Appendix D

OSMB Report
Customer Service Centre (CSC)

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Date 27th September 2017

1. Executive summary

This report is a summary of the current CSC performance, telephony delivery protocols and the future activities in progress and planned in order to achieve the contractually required improvements, specifically in relation to KPI 04, abandon call performance.

2. Introduction

The Customer Service Centre, CSC, delivers a range of services to the citizens of Lincolnshire on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council, predominately through voice and email channels. Due to the variety and nature of the of the services provided the CSC is split into 2 hubs, details listed below for clarity.

Corporate Hub Telephony Service Provision	Care & Wellbeing Telephony Service Provision
Adult Learning	Adult Charging
FOI	Adult Care
Comments, Compliments & Complaints	Children Services
Heritage	Carers Service
Highways	Wellbeing Service
Fostering & Adoption	
Library Services	
Education	
Family Information Services	
OOH BRECKLAND	
OOH NKDC	
OOH SHDC	
OOH WEST LINDSEY	
School Appeals	
Switchboard	
Tourism	
Registration & Celebration Services	
WLDC Daytime Overflow	
School Transport	
Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership	
Out of Hours - Adult Care	
Out of Hours - Children Services	

The CSC operational teams are supported by the Capacity & Planning Team, a Training & Development Officer and 2 Service Design Analysts.

The CSC is contractually obligated to deliver against a set of 8 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Detailed below are the scores for the last 3 months. These targets were in place 12 months prior to the TUPE of the CSC services to Serco, with the exception of KPI 10, which commenced in 2017.

KPI	KPI Short Description	Freq	TSL	MSL	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17
CSC_KPI_01	% of all Contacts received through Digital Access Channels per month	M	20	17	25.45	23.24	21.25
CSC_KPI_03	% Avoidable Contact Rate	M	10	15	3.55	3.27	3.09
CSC_KPI_04	% of total Calls that are Abandoned Calls	M	7	10	14.05	13.72	12.01
CSC_KPI_05	% of email contacts responded to within 1/3 business working days	M	95	90	93.46	97.03	96.62
CSC_KPI_06	% First Contact Resolution Rate	M	85	80	97.49	97.46	97.46
CSC_KPI_07	% of Customers rating their experience of contact as "Good" or better per month	M	90	85	95.43	96.48	95.81
CSC_KPI_09	% of carers assessments (reviews and new), as completed by the CSC, completed accurately and within 20 Business Days	M	98	95	97.96 **Mitigation Agreed**	100.00	100.00
CSC_KPI_10	Abandoned LRSP Calls as a percentage of total LRSP Calls each month	M	25	30	14.61	13.55	21.19

Freq – Frequency of reporting

TSL – Target Service Level

MSL – Minimum Service Level

Whilst KPI 04, % of calls abandoned, remains a challenge the KPI has shown continual improvement over the past 3 months.
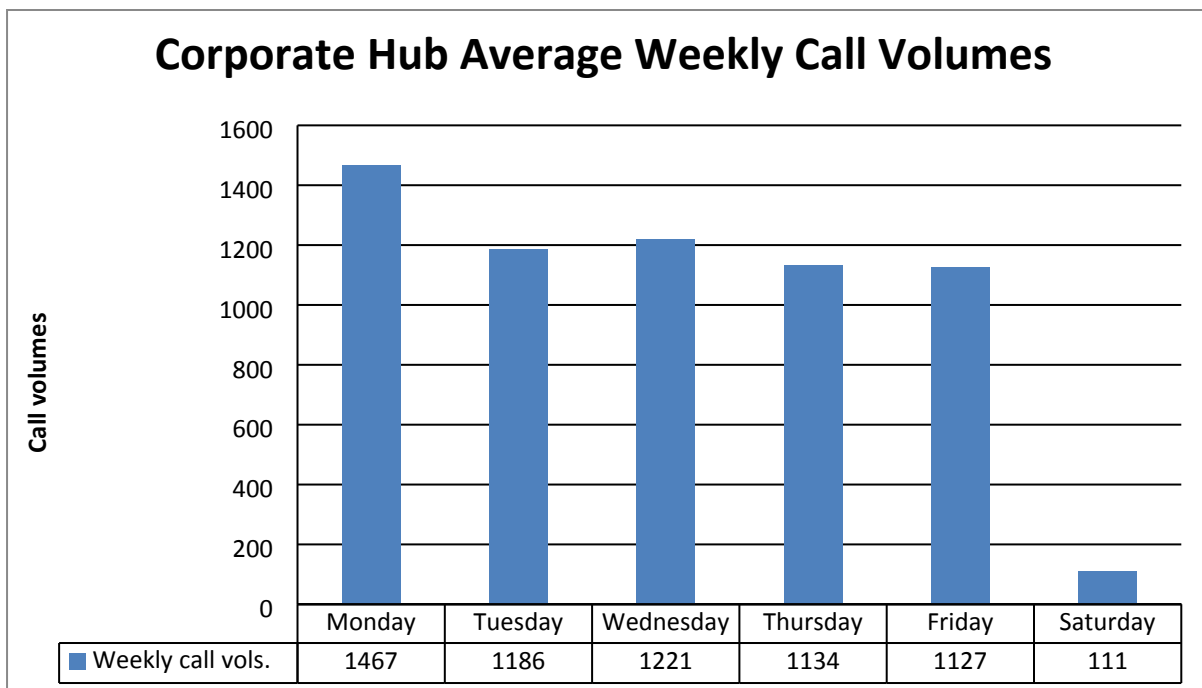
3. CSC Weekly call volumes

The graphical information below details the average number of inbound call receipts over an average week, split by hub, based on the past 6 months' worth of data.

The activities carried out in each hub varies and drives which hub a service sits in; the Corporate Hub services are comprised of low complexity and high volume contacts whereas in contrast the Care & Wellbeing Hub handles lower volumes but high complexity contacts, resulting in a much higher average handle times. In addition the Care & Wellbeing advisors carry out a much higher volume of offline activities resulting in 39% of the Adult Care, including Carers, advisors working on activities that stem from an inbound contact but in essence the next stage of the customer journey and a separate activity, as work flowed through Mosaic. For example an advisor maybe required to complete an Adult Care Assessments, taking on average 107 minutes to complete.

The Corporate Hub

The average trend of peak call receipts is between 0900-1100 Monday to Friday, with Saturday peak volumes received between 1000-1100. Email volumes follow the same pattern as calls and due to the constant delivery over the weekend, peak on a Monday morning. This is the case for both the Corporate and Care & Wellbeing Hub email contacts.
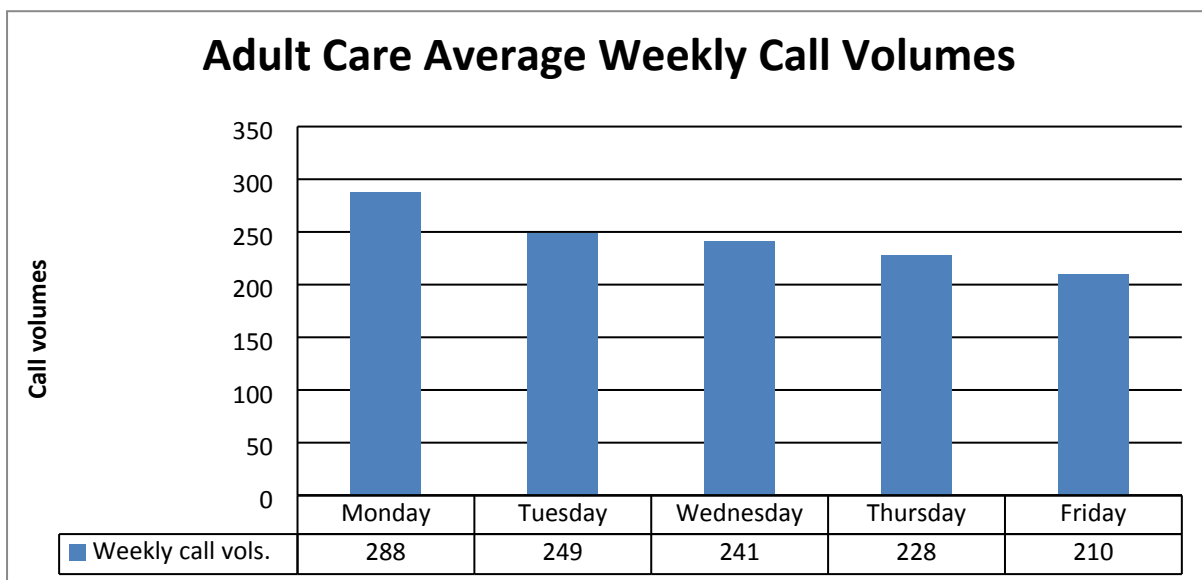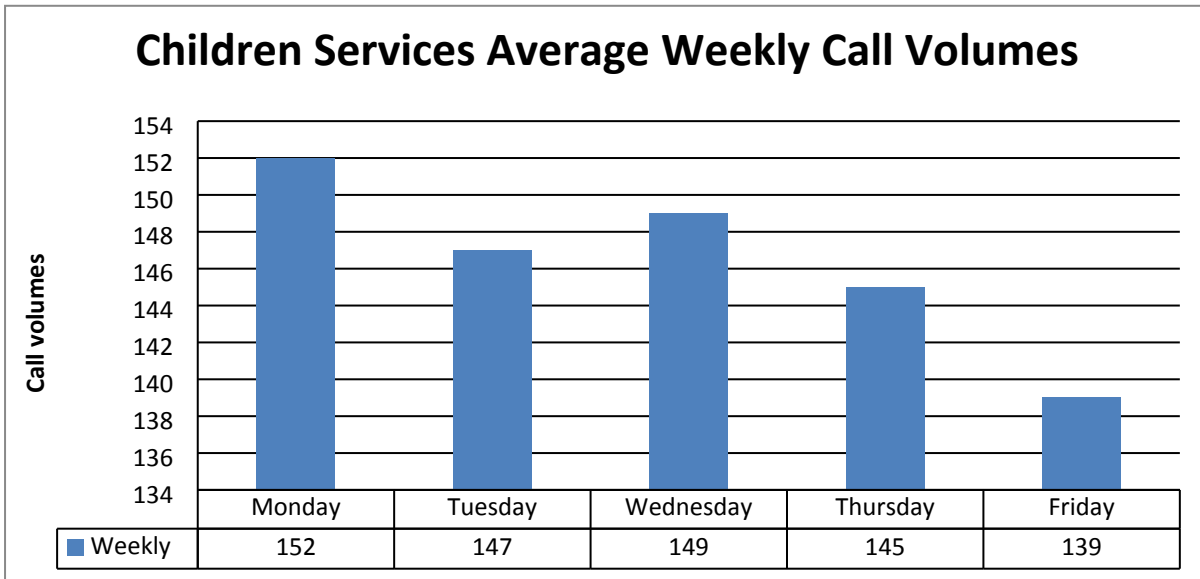
Corporate Hub Average Weekly Call Volumes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Weekly call vols.	1467	1186	1221	1134	1127	111

The Care & Wellbeing Hub

Whilst the Adult Care and Children's Service sit within the same Hub within the CSC we have traditionally forecast and scheduled the calls to be answered independently due to Children Service request for the service to remain a separate entity. On the 18th April 2017 permission was granted by the Council for advisors outside of the Children's Team to be trained to take Children's services safeguarding calls however whilst this remains a viable option that we would like to proceed with, we have been unable to progress this so far due to the resource restrictions across the centre and the impact on the Children's service due to training being provided by Children's advisors, resulting in off line time.

When reviewing the Adult Care call profile it can be summarised that the calls do not peak but remain high during both AM and PM with a respite during the lunch time period. Friday does however peak during the morning with call volumes reducing during the afternoon.

Adult Care Average Weekly Call Volumes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Weekly call vols.	288	249	241	228	210

The opposite peak call trend can be seen in the Children's contacts, with peak volumes arriving on the afternoon following the lunch time period.

Children Services Average Weekly Call Volumes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
▇ Weekly	152	147	149	145	139

Understanding the expected contact volumes is only part of the information required to ensure an accurate forecast. We also consider the average call handling time for each service line into the CSC in addition to email volumes, callback volumes and other off line activities, including any additional external activities that may impact contact receipts.

How do we forecast call volumes and schedule advisors?

The CSC forecasts its expected call volumes based on historical contact activity, breaking receipts down into 15 minute intervals. The workforce management system is programmed to use the available resource in the most efficient way to ensure all planned activities are completed, this includes but is not limited to answering inbound calls, breaks, training and off line work activities, related to the services delivered, for example, handling email contacts, whilst meeting the deliverables inputted.

4. How has the CSC leveraged the available capability of the contact centre telephony system?

The CSC is continually exploring options to maximise the facilities available using the current Avaya Contact Centre telephony platform.

Email handling

The CSC is measured through KPI 05, and related Performance Indicators (PIs) to ensure the customer receives a timely response to their email contact. Due to the need to measure the response time and ensure the volume of emails are handled by an advisor with the correct skills we use the Avaya telephony platform to deliver the emails to advisors when that Advisor becomes available, thus increasing the advisors occupancy and provides reliable performance data.

Telephony messaging

The telephony system does have the capability to inform the customer where they are in the queue, however this has not been utilised as it does not provide any context to the customer in relation to expected wait time at other times of the day and therefore has the potential to raise the callers expectations if the fundamental reason for the delay in answering their call is outside of the CSC's control. Customer behaviour already shows us that a customer can make numerous attempts to contact the CSC if they feel that their wait time is unacceptable, which directly affects the % of calls abandoned, which the CSC is keen to avoid.

The telephony messaging strategy adopted by the CSC aims to compliment the KPIs set out within the contract and are as follows:

- Offer the customer the option to request a callback, ending their wait time and reducing the volume of calls abandoned.
- Inform the customer of alternative options for contacting the service they are calling, for example the Highways message informs the customer that the portal is available, promoting channel shift
- Advise the customer of any call requirements, for example the necessity of a debit/credit card for Speed Awareness course bookings, reducing avoidable contact and increasing first contact resolution.

Callbacks

Through leveraging the technology available in the current contact centre telephony system the CSC has deployed a customer initiated callback facility that is offered to any customer waiting in the queue with the offer being repeated approximately every 90 seconds. The customer is given the option to enter their telephone number into their handset on the understanding that they will receive a callback from a trained advisor once they are available.

The feedback from our customers is very positive in relation to this service and provides a benefit to the CSC by flattening the demand on the service and increasing the occupancy of the advisors, as they are delivered the callback through the Avaya Agent desktop application when they are available due to no inbound calls waiting in the queue to be answered. Callbacks are given a lower answering priority to ensure that the contact is not presented to the advisor above an inbound call. In September 9.7% of answered contacts were callbacks

Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

The CSC's use of interactive voice response telephony menu system across different services within the CSC enables identification, segmentation and routing of callers to the most appropriate agent within the service, and whilst is simple in its application it has proved a successful method. The example below shows how the CSC has used this facility, the outcomes are that we are able to provide a higher priority route in for urgent contacts and direct routing to area offices for those callers who do not need to come through the CSC, reducing costs and increasing advisor availability.

