

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Personnel Committee - 12 January 2004

REPORT ON: Repairs Contact Centre

REPORT BY: Director of Housing, Director of Dundee Contract Services and Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

REPORT NO: 4-2004

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To outline the structure and operations of the Repairs Service Contact Centre.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee approve the following recommendations:-

- 2.1 the establishment of one post of Contact Centre Supervisor, graded AP5, £22,398 - £24,396;
- 2.2 the establishment of nine posts of Contact Centre Advisor, graded GS3 - AP2, £13,650 - 16,866, with a qualification bar at AP1, three of which will be temporary for one year;
- 2.3 the deletion of six posts of Assistant Housing Officer, graded GS3, £13,650 - £14,211, from the Housing Department Area Office structure;
- 2.4 the deletion of one post of Housing Officer, graded AP2, £15,582 - £16,866, from the Housing Department Area Office structure;
- 2.5 the deletion of one post of Clerical Assistant, graded GS1/2, £10,068 - £13,416, from Dundee Contract Services Department.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Annual operational costs will be met from existing resources in both Housing Revenue Account and Dundee Contract Services Budget.

The additional temporary staffing will be funded from the Housing Revenue Account and Dundee Contract Services budget and will be employed for a period of 12 months. The net additional cost of establishing the Contact Centre would be £54,736 for one year.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The key theme of resources being used efficiently and the minimisation of waste is met by this report.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report makes the Repairs Service more accessible to service users in terms of communication with the service providers and in the flow of information relating to repair requests.

6 BACKGROUND

The Best Value Sub Committee on 12 November 2003 and the Housing Committee on 17 November 2003 approved the proposal to establish a Repairs Contact Centre as part of the enhanced Housing Repairs Service to be introduced on 1 April 2004.

This report outlines the staffing complement to be established, the telephony and IT systems to be employed and the means by which the Contact Centre will enhance the three way communication strategy proposed in the Best Value Review report.

7 MAIN TEXT

- 7.1 It is proposed that the three way communications essential to ensure the smooth running of this complex service will be improved by the introduction of a Repairs Contact Centre which will enhance the service provided by co-ordinating resources, liaising direct with tenant regarding appointments, changes to planned works, etc. In addition, it is proposed that the Contact Centre staff will be empowered to take ownership of a repairs request received and will be responsible for progressing this to a satisfactory conclusion. By its nature this process will involve communication and co-ordination between the Repairs Contact Centre and Housing Offices, Dundee Contract Services and the tenant.

An overview of the Repairs Contact Centre is as follows:

- 7.1.1 The Repairs Contact Centre would be jointly managed by Housing and Dundee Contract Services and its duties and responsibilities would not alter without consultation with the Partnership Board as detailed in Report No 774-2003 Best Value Option Appraisal on the Repairs Service.
- 7.1.2 It is anticipated that, given the proximity to the tradespersons, it will be advantageous for tenants to make telephone enquiries on repairs service issues via the Repairs Contact Centre.
- 7.1.3 Personal callers will also be received at the Repairs Contact Centre.
- 7.1.4 The Contact Centre will have the key troubleshooting responsibility in the repairs reporting process. The Contact Centre will be responsible for ensuring the successful completion of a repair and will direct resources to achieve this outcome in conjunction with operational management.
- 7.1.5 The Repairs Contact Centre will, like Area Housing Offices, have a part to play in the quality control and assurance system designed into the service.

