

**REPORT TO THE PERSONNEL, LICENSING
AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

Report No.10

Date of Meeting	21 st May 2007
Title of Report	Telephone Recording Policy
Link to Corporate Priorities	Customer Focus
Public Report	Yes

Summary of Report

To seek the Committee's approval for the introduction of call recording and monitoring within the Council's Contact Centre and amendments to the Information Management & Data Security Policy.

Officer Recommendations

Option 1-It is recommended that the Personnel, Licensing and Administration Committee agree to the proposals to introduce call recording and monitoring, and amendments to the Information Management & Data Security Policy.

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
None	Yes	None	Yes	No

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council utilises Braxtel's Fluency Call Centre software within its main customer contact centres in Customer Services, Planning and Cleansing and Amenities. With effect from 11th December 2006, the system now has additional functionality that will allow calls to be recorded and retrieved for monitoring purposes. It is proposed that this functionality be implemented from April 2007.
- 1.2 This report sets out the business reasons for introducing call recording and monitoring and how this impacts on Officers' working within the Council's contact centres. The policy and procedures relating to the introduction of call recording and monitoring has been incorporated into Section 10 of the Council's Information Management and Data Security Policy-see Appendix A.

2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 Option 1: To support the plans for the introduction of call recording and monitoring and the proposed amendments to the Information Management and Data Security policy. This will ensure that the best use of technology is used to enhance the telephone service provided to customers through the ability to monitor the qualitative aspects of service delivery. In addition, the system will assist in managing, monitoring and resolving issues and complaints.
- 2.2 Option 2: To suggest amendments to the call recording and monitoring proposals and/or amendments to Section 10 of the Council's Information Management and Data Security Policy. It should be noted that any radical amendments to the proposals might compromise realising the full benefits of the technology.

3. General Information

- 3.1 The Council utilises Braxtel's Fluency call centre software within its main contact centres in Customer Services, Planning and Cleansing and Amenities. The software provides a relatively comprehensive suite of management information and performance reporting in respect of the quantitative aspects of service delivery. However there is no functionality within the existing software to manage the qualitative aspects of the service. The quality of service provision is currently monitored through the use of customer satisfaction surveys and by shadowing/mentoring individual officers through the use of a double headset that allows a third party to listen to calls. The latter can be particularly resource intensive.
- 3.2 A capital growth bid was submitted and approved in respect of the 2006/07 budget to procure a telephone call recording and monitoring system for the Council's Customer Contact Centres. After comparing the functionality offered by various products, a decision was made to procure a call recording and monitoring module offered by Braxtel, the Council's existing call centre software suppliers. This was installed on 11th December 2006.
- 3.3 The main benefits of utilising the call recording and monitoring functionality include the ability:
- To record all incoming business telephone calls routed and handled within the Fluency software.
 - To store and retrieve recorded conversations for monitoring purposes for a user defined period or until the server disk capacity has been exceeded. As a general rule, this will not exceed 12 months.

- To store individual cases for a longer periods depending on the circumstances of the case and the business need to retain the recording.
- To search for specific conversations by date, time, caller telephone number and Officer extension to resolve issues such as abusive callers, customer complaints etc.
- To randomly select calls based on user defined criteria such as time, date, officer, extension, service etc. This will allow the qualitative aspects of the service, such as adherence to customer charter standards, via a user defined checking script, to be monitored and measured. There is also an integral reporting tool.

3.4 The Council only intends to record business calls (not personal) for the following purposes:

- Officer training.
- Qualitative checking, measurement and adherence to standards.
- Inform appraisals and assessment of competence.
- As evidence to inform dispute/complaint resolution.
- As evidence for investigative purposes.
- To resolve Officer complaints regarding abusive telephone calls.

3.5 It should be noted that the call recording and monitoring functionality is only available where calls are handled within the Fluency software. It will not be available for calls routed and handled through 3COM's NBX system.

4 Human Resources Implications

4.1 There will be a number of implications for Officers working within the Contact Centres. On a positive side:

- Officers will have tangible evidence of abusive calls that will allow the Customer Contact Team Leader to take pro-active measures to address.
- Issues and complaints can be more effectively resolved, including occasions that support the Officer's version of events.
- There will be evidence setting out specific details of the interaction, including what information was provided by the customer and what information/advice was given by an Officer. This could be used as evidence for a Benefits Fraud Investigation.
- Recordings can be used to help train staff, provide feedback and inform appraisals.

4.2 However, call recording affects the privacy of members of staff whose calls are being recorded. As a result, arrangements have been made so that personal calls will not be recorded. Furthermore, the content of recordings may be used in the investigation of complaints, including disciplinaries.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 Any call recording arrangements need to comply with relevant legislation, including the Human Rights Act 1998 and Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. This policy is compliant with the relevant legislation.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 The Council has invested £18,500 in the procurement of call recording software. If the proposals to implement the functionality of the software are not accepted, the Council will not be able to realise the return on their investment and the potential benefits of the system.

Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None.
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None.

Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference