



Member and MP Enquiries

Annual Report 2011/12

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Introduction

On the 1 April 2011 the Council introduced a system to record enquiries received via Members. The drivers behind this were:

1. The need to introduce an effective, practical and consistent approach for officers when responding to requests from Members to benefit both officers and Members;
2. The need for officers and Members to understand the number and nature of requests received;
3. The need for officers and Members to understand the amount of time spent dealing with enquiries; and
4. The need for officers and Members to understand what actions/organisational learning results from these enquiries; and
5. The need to use this information to drive forward cost effective service improvements based on an understanding of residents needs.

The same system was also used to record those enquiries received from Members of Parliament.

The Complaints and Information Governance Manager re-configured the Council's electronic complaints and information request management system to record these enquiries and trained Directors and Assistant Director Personal Assistants to administer the system.

Total Number of Enquiries Received

Between the 1 April 2011 and the 31 March 2012 789 Member enquiries and 99 MP enquiries were logged in the database. A further 346 Member Enquiries and three MP enquiries were received but not logged in the database. This report provides an analysis of those enquiries that were logged in the database.

Member Enquiries by Ward/Department

Ward	People	Place	Resources	Total
North Road	11	56	5	72
Haughton East	29	35	2	66
Haughton West	17	43	3	63
Heighington & Coniscliffe	9	43	3	55
Bank Top	8	33	3	44
Central	3	35	0	38
Not Applicable	23	20	0	43
Pierremont	1	35	1	37
Middleton St George	7	29	0	36
Not Known	3	32	0	35
Cockerton West	18	16	0	34
Harrowgate Hill	4	27	2	33
Lingfield	7	17	2	26
Park East	5	19	1	25
Cockerton East	10	14	0	24
Haughton North	2	22	0	24
Hurworth	1	21	2	24
Sadberge & Whessoe	2	21	1	24
Eastbourne	1	17	1	19
Hummersknott	1	13	2	16
Northgate	1	10	0	11
Park West	1	10	0	11
Faverdale	2	7	1	10
College	1	6	0	7
Lascelles	3	4	0	7
Mowden	1	4	0	5
Total	171	589	29	789

**Member Response Times by Ward/Department
(responded to within 10 working days)**

Ward	People	Place	Resources
Bank Top	100.0%	73.7%	100.0%
Central	100.0%	63.9%	N/A
Cockerton East	75.0%	90.0%	N/A
Cockerton West	100.0%	96.7%	N/A
College	N/A	66.7%	N/A
Eastbourne	100.0%	94.1%	100.0%
Faverdale	0.0%	85.7%	100.0%
Harrowgate Hill	75.0%	69.2%	50.0%
Haughton East	90.0%	87.3%	100.0%
Haughton North	66.7%	81.8%	N/A
Haughton West	50.0%	78.2%	100.0%
Heighington & Coniscliffe	66.7%	87.5%	100.0%
Hummersknott	100.0%	75.0%	50.0%
Hurworth	100.0%	81.0%	100.0%
Lascelles	N/A	87.5%	N/A
Lingfield	N/A	95.7%	N/A
Middleton St George	60.0%	83.9%	N/A
Mowden	0.0%	100.0%	N/A
North Road	60.0%	85.2%	66.7%
Northgate	100.0%	80.0%	N/A
Not Applicable	100.0%	88.9%	N/A
Not Known	100.0%	71.0%	N/A
Outside of Borough/Council Area	N/A	N/A	N/A
Park East	100.0%	86.4%	100.0%
Park West	0.0%	90.0%	N/A
Pierremont	100.0%	75.8%	100.0%
Sadberge & Whessoe	100.0%	77.3%	100.0%

While the majority of Members enquires were responded to within 10 working days this did not happen in all cases. Where the response target was met in less than 75% of cases further details on response times are provided below.

In relation to enquires from Members in Central ward about Services for Place 24 enquiries were responded to in timescale; four were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; four were responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and six were responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in College ward about Services for Place four enquiries were responded to in timescale; one was responded to in 11 – 15 working days; and two were responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Faverdale ward about Services for People seven enquiries were responded to in timescale; two were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; and one was responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Harrogate Hill ward about Services for Place 22 enquiries were responded to in timescale; seven were responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and four were responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Haughton North ward about Services for People 20 enquiries were responded to in timescale; three were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; and one was responded to in 16 – 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Haughton West ward about Services for People 46 enquiries were responded to in timescale; five were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; two were responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and 10 were responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Heighington & Coniscliffe ward about Services for People 46 enquiries were responded to in timescale; three were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; one was responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and five were responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Middleton St George ward about Services for People 29 enquiries were responded to in timescale; five were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; one was responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and one was responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in North Road ward about Services for People 57 enquiries were responded to in timescale; four were responded to in 11 – 15 working days; two were responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and nine were responded to after 20 working days.