- 7.1.6 Repairs Contact Centre staff will have the authority to instruct repairs up to an agreed level/value/size and will co-ordinate trades and appointments for tenants and Housing Officers where required. Repairs Contact Centre staff will have direct radio contact with tradespersons and should be able to reorganise works and appointments should a tradesperson be delayed for instance thereby improving customer care.
- 7.1.7 The Repairs Contact Centre will become the emergency repairs centre out of hours and at weekends.
- 7.1.8 The Repairs Contact Centre improves communication between the tenant and Dundee Contract Services but it will also assist Area Housing Offices in that it can co-ordinate works and can arrange appointments for Housing Officers where pre-inspection of a repair is required.
- 7.1.9 Area Housing Offices will continue to have the facility to take repairs telephone calls, eg if a tenant requires more than one housing service but it is anticipated that Area Housing Offices will focus more on personal contact, eg to report a repair, to request an inspection. In addition, Area Housing Offices will have a role of play in budgetary control and quality assurance matters.
- 7.1.10 It should be recognised that much of the communications in the repairs service will be between the tenant and Housing. Routine reporting and co-ordination will be improved by the Repairs Contact Centre, but Housing will also have to have regular contact with the Repairs Contact Centre, e.g. regarding progress chasing, complex/non routine jobs, on job authorisation where appropriate and in relation to complaints of service failure.
- 7.1.11 In addition, with regard to pre inspection, effective liaison between the tenant and the Housing Officer remains crucial. Liaison between the tenant, Housing Officer and Dundee Contract Services is particularly important where the diagnosis of the problem or of the best solution is unclear. It is expected that there will be a degree of joint working between Housing and Dundee Contract Services in such cases to reduce the potential delay for the tenant.
- 7.1.12 Effective communication between the tenant and Housing, tenant and Dundee Contract Services; and Housing and Dundee Contract Services is improved by the introduction of the Repairs Contact Centre, but it should also be noted that communications outwith the Repairs Contact Centre will continue and will contribute to the overall effectiveness of the repairs service.

7.2 **Location of Contact Centre**

The Repairs Contact Centre will be located at Dundee Contract Services Offices at 353 Clepington Road, Dundee, and will take both telephone and personal calls regarding the repairs service.

7.3 **Telephony Specification**

Appendix 1 outlines the specification for the telephone service to be provided at the Repairs Contact Centre.

7.4 IT Systems

The new IT system that has been developed to support the Repairs Service will enhance the service to tenants by providing staff with real time updates on job progress, more and better information regarding material and staffing availability. The system will replace the current systems in Housing and Dundee Contact Services and will provide one tailor-made service which all staff working in the repairs service will use regardless of whether they are in the Contact Centre or a Housing Area Office.

7.5 Staffing Resources

- 7.5.1 Currently there are twelve FTE posts graded GS3 within the Housing Area Office network dedicated to providing the repairs service. These posts are responsible for receiving reports of repairs, diagnosing repairs required and instructing the required job. Dundee Contract Services have one FTE post graded GS1/2 whose duties will become part of the Contact Centre.
- 7.5.2 Housing also have 4 FTE posts graded AP2 employed within the Maintenance Teams across the Area Office network to assist with co-ordination of the repairs function, quality control and to give advice on repairs issues to staff/tenants.
- 7.5.3 At present Area Offices process approx 70,000 repairs requests per annum. There are approximately 130,000 tenant phone call contacts per annum to the Housing Department in connection with the repairs service. An element of these contacts will be to check on progress of a repair request and it is expected that this number would reduce as the Contact Centre and Housing Offices get more of the initial instructions right first time.
- 7.5.4 Research shows that at present the split between personal callers requesting repairs and phone calls to request a repair is approx 60:40% in favour of telephone contact.

7.6 Staffing Structure

Appendix 2 outlines the Contact Centre interim structure:

6 permanent posts of Contact Centre Advisor - Graded GS3 - AP2 (with a qualification bar at AP1);
 1 permanent post of Contact Centre Supervisor - Graded AP5;
 3 temporary posts of Contact Centre Advisor - Graded GS3 - AP2 (with a qualification bar at AP1).

7.7 Duties of Contact Centre Staff

- 7.7.1 The duties of the staff working in the Contact Centre are detailed in the job descriptions attached as Appendix 3.
- 7.7.2 Contact Centre staff will ensure the successful completion of repairs and will have the necessary authority to fulfil this remit.
- 7.7.3 The Contact Centre Supervisor will report initially with the Dundee Contract Services line management on site who will jointly manage the Centre with the City Housing Manager.

