that can be achieved from inclusion in the next phase. Particular interest has been expressed in improving rent collection, waiting list administration, booking and following up on council house repairs (joint service between HASS and Neighbourhood Services) and answering general enquiries. A key objective will be to try to handle as much of the customer enquiry in the first contact without having to refer the customer on.

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor:

- Tenancy Management – cover the majority of the face-to-face housing landlord functions, general estate management, low level nuisance, allocations / offer process, annual visits, void management (inc dispersed temporary accommodation), estate improvements, management of handy persons.
- Tenancy Enforcement – cover the high-level enforcement action i.e. injunctions, demoted tenancies, evictions.
- Income Management - current and former arrears recovery, court / evictions process, leaseholder arrears, temporary accommodation (HRA) arrears, recharges / sundry debts, garage arrears, rent setting / reconciliation.
- Housing Registrations - waiting list management (CYC and Affordable Housing), advice on allocations policy, management transfers, nominations to Registered Social Landlords.
- Administration - reception cover (St Leonard's & Acomb), stationary procurement / invoices etc, management of OAP Decoration Scheme and OAP Garden Contract, RTB admin, leaseholder billing and garage management.
- Customer Service team - general telephone enquiries, telephone repairs reporting, repairs follow up, making rent repayment arrangements, coordinating direct debits.
- Responsive Repairs – Inspection and ordering responsive repairs with internal contractor (Neighbourhood Services) via the repairs partnership agreement and with external contractors.

Volume and channels of customer access

- Current Customer visits – 15,200 a year
- Customer Phone Calls – 100,000 a year

Number of staff and budget per service – These figures include front line staff and managers up to service manager level.

Area	Total ftes	Budget Head
Tenancy Management	18 ftes	£496K
Tenancy Enforcement	5 ftes	£122K
Income Management	10 ftes	£277K
Housing Registrations	9 ftes}	£427K
Administration	15 ftes}	
Customer Service team	9 ftes	£210K
Responsive Repairs	7 ftes	£245K

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Other relevant factors - e.g. perceived risks, other changes happening that might influence the timing.

- Long term future of housing landlord functions,
- Repairs partnership

Parking

Payment of Parking Control Notices (PCNs) and associated appeals, administration of residents' and visitors parking permits and associated payments. The Parking Service have identified that inclusion in phase 2 would bring about great process efficiencies in income collection, applications and management of appeals. Streamlined processes and new technology would enable the service to automate payment, automate applications, reduce the number of appeals and reduce face-to-face contact which would bring customer service improvements and reduce costs. This would also meet audit recommendations to address control weaknesses in income collection routines. Without inclusion in Easy this would require additional funds.

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor

- Payment of Parking Control Notices (PCN's)
- Appeals against PCN's
- Application and payment for residents parking permits
- Provision, dispatch and payment for visitor permits

Volume and channels of customer access

- 69,000 payments per year
- £6m income per year with costs of £2.2m
- 23,418 PCN's issued per year of which 5191 cancelled
- 5,526 residents parking permits issued per year
- 194,000 visitors permits issued per year
- 129 car parks
- Payment of PCN's is already web enabled
- Parking office open all week and Saturday morning, predominantly to collect cash and distribute Visitor parking permits.

Number of staff and budget per service

- 11.5 total staff
- 4 FTE's administer parking permits and 1.5FTE process PCN payments. Remaining staff deal with PCN appeals
- Total income budget for the service £6m
- Total expenditure budget £2.2m

Other Drivers

Internal audit report has revealed some control weaknesses in the income collection arrangements due to lack of separation of duties for payment and PCN cancellation. Easy could solve this. Changes in processes to make the service less paper driven and more efficient require technology available under easy@york and the integration of information from the Parking system into corporate cash receipting systems. This would enable rationalization of face-to-face cash collection.

Electoral registration

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor

- The service provides a system of rolling registration for electors moving home during the course of the year. This is supplemented by an annual canvass held from September to 30th November each year and the publication of an annual register of electors on the 1st December. Easy@york could assist with all registration activities, with applications for postal votes, use of automated telephone registration and to link the electoral registration system with the Local Land & Property Gazetteer.
- The administration of elections and the registration of electors are statutory duties.
- Provides advice and assistance in connection with the registration of absent voters, service voters, voluntary mental patients, overseas electors and European Union citizens.
- Ensures that Parliamentary, European Parliamentary, City Council, Parish Council. Parish Polls and Referenda are administered to meet the Council's statutory duty.
- Provides advice on electoral matters to Elected Members, electors, election candidates, elections agents and parish councils.