On calling the Adult Care number the customer is given 3 options through the Interactive Voice Response, messaging and has the ability to select the option that best suits their needs:

- Adult Care – general enquiries
- Adult Care Option 1 – for those callers that have an open case or social worker
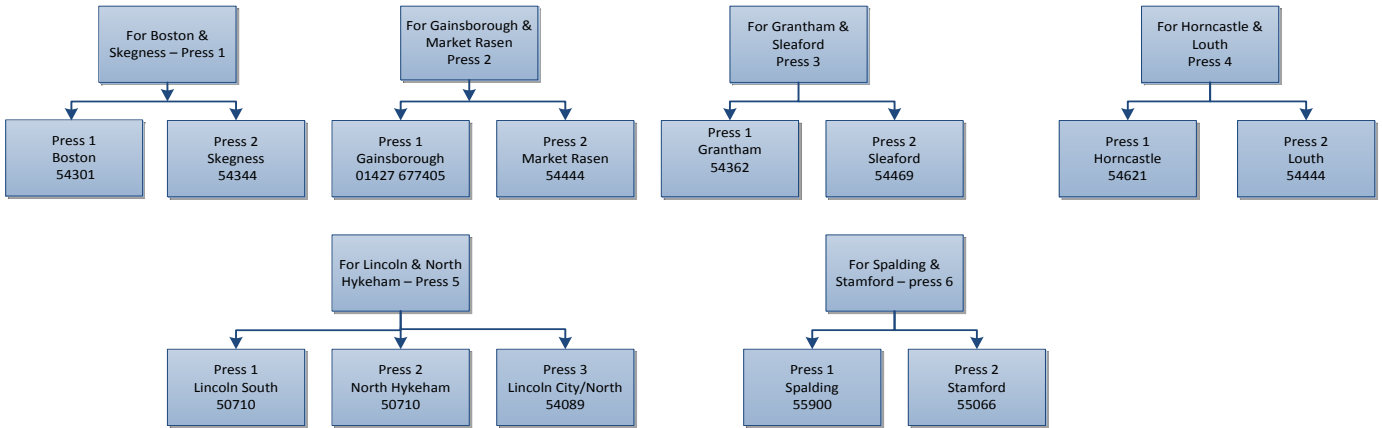- Adult Social care Option 2 Urgent

The messaging is as follows:

"Thank you for calling Lincolnshire County Councils Adult Care Team. If you wish to speak with one of our advisors please be aware that your call may be recorded for training and quality assurance purposes. All of your information will be safeguarded by the data protection act and may be shared with other social care or healthcare professionals.

If you are calling in relation to an adult who has had recent and ongoing contact with a social worker please press 1.

If you are calling in relation to an adult who has had recent contact and you know the area office where they are based please press 1."

In order for you to be transferred to the Area your worker is based please listen to the following options:

For Boston & Skegness – Press 1
- Press 1 Boston 54301
- Press 2 Skegness 54344

For Gainsborough & Market Rasen Press 2
- Press 1 Gainsborough 01427 677405
- Press 2 Market Rasen 54444

For Grantham & Sleaford Press 3
- Press 1 Grantham 54362
- Press 2 Sleaford 54469

For Horncastle & Louth Press 4
- Press 1 Horncastle 54621
- Press 2 Louth 54444

For Lincoln & North Hykeham – Press 5
- Press 1 Lincoln South 50710
- Press 2 North Hykeham 50710
- Press 3 Lincoln City/North 54089

For Spalding & Stamford – press 6
- Press 1 Spalding 55900
- Press 2 Stamford 55066

to hear these options again press 0

to return to the main menu press 8

If your call is urgent and by urgent we mean it needs to be actioned today press 2

For all other queries press 3.

5. Abandon call performance

Abandon call performance impact on Customer Experience

The tolerance relating to how long a customer is willing to wait in the call queue will vary from service to service and it has been identified through the Customer Experience surveys that this does not determine the customer's experience of interacting with the CSC as greatly as one may perceive it to; the data tells us that the customer can still be extremely satisfied with the service they receive in spite of a lengthy wait time if the quality of the service they receive once answered is good. However this does not account for those customers who do abandon their call before it is answered. The Customer Experience performance can be seen in section 2, KPI 07 and has exceeded 97% for the last 3 months.