- 7.7.4 Responsibility for the performance of the Contact Centre rests jointly with the Director of Housing and the Director of Dundee Contract Services who will be responsible for reporting same to the Management and Partnership Boards as required.
- 7.7.5 It is anticipated that the Contact Centre staff will rotate between the various aspects of the Contact Centre activities, as determined by the Supervisor and by the needs of the service.
- 7.7.6 The opening hours of the Contact Centre will be 8.00 am - 6.00 pm and flexible working hours will be necessary to meet the needs of the service.
- 7.8 Recruitment of Staff**
- 7.8.1 It is proposed that the Contact Centre Supervisor post (AP5) will be advertised both internally and externally.
- 7.8.2 The nine Contact Centre Advisors will be advertised internally within Housing and Dundee Contract Services Departments in the first instance. A qualification bar at AP1 will be applied.
- 7.9 Area Office Repairs Service**
- 7.9.1 The Contact Centre will become a key control mechanism in the repairs service due to its proximity to Dundee Contract Services operation staff.
- 7.9.2 The new Repairs Service will lead to changes in the Area Housing Offices.
- 7.9.3 Housing Offices will continue to offer a personal service to tenants who wish to call at a local office. In addition, tenants who still wish to telephone their local office will be able to continue to do so.
- 7.9.4 We anticipate that, in due course, the vast majority of repairs telephone calls will go direct to the Contact Centre. However until tenants become aware of the Contact Centre service a proportion of those telephoning may continue to contact their local Housing Office.
- 7.9.5 As there will be a significant repairs workload remaining in the Housing Offices the following staffing complement is proposed:
- 7.9.6 Two posts of Assistant Housing Officer graded GS3 and one Housing Officer graded AP2 covering each of the three Housing Management areas (Central/Lochee/Happyhillock and Whitfield).
- 7.9.7 Six posts of Assistant Housing Officer graded GS3 will be deleted from the Housing Department structure. Supernumeraries will be identified on the basis of length of service and redeployed into vacancies within the Housing Department in the first instance.
- 7.9.8 The posts of Assistant Housing Officer graded GS3 in the Housing Offices will continue to receive callers and report repairs, they will arrange appointments and liaise with Housing Officers and the Contact Centre to ensure that jobs are completed satisfactorily and they will have a role to play in the quality assurance mechanisms put in place to ensure the Repairs Service is delivering its objectives.

- 7.9.9 The Housing Officer graded AP2 in the Housing Offices will co-ordinate the delivery of the local repairs service, will be in regular contact with the Contact Centre, and be involved in the quality assurance systems.

8 **CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 All Chief Officers, DFTA and the Trade Unions have been consulted on the content of this report.

9 **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Telephony Specification

Appendix 2 - Contact Centre Interim Staff Structure

Appendix 3 - Job Descriptions for GS3 - AP2 and AP5

10 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Best Value Sub Committee report 12 November 2003

Housing Committee report 17 November 2003

E. Zwirlein
Director of Housing

22 December 2003

R.P. Jackson
Director of Dundee Contract Services

22 December 2003

J.C. Petrie
Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

22 December 2003

**HOUSING REPAIRS CONTACT CENTRE
TELEPHONE SYSTEM SPECIFICATION**

1 LOCATION

Dundee Contract Services
353 Clepington Road
Dundee
DD3 8PL

2 TELEPHONE NUMBER

(01382) 434343

3 HOURS OF WORK

8.00 am to 6.00 pm - Monday to Friday

4 IN BOUND ROUTING

Uniform

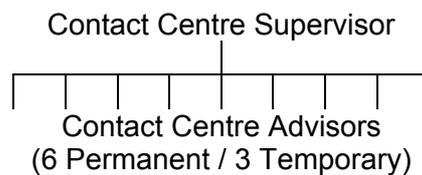
5 ALL AGENTS BUSY

Queue - Yes - maximum time - 45 seconds.
Then voice messaging - leave message - phone back.

6 REPORTS

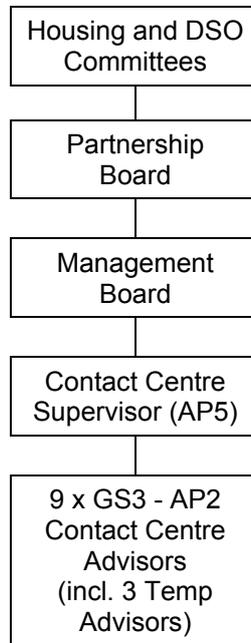
Standard.

