

Appendix 3 – Helpline Consultation Analysis

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council undertook a consultation concerning its proposals for increasing Helpline prices and introducing charges for Telecare equipment from 24th April 2015 to 8th June 2015.
- 1.2 The consultation was undertaken through the following means:
 - A consultation questionnaire in booklet format was issued by post to all residents directly affected by the proposals;
 - Email and letter correspondence to key stakeholders including voluntary groups, welfare groups and organisations representing the interests of customers that may be affected by the proposals inviting them to participate in the consultation and comment on the proposals; and,
 - Information on the Council’s website.
- 1.3 Data referenced within this report for the Borough as a whole has been compiled from 2011 census data.
- 1.4 The response rate to the consultation (i.e. 17.6% representing 125 out of 710 customers) means that the degree to which this is representative of the customer base as a whole should be given caution. Also, a number of respondents did not answer all questions or may have given more than one response to some questions that may have the effect of distorting some of the results. There were also some responses where respondents appeared to have ticked an incorrect box resulting in a degree of potential bias within the overall results obtained.
- 1.5 In view of the comments outlined in section 1.4 above, Members should be aware of these potential shortcomings as they consider the weight they give to the outcomes of the consultation alongside other drivers for change, including the equalities impact assessment.

2.0 Purpose and scope of the consultation

- 2.1 The purpose of the consultation was to seek the comments and views of residents and stakeholders concerning the proposals for increasing the price of the Helpline service and introducing charges for the provision of Telecare equipment.
- 2.2 The consultation commenced on 24th April through the issue of questionnaires by post on the 22nd of April to 710 residents that would be directly affected by the proposals if they were to be approved. The consultation questionnaire was also available to access online from 24th April via the Harrow Council website.
- 2.3 Letters and emails were issued to 41 key stakeholders within the Borough from 24th April 2015 to 1st May 2015.

- 2.4 The consultation informed residents and other stakeholders of the proposals and invited comments regarding them.
- 2.5 Respondents were asked the following questions:
- The importance of the two key principles shown below concerning the proposals.

Principle 1 – Increase the cost of the Helpline Service to reduce the gap between the cost of running the service and the income generated from providing it

Principle 2 – Charge for the cost of sensors and equipment provided through the Telecare service.

- The importance to them of the cost of the Helpline service and reasons for their response.
- Whether the Helpline Service price should increase by £0.48 per week or £0.58 per week and reasons for their response.
- The importance to them of the cost of the Telecare Service and reasons for their response.
- To give any other comments supporting their responses and any alternative options they would like to be considered.
- To give details of any other groups that the Council should protect from the proposed changes and reasons.
- To provide any other additional comments concerning the proposals

3.0 Current use of the Helpline and Telecare Services

- 3.1 There are currently 1,269 Harrow Council residents paying for the Helpline Service. Of the paying customers, 717 pay their charges directly to Harrow Council on a quarterly basis. The remaining cases (i.e. approximately 550) within the Harrow area relate to private schemes. These schemes are primarily for premises where there is more than one resident (e.g. sheltered accommodation) and for which separately agreed charges exist with the scheme owner.
- 3.2 There are a further 1,684 customers that receive the Helpline service free of charge either under the terms of a “reablement” package where the Council meets the cost of their support for up to six weeks period or under the terms of a pre-existing Helpline contract.
- 3.3 There are three tariffs currently in use for Helpline customers that pay their charges to the Council directly. These charges are payable on a quarterly basis and are as follows:
- £180 initial joining fee and £27.95 per quarter,
 - No initial joining fee and £62.40 per quarter,
 - £41.60 per quarter (this is a legacy payment fee that is payable by some former Social Services referred customers)

In the latter case, this is not a current Helpline charge that is available. However, there are some customers that continue to pay this amount.

- 3.4 The questionnaire and on-line consultation were intended to facilitate a qualitative and quantitative picture of current customer and stakeholder views concerning the proposals.
- 3.5 A consultation is almost always partial as non-users of services and those perceived as least affected by the proposed change are less likely to get involved. However, given the above and the other caveats indicated within this report, the data gathered from the questionnaire responses can generally be used to assist and inform the development of the service offer.
- 3.6 Analysis of the specific answers received and the further comments contributed provides evidence of customer views and needs in relation to the Helpline and Telecare Services.

4.0 Methodology

- 4.1 A range of approaches were used to capture responses to the proposals as set out below:

- The consultation documentation including the questionnaire was available via Harrow Council's website - www.harrow.gov.uk/helpline
- A contact telephone number was provided for residents and included on the consultation documentation to deal with any requests for information or to log supplementary comments. All correspondence has been logged and has been referenced within this report.
- An email / letter was sent to 41 organisations both within and external to the Borough representing the interests of customers either using or likely to use in the future the services of Helpline and / or Telecare outlining the nature of the consultation and providing details of how to access the consultation documentation.
- Alternative formats of consultation documentation were available on request and this was referred to within the consultation questionnaire.