In relation to enquires from Members in Park West ward about Services for People nine enquiries were responded to in timescale; one was responded to in 16 – 20 working days; and one was responded to after 20 working days.

Cost to respond to Member / MP enquiries

Department	Cost (£)	No. of records for which info. provided
Services for People	1,532.50	65 of 171
Services for Place	4,101.25	300 of 589
Resources Group	0	0 of 29
Total	5, 633.75	365
Total Members	4, 918.75	335
Total MP	715	30

The amount used to calculate the cost of responding to a request is £25 per hour.*

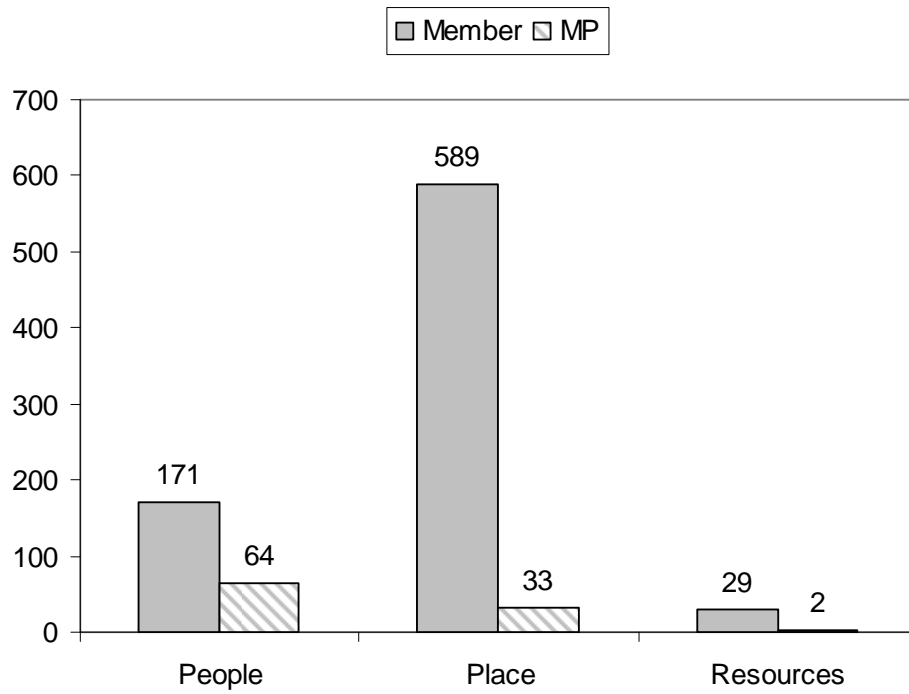
Based on the information above the mean cost of responding to one enquiry is £15.43 (£5, 633.75 / 365). £6.25 was the minimum it cost to respond to an enquiry and £125 was the maximum. Over 100 of the enquiries received cost an estimated £6.25 to respond to with a further 100 costing an estimated £12.50. Over 50 enquiries cost an estimated £25 to respond to with the remainder costing between £50 and £125.

Using the mean the estimated cost to the Council of responding to all of the Member / MP enquiries received is detailed in the table below. This cost excludes any subsequent action taken as a result of the request.

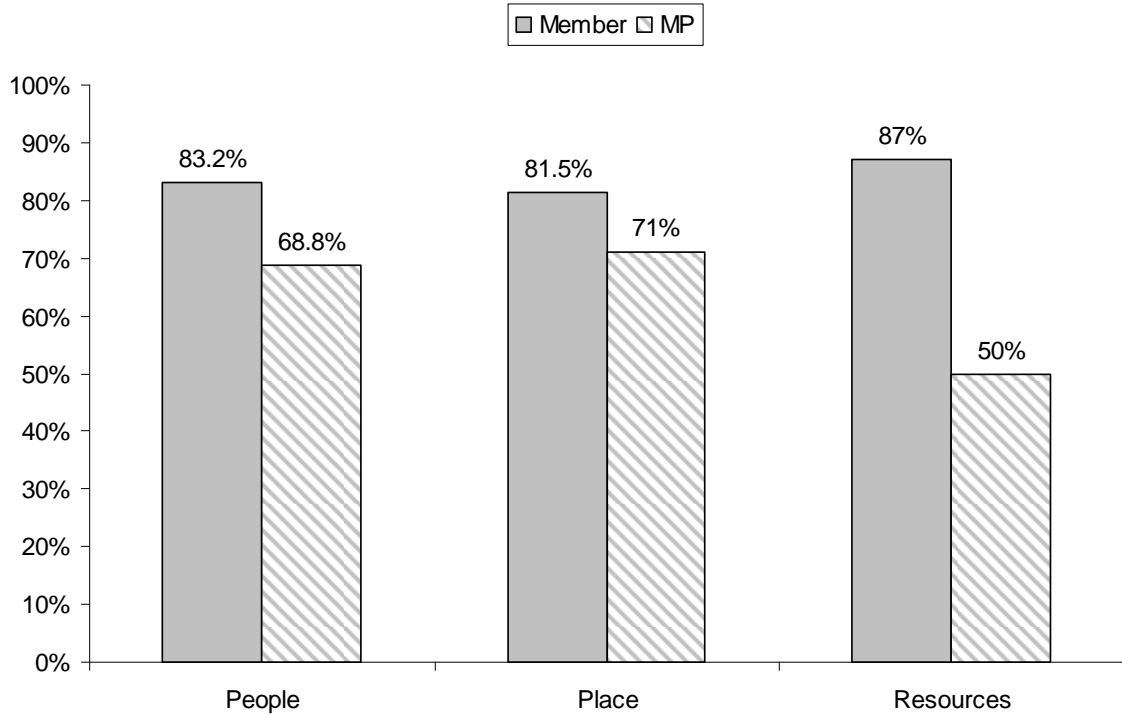
Department	Cost (£)	Total number of Member / MP Enquiries
Services for People	2,839.12	171 logged + 13 not logged (184)
Services for Place	14,272.75	589 logged + 336 not logged (925)
Resources Group	447.47	29
Total	17, 559.34	1138
Total Members	17,050.15	1105
Total MP	509.19	33

** This figure is based on the amount set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate limit and fees) Regulation 2004 Requests to be used by public authorities to calculate the cost of responding to freedom of information and subject access requests. .*

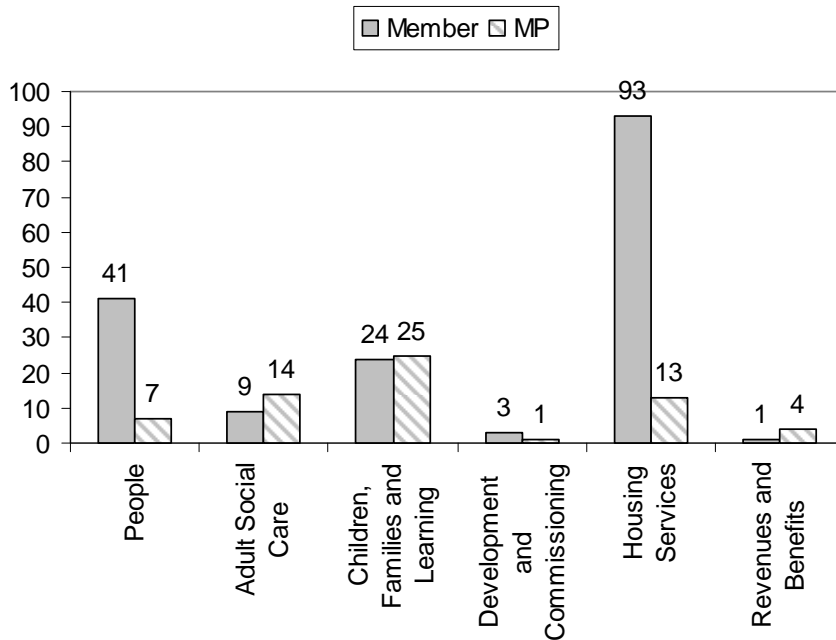
Breakdown of Member / MP Enquiries by Department



Breakdown of Response Performance by Department (Responded to within 10 days)