7 STAFF STRUCTURE



REPAIRS CONTACT CENTRE

CONTACT CENTRE INTERIM STAFF STRUCTURE



**DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL
JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. IDENTIFICATION

POST TITLE:	Contact Centre Advisor	POST REF:	
DEPARTMENT:	Dundee Contract Services/Housing	GRADE:	GS3/AP2
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Contact Centre Team Leader		(Qual/Experience Bar at AP1)

2. PURPOSE OF JOB

To provide a contact for repair requests/enquiries; prioritising and processing repair instructions in accordance with established guidelines through to completion; and to include all associated administrative duties.

3. POSITIONS DIRECTLY SUPERVISED

- None.

4. PRINCIPAL WORKING CONTACTS

- Contact Centre Team Leader for day to day supervision of duties;
- Operational Management (Dundee Contract Services/Housing) regarding all aspects of repairs;
- Other staff of the Departments in respect of the work of the postholder;
- Area Housing staff relative to repairs;
- Tradesmen regarding job instruction and progress to completion.

5. MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

- Receive incoming calls via the Contact Centre relative to repair requests and/or enquiries;
- Assess repair requests and raise job instructions, technical inspections or make appointments for inspections or tradesmen to undertake repairs, all through the Council's computer system;
- To instruct and ensure the successful completion of repair requirements through liaison with tenants, Operational Management and Tradesmen regarding job orders from request through to completion;
- To undertake quality analysis on the overall service provided by/through the Contact Centre through contact with tenants by telephone or written or computer;
- To maximise the collation of relevant data relating to ongoing and completed works using the computer system;
- To ensure appointment records are continuously updated and kept;
- To ensure that all rechargeable repairs are identified and billed appropriately;

- To respond to routine correspondence relating to all aspects of the service and assist in the collation of details for more complex issues;
- To provide administrative support relative to the processing of repair orders, etc;
- To input data relative to the Housing Stock including the updating of records to include new installations etc;
- To provide information, reports, etc., as required through the Council's computer system;
- Work in any Housing or Dundee Contract Services repairs contact points, on rota basis, if required;
- To take ownership and troubleshoot to resolve any problems/queries raised through the Contact Centre;
- Undertake such other duties as may from time to time be required or as the Director of Dundee Contract Services and/or Director of Housing may direct.

6. OTHER DUTIES

This job description is a broad picture of the post at the date of preparation. It is not an exhaustive list of all possible duties and it is recognised that jobs change and evolve over time. Consequently, this is not a contractual document and the postholder will be required to carry out any other duties to the equivalent level that are necessary to fulfil the purpose of the job.

Deal with all customer enquiries promptly and pro-actively and whenever possible ensure that the customer's enquiry is dealt with fully during their first contact.

- To interrogate the voice recording system and carry out regular training sessions with the Contact Centre staff relative to customer care and the overall quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the service delivery;
- To operate effectively within the framework of the Partnership Agreement;
- To be responsible for the training requirements of the Contact Centre participation and involvement in training appropriate to the Centre's functions and any corporate issues;
- To respond to routine correspondence relative to the Contact Centre;
- To be responsible for the production of reports and statistical information for Management purposes relative to performance related issues and to propose solutions if required;
- To liaise with Operational Management to ensure effective progression of repairs including appointments and resource availability;
- To liaise with Operational Management to achieve efficient joint working in the service delivery of the repairs;
- To liaise with Area Housing Staff to achieve efficient joint working in the service delivery of the repairs and system for Contact Centre Staff where required;
- Ensure that the operation of the Contact Centre meets with all relevant Health and Safety Legislation;
- Undertake such other duties as may from time to time be required or as the Director of Dundee Contract Services and/or Director of Housing may direct.
- Responsible for, in conjunction with the operational management, directing resources to ensure successful completion of a repair.

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To develop systems, scripts, training, etc. to ensure that the section develops and maintains the highest standards of customer care.

Deal with all customer enquiries promptly and pro-actively and whenever possible ensure that the customer enquiry is dealt with fully during their first contact.