Abandon call performance impact on call wait times

On average for every 7 seconds a customer has to wait, the CSCs abandoned rate will rise by 1%. This relationship is quite consistent. The quantity of abandoned calls will fluctuate based on the demand the service is experiencing, however the Target Service Level for KPI 04 is that no more than 7% of calls are abandoned across the CSC, in any given month.

The information below takes the average weekly call volumes detailed in section 3 and shows how many calls would be abandoned for different abandoned rate percentages. It also provides a useful indication of potential wait times.

		Actual abandon calls			Average wait time
	Abandon call performance	Corporate Hub	Adult Care	Children's Service	
Target Service Level	7%	438	85	51	00:00:47
Minimum Service Level	10%	625	121	73	00:01:06
	12%	750	145	87	00:01:33
	16%	1001	194	117	00:01:52
	20%	1251	243	146	00:02:18

The abandoned rate for August was 12.01% which means that on average a caller would likely wait a minute and 33 seconds to get through. There would of course be many occasions throughout the day when there was no queue and most calls in the CSC are answered within 30 seconds.

6. First Contact Resolution & Avoidable Contact reporting

These 2 KPIs measure how well the CSC has performed within its remit; the definitions used are detailed below.

First Contact Resolution (CSC_KPI_06)

The percentage of calls where the customer's needs are properly addressed the first time they call, thereby eliminating the need for the customer to follow up with a second call.

Avoidable Contact (CSC_KPI_03)

Any contact from a customer:

1. About the same issue (unless providing new/additional info not available at time of initial call); OR
2. Resulting from inaccurate or poor information from THE CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE is avoidable.

How do we measure these KPIs?

The CSC is required to provide this data for a minimum of 30% of the total calls answered by the CSC on a monthly basis, with no less than 20% for each service area. There is an agreement that the data will be collated throughout the month, ideally on a daily basis unless there are exceptional circumstances resulting in a forecasted impact on service provision. This quantity was agreed by the Council as a good balance between giving statistically viable information (at least 95% confidence level which is the industry best practice target) whilst not creating excessive burden on the CSC.

The Corporate Hub

The case management system, Lagan is used in the Corporate Hub to capture the information required. If the call results in the advisor creating a case within Lagan, due to the need to send the information to the back office for further action, the system will automate the First Contact Resolution outcome, based on a pre-determined list of categories. At the end of the Lagan contact the advisor will be prompted to input whether the case was an avoidable contact before closing the case.

For those calls that do not result in a Lagan case being created, as only advice and guidance is required, the advisor is instructed to open a call logging form within Lagan to input the First Contact Resolution and Avoidable Contact outcome.

Both of these forms are reported on through Lagan to calculate the performance against both KPIs, providing the volume of calls logged against each service. The CSC has committed to carrying out this activity on a daily basis and the reporting allows for this to be audited as required.

The Care & Wellbeing Hub

Due to Lagan and Mosaic not being integrated the information is captured using a Firmstep eform, accessed through GEORGE. The advisor is instructed to open a call logging form following the completion of their call to input the First Contact Resolution and Avoidable Contact outcome.

First Contact Resolution (FCR)

Metric	Description
A	Calls Resolved at the first point of contact with the Service Provider in month
B	Total Calls answered by the Service Provider in month

Formula of the measure:
(A / B) * 100

Avoidable Contact (AC)

Metric	Description
A	Avoidable Calls received by the Service Provider in month by a CSC omission
B	Total Calls answered by the Service Provider in month

Formula of the measure:
(A / B) *

Both KPIs are measured using the same method however the systems used to capture the information is dependent on the service and is summarised below.