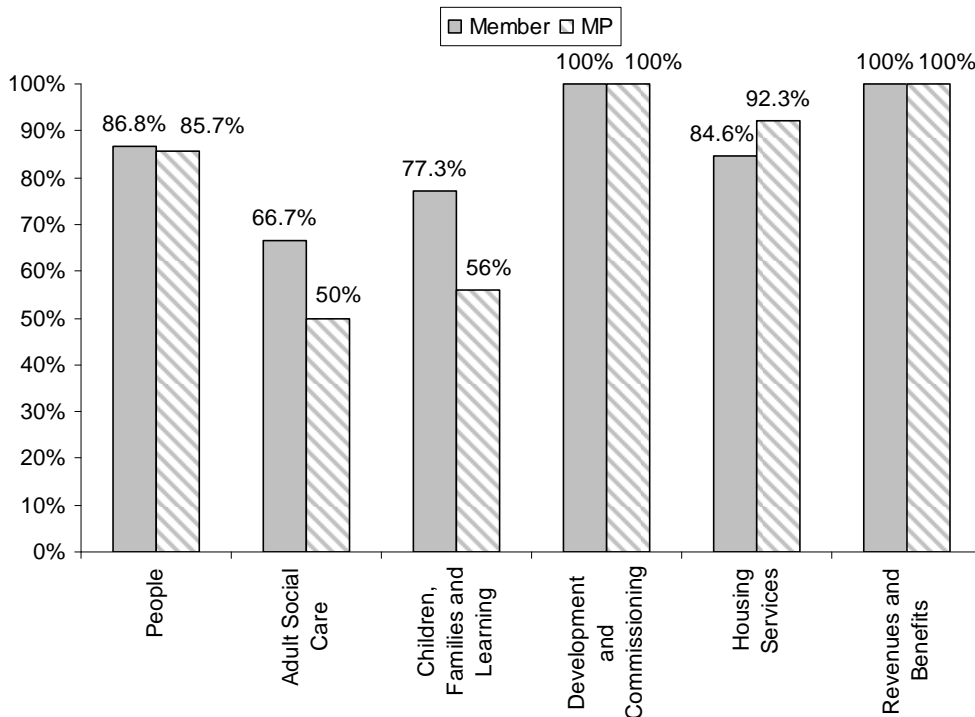
Breakdown of Member / MP Enquiries by Services for People



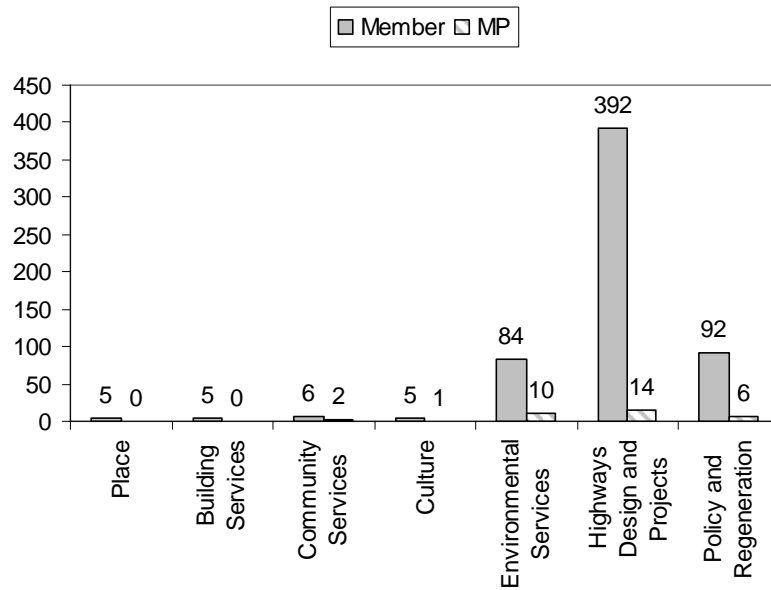
Identifiable trends in relation to Member enquiries for Service for People included:

1. enquiries about housing issues including management, repairs and Choice Based Lettings; and
2. enquiries about school admissions; and
3. enquiries about parking problems outside of schools at the start and end of the school day.

