

# Members Enquiries Update

## Summary

The members enquiries improvement programme has been in place since March 2024 following the corporate peer review which highlighted members concerns over the timeliness and quality of members enquiries responses. Key areas highlighted for improvement included refining the processes for recording and reporting performance as well as focusing on responsiveness and efficiency.

