

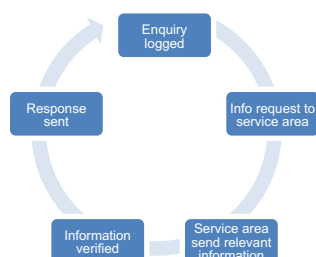
Report title: Member Enquiries Survey Results 2023	
Report to: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Report author: Richard Buttress, Democratic Services Manager	
Date: 4 March 2024	For: Discussion
Enquiries to: Richard Buttress, Democratic Services Manager (richard.buttress3@essex.gov.uk)	
County Divisions affected: Not applicable	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share with the committee the results of the 2023 Member Enquiries survey, as well as background into the team itself.
- 1.2 The survey is sent out annually and allows us to find out Members experiences of the Member Enquiries team and allows to review comments and suggestions of how we may be able to improve the service.
- 1.3 In previous years, Members have told us that they value the service, but we know that support cannot be taken for granted.
- 1.4 Members were given six weeks to complete the survey, of which 32 responses were received.

2. Background

- 2.1 The team are the single point of access for all County Councillor and Members of Parliament enquiries and have a maximum of 10 working days to respond to enquiries. To answer enquiries, the team contact both internal and external service areas to seek the information needed to respond to enquiries.
- 2.2 The team answer around 35% of enquiries without needing to contact a service area. Information for these enquiries is obtained using access to internal systems and a detailed knowledge centre created using OneNote.
- 2.3 For those enquiries that a service area is needed to be contacted, the cycle of an enquiry is shown below:



3. Resource

- 3.1 The Member Enquiries team transferred to Democracy and Transparency in April 2017 and as part of that process, five FTE moved across. Current breakdown of resource is set out below:

Member Enquiries Officer	FTE
Officer 1	1.0
Officer 2	1.0
Officer 3	1.0
Officer 4	0.6
Officer 5	0.8
Total	4.4

4. 2022/23 position

- 4.1 In 2022/23, the team received just under 10,500 enquiries.
- 4.2 The average time taken to respond to enquiries was 5.3 working days.
- 4.3 Most enquiries (80%) are highways related and throughout the year we see peaks and troughs, due to several factors including the weather, policy decisions and local and national politics.
- 4.4 Over the years, the team has received an enquiry relating to nearly all Essex County Council (ECC) service areas, although as mentioned above, highways make up most of the volume followed by Education (7%) and Social Care (6%).

5. 2023/24 position

- 5.1 So far in 2023/24, 8536 enquiries have been received, with a response provided within an average of 4.6 working days.
- 5.2 As with 2022/23, most enquiries (82%) relate to highways.

6. Looking ahead

- 6.1 Along with colleagues in Information Governance and Compliance and Complaints (who share the same CRM), we are currently in the process of procuring a new system that enquiries are recorded on.
- 6.2 As part of this, the aim is to find a system that has better capability and functionality such as online integration with automated logging and hopefully a function that will allow members to track the progress of their enquiries that have been submitted to Member Enquiries.

7. List of Appendices

App A: Member Enquiries Survey Results 2023