Response Performance for Services for People (Responded to within 10 days)



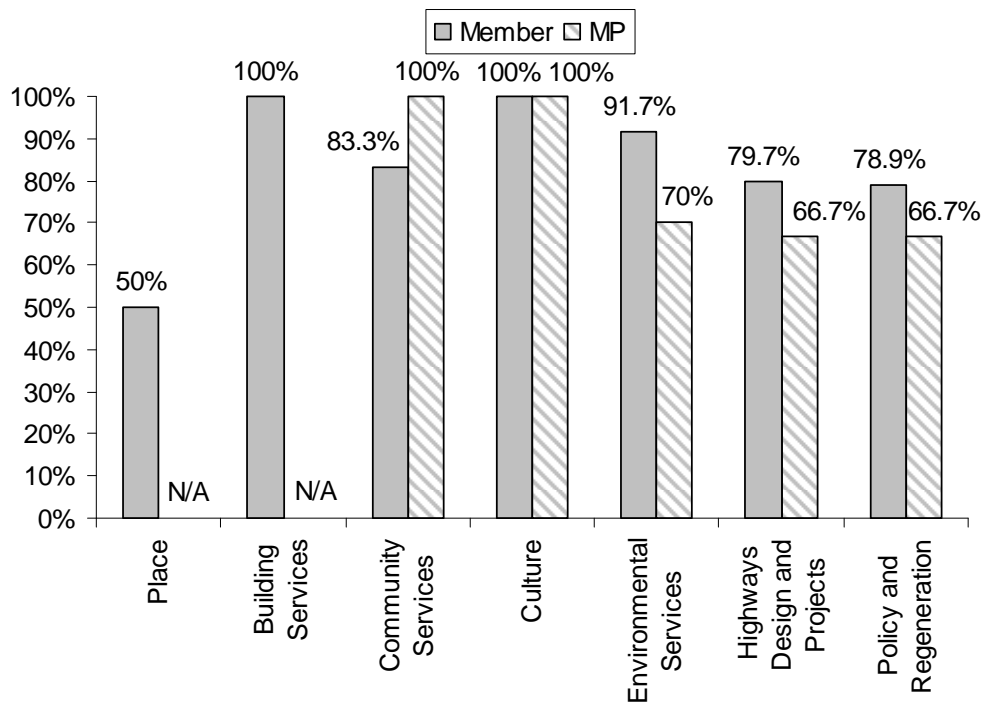
Breakdown of Member / MP Enquiries by Services for Place



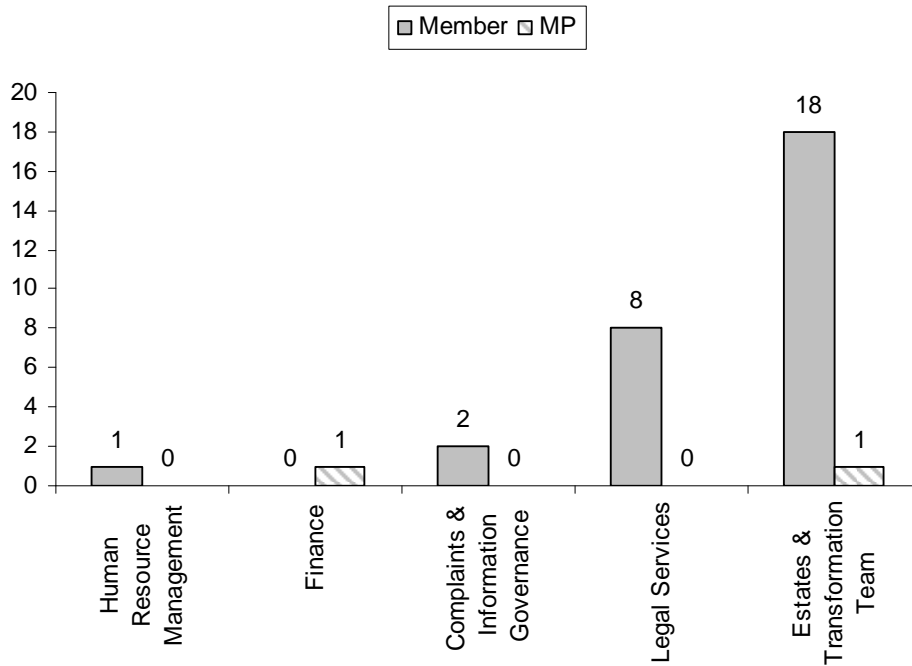
Identifiable trends in relation to Member enquiries for Service for People included:

1. enquiries about traffic restrictions;
2. enquiries about damage to highways including potholes and damage to footpaths;
3. enquiries about street lighting;
4. enquiries about street cleaning; and
5. enquiries about gritting/salt bins.

Response Performance for Services for Place (Responded to within 10 days)



Breakdown of Member / MP Enquiries by Resources Group



Identifiable trends in relation to Member enquiries for Resources Group included:

- enquiries about the sale and ownership of land.

Response Performance for Resources Group (Responded to within 10 days)

