

<b>Impact Assessment of: Interactive Voice Response – Choice Based Lettings</b>
<b>Service/ Directorate: Policy, Performance and Improvement</b>
<b>Date Completed: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009</b>
<b>Lead Officer: Anthony Derbyshire</b>

**Members of the assessment team:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service</b>
Anthony Derbyshire	Business Transformation	IVR Project Manager
Paul Broughton	Customer Services	Chief Officer

**Brief description of policy/ service:**

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) is a transactional system that can provide customers with a 'self-service' route via the telephone into a variety of Council services without needing to speak to a customer services officer. As IVR is fully-automated, it can be made available to the customer 'around the clock', thereby allowing them to access services at a time to suit them. A number of IVR applications already exist within various departments in the Council and it is the long-term intention to consolidate these onto the new IVR platform as and when their contracts are up for renewal, as well as developing new IVR solutions to key high volume/low complexity telephone calls.

It is not the intention to use IVR to over-complicate the call-handling process by introducing multi-layers of options, nor to try and automate a call enquiry type that would be better resolved by a customer services officer. To the contrary, its purpose will be to;

- increase access to Council services – IVR will enable customers to conduct a transaction with the Council outside of normal opening hours.
- handle high volume / low complexity enquiries without the need for customers to be held in a queue
- increase the call-handling capacity of the call centre
- release customer services officers to focus on calls from customers with more complicated enquiries.

A number of service requests were identified that would lend themselves to an IVR application. The first application to be developed will allow customers to place bids for rental properties under the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme without needing to speak to a customer services officer. By fully automating this process, it will be possible to offer access to this service outside of normal office hours.

**Brief account of how the impact assessment was carried out:**

This impact assessment only focuses on the impact of using IVR as an access channel for placing CBL bids - it is not an impact assessment of the CBL scheme itself.

IVR is an additional channel to this service, and complements those already in place. Importantly, it doesn't remove the option for a customer to still speak to a customer services officer if they so wish and, as such, is very much a positive development. Therefore, the focus of the impact assessment is on the 'customer-friendliness' of the application and the quality of its interaction with the customer, so as to ensure maximum usage.

**Brief description of any adverse affects found:**

No barriers identified.

**Summary of Actions arising from Assessment**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Deliver publicity campaign	IVR Project Manager	To tie in with 'go-live' date
Ensure that the IVR infrastructure is properly supported.	IVR Project Manager	Support arrangements to be in place prior to 'go-live'.
The IVR processes need to be short, simple to follow and in Plain English.	IVR Project Manager	Scheduled into the IVR development phase (Oct-Dec '09)
Voice recognition needs to be comprehensive in order to handle a variety of local accents and dialects.	IVR Project Manager	As above. In addition, controlled system testing will take place in a live environment to provide assurance around the systems usability.

<b>Contacts for further information:</b>
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