5.0 Consultation Responses – Analysis

- 5.1 The format of the questionnaire used for the consultation is shown in Appendix 2 of the main report.
- 5.2 This was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period and printed copies of the document were distributed to all Harrow Council residents directly affected by the proposals.
- 5.3 There were 125 consultation questionnaire responses received, comprising 6 online responses (4.8%) and 119 paper responses (95.2%).
- 5.4 The consultation questionnaire response rate appears higher than is often experienced for consultations although this is likely to have been affected by the issue of a questionnaire to all potentially affected Helpline customers, the

nature of the proposals being consulted on and the personal circumstances of many of the customers.

- 5.5 The tables below show the analysis obtained from the consultation questionnaire responses and the Helpline service database compared where practicable to that of the Harrow population based upon the 2011 census data.

Table 1 – Ethnic Origin

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
White	42.2	35.4	94.6
Mixed	4.0	0.3	0
Asian	42.6	6.8	4.5
Black	8.2	1.5	0.9
Other	2.9	0.6	0
Unknown	-	55.4	-

The consultation responses indicate that the greatest proportion of respondents to this question were of a “white” ethnic origin. This contrasts with the 2011 census for which “Asian” was the ethnic origin represented by the greatest proportion. However, as Helpline customers are predominantly of a “White” ethnic origin, the results from the consultation are consistent in that respect.

Table 2 – Age

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Under 16	20.2	0	0
16 to 24	11.7	0	0
25 to 44	30.4	0.6	2.5
45 to 64	23.6	4.5	5.1
65 and over	14.1	94.9	92.4

The consultation responses indicate that the greatest proportion of respondents to this question were aged 65 and over. This contrasts with the population census where that age group is represented by one of the lowest proportions. However, as customers using the Helpline service are predominantly of pension credit age, the results are broadly consistent with those of the Helpline service database.

Table 3 – Marital and Civil Partnership Status

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Single	32.3	2.5	Not known
Married	53.7	9.1	79.4
Separated	2.3	0	Not known
Divorced or legally dissolved civil partnership	5.4	0.3	Not known
In a registered same sex civil partnership	0.2	0	1.3
Widowed or surviving partner from same sex civil partnership	6.2	19.0	Not known
Not married or a civil partnership	Not known	0	19.2
Not disclosed	-	69.1	-

The consultation responses indicate that the majority of the respondents to this question are married. In this context, married status also includes customers that have been widowed. This data cannot be compared directly to the 2011 census but is representative of the Helpline service database for which 28.1% of the total is married / widowed.

Table 4 – Disability

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)
One person in the household with a long term health problem or disability and with dependent children	6.0	Not known
One person in the household with a long term health problem or disability and with no dependent children	18.1	Not known

Table 5 – Consultation Responses for Disability

Nature of Disability	Volumes	Proportions
Disability - Mobility	84	51.2
Disability - Learning	31	18.9
Disability - Vision	16	9.8
Disability - Other	12	7.3
Disability - Mental Health	1	50.0
No disability affecting day to day activities	20	12.2
Totals	164	100.0

The consultation responses indicate that almost all of the respondents to this question had a disability affecting their day to day activities. This data cannot be compared directly to the 2011 census and “disability” status is not available for reporting from the Helpline database.

Table 6 – Religion

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Christianity	37.3	47.6	61.5
Buddhism	1.1	0	1.9
Hinduism	25.3	8.8	4.8
Judaism	4.4	19.8	20.2
Islam	12.5	2.0	1.0
Sikhism	1.2	0	0
Other	2.5	1.1	0
No religion	9.6	2.6	10.6
Religion not stated	6.2	18.1	Not known

The consultation responses indicate that the greatest proportion of consultation respondents to this question (i.e. 61.5%) stated that their religion was “Christianity. This reflects the 2011 census results for which Christianity had the highest proportion. The results are also representative of the Helpline service database.

Table 7 – Gender

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Male	49.4	23.7	45.2
Female	50.6	74.1	54.8
Not specified	-	2.2	-

The consultation responses indicate that the greatest proportion of consultation respondents to this question (i.e. 54.8%) were female which is broadly comparable with the 2011 population census results. The results are also representative of the Helpline service database.

Table 8 – Gender Reassignment

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Yes	Not known	Not known	5.1
No	Not known	Not known	94.9

The consultation responses indicate that the greatest proportion of consultation respondents to this question (i.e. 94.9%) are the same gender as they were assigned at birth. As similar data is not available from the 2011 census or Helpline database, it is not possible to determine whether this is proportionate to the Harrow Council population or Helpline customer base.

Table 9 – Sexual Orientation

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Bisexual	Not known	Not known	0
Gay Man	Not known	Not known	0
Gay Woman / Lesbian	Not known	Not known	2.7
Heterosexual	Not known	Not known	93.2
Other	Not known	Not known	4.1

As similar data is not available from the 2011 census or Helpline database, it is not possible to determine whether this is proportionate to the Harrow Council population or Helpline customer base.

Table 10 – Pregnancy / Maternity

	Census 2011 (%)	Helpline Customers (%)	Consultation Response (%)
Yes	Not known	Not known	24
No	Not known	Not known	76

The results from the consultation appear to show that 24% of respondents to this question had been pregnant or on maternity leave within the past two years. However, it appears that in a number of cases, the relevant box was incorrectly ticked for this question. As similar data is not available from the 2011 census or Helpline database, it is not possible to determine whether this is proportionate to the Harrow Council population or Helpline customer base.