7. Future activities

The CSC has continued in earnest to improve its performance across all KPIs, the activities below are in track and have delivered the improvements seen to date however there is an acknowledgement that there is further work to do. The CSC is being supported by Serco service area specialist colleagues outside of the Lincolnshire contract and will continue to leverage all the benefits available to them through being a member of the Serco contact centre community.

Absence Management

The CSC has experienced an unprecedented increase in the level of unplanned absence across the advisors working within both the Corporate and Care & Wellbeing Hubs. This has a detrimental impact on our ability to provide the commissioned service to the levels expected. Based on history we do predict a level of absence in our forecasts; however the recent absence levels far exceeded this.

To improve this area we have looked to our colleagues in Bolton, who have a proven record of managing their unplanned absence levels effectively. We have been supported on site by 2 full time Team Performance Managers that have been solely looking to support colleagues back to work or to provide the assistance they require to speed their recovery. In addition to our shared HR services visiting site weekly during May to support Team Leaders with complex cases. During this process skill gaps have been identified and training was delivered on the 28th September.

Resource review

The CSC has conducted an internal review of its forecasting model and reviewed assumptions impacting its outcome. A further review of the CSC's forecasting model and outcomes is in progress with our colleagues in our Liverpool contact centre. An interim outcome, to ensure the accuracy of the forecast, has been to deploy software that allows us to accurately account for the time taken when completing offline activities.

This work will feed into the review of the Care & Wellbeing model to ensure that all activities required are accounted for accurately.

Recruitment

Working in collaboration with the Council we have been able to advertise our latest advisor vacancies in the LCC jobs page, Facebook and Twitter feeds, resulting in a 62% increase in the number of application received. We have continued to refine our recruitment process and benchmarked our advertisement to ensure it is competitive in the marketplace.

We are continually reviewing our resource requirements, including our forecasted attrition, to ensure that the right numbers of trained advisors are available to meet the service demands. We are expecting our newly appointed advisors to start during November 2017.

Team Leader & Duty Manager Role review

A review of the existing Team Leader role commenced in May of this year and it was quickly identified that the number of advisors within each team was hindering the effectiveness of the management the Team Leaders were able to deliver; including absence management, coaching, performance management and general levels of engagement.

In response to this we are going live with an increased number of Team Leaders in October in addition to the implementation of a new Duty Manager, who will have the responsibility to ensure changes in demand are reacted to in real time along with greater adherence management; ensuring that advisors are adhering to their scheduled work activities, for example, an advisor is scheduled to handle email contacts due to the forecasted call volumes being low however the service experiences a peak in inbound call traffic, the Duty Manager would identify the change in demand and make the required changes to the schedules to accommodate.

Management Information (MI)

A review of the existing Management Information has taken place and we have adopted the Serco contact centre Management Information pack. This Management Information pack will enable us to provide effective intelligence to our Team Leaders at a team, service and advisor level with the objective to ensure all advisors are performing at an acceptable level.

Alongside this we are in the process of introducing deliverable for each role to create responsibility at each level with the CSC structure.

Care & Wellbeing Model

Work has started and has been shared with the Adults service leads regarding the future delivery of the Care Wellbeing service from within the CSC, excluding Children services. As the next stage is resource heavy we are drafting in support from our Serco contact centre colleagues in Liverpool to understand the 'As Is' process; this in conjunction with the offline activity resource requirements being collated currently will give us a greater understanding of the best way to deliver this service in the future. It is our intention to continue the discussions with the Council service leads and deliver a model in collaboration that meets our contractual requirements.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion the CSC is in a period of change all aimed to improve the performance to ensure the contractual KPIs are delivered and that services are delivered to the satisfaction of the service leads, all with the Customer Experience at the heart of everything we do.

Due to the complexities of the services we deliver there are no quick fixes. There is a strong link between the available advisor resource and our overall performance. We have identified opportunities to improve our position in these areas and activities are well underway to facilitate the improvements required, specifically in relation to our renewed approach to absence management, recruitment and performance management and therefore it is expected that the service will continue to improve.