Volume and channels of customer access

Inbound communications

- Annual telephone calls (approx): 9,000
- Annual letters (approx): 2,500
- Registration forms received (approx): 110,000
- Postal vote forms received (approx): 2,000
- Rolling registration forms received (approx): 4,000
- E-mails received (approx) 1,000

Sent out the following in the last 12 months (an election year, so it is slightly more than normal):

- Dispatch of Registration forms during annual canvass: 170,000
- Dispatch of Mini canvass in February: 87,000 letters
- Postal vote identifier letter sent out: 15,000 letters
- Rolling registration forms: 3,000 (plus around 4,000 sent by council tax on our behalf).
- Postal vote applications: 5,000
- In summary this service covers 410,500 customer interactions in a (busy) year.

Number of staff and budget per service

- 5 members of staff – manager manages one other service
- Budget £214k

Service is heavily mandated by statutory regulations on how it must work e.g signatures are required for new registrations

Licensing

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor

- CYC administer a wide range of licences and though this service is not particularly suitable for delivery over the phone it would really benefit from the use of online application forms and mobile working.
- Application for and issue of a range of licences that are awarded by the council from taxi licenses to live music licences. The volume of each of these licences is often quite small and the actual giving of permission is invariably a specialist back office task. This might mean that this service is not particularly suitable for delivery in the YCC however the

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processes could be speeded up if there were online forms that could pre-populate the back office system. Also the use of handheld devices to give inspectors access to system information whilst they are in the field (especially out of hours) would make the whole service much more effective in their regulatory function. E.g. giving inspectors access to information on the license details for a licensed premises so that they can check the closing time and capacity of the bar/pub at midnight when it would be impossible to carry round all the paperwork.

Volume and channels of customer access

- 24 types of license issued (plus others in City Strategy)
- 5369 total licences issued per annum (plus others in City Strategy)

Number of staff and budget per service

- Total expenditure £467k
- Total income £-557k
- Total Net Cost £-90k
- Number of staff - 9.5 fte's

Recruitment

Breakdown of what is covered by the high level service descriptor:

- Undertake initial contact for sending out application forms, possibly insource Internet job adverts onto our new website.
- Administration of recruitment especially dispatch and receipt of application forms with a strong focus on online applications.
- Recruitment work is currently undertaken by each team and is therefore very inconsistent. Some jobs are advertised on line but not all. We have no real data about the volume of this activity. Centralisation could enable us to get better management information on the best ways to advertise

Volume and channels of customer access

- No of jobs recruited to per annum 960 approx
- No of application forms sent out (estimated) 40,000
- No of applications received (estimated) 15,000

Number of staff and budget per service

- Spread across the whole organization

Income Collection

Experience of re-engineering income collection in phase 1 revealed that it was impossible to change customer facing arrangements without changing the way in which the debt was generated and how this is managed in a range of financial systems. There is an efficiency project looking at this but it is not resourced to undertake the in depth business process re-engineering that is required. This work could potentially reduce face-to-face income collection, increase the level of pre-payment, reduce the cost of invoicing and collection and increase collection rates. Income areas which could be covered are: -

- School music lessons and instrument hire collection
- Library fine collection.

Volume and channels of customer access

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- Widely spread across the organisation

Number of staff and budget per service

- Widely spread across the organisation

Generic Activities

Corporate process redesign for handling white mail – Design processes for central post room and scanning facility in Hungate. Associate this with the corporate roll out of a Document Management System

Life Events – Build sophisticated signposting for customers to navigate around the different Council services that they may need when there is major life event such as bereavement, change of address, marriage or birth. This could possibly extend to capturing information once and sharing it across the Council.

Mobile Working - redesign business processes and use mobile devices. Pilot this approach with Licensing, Housing Management and Phase 1 services (YPAL and Benefits) with a view to rolling it out corporately.

Develop additional face to face customer contact points in Libraries, Children’s Centres and possibly Secondary Schools – provide customers with assistance to access YCC services via the Internet or phone and potentially directly provide a face-to-face service at these locations.

Volume and channels of customer access

- Widely spread across the organisation

Number of staff and budget per service

- Widely spread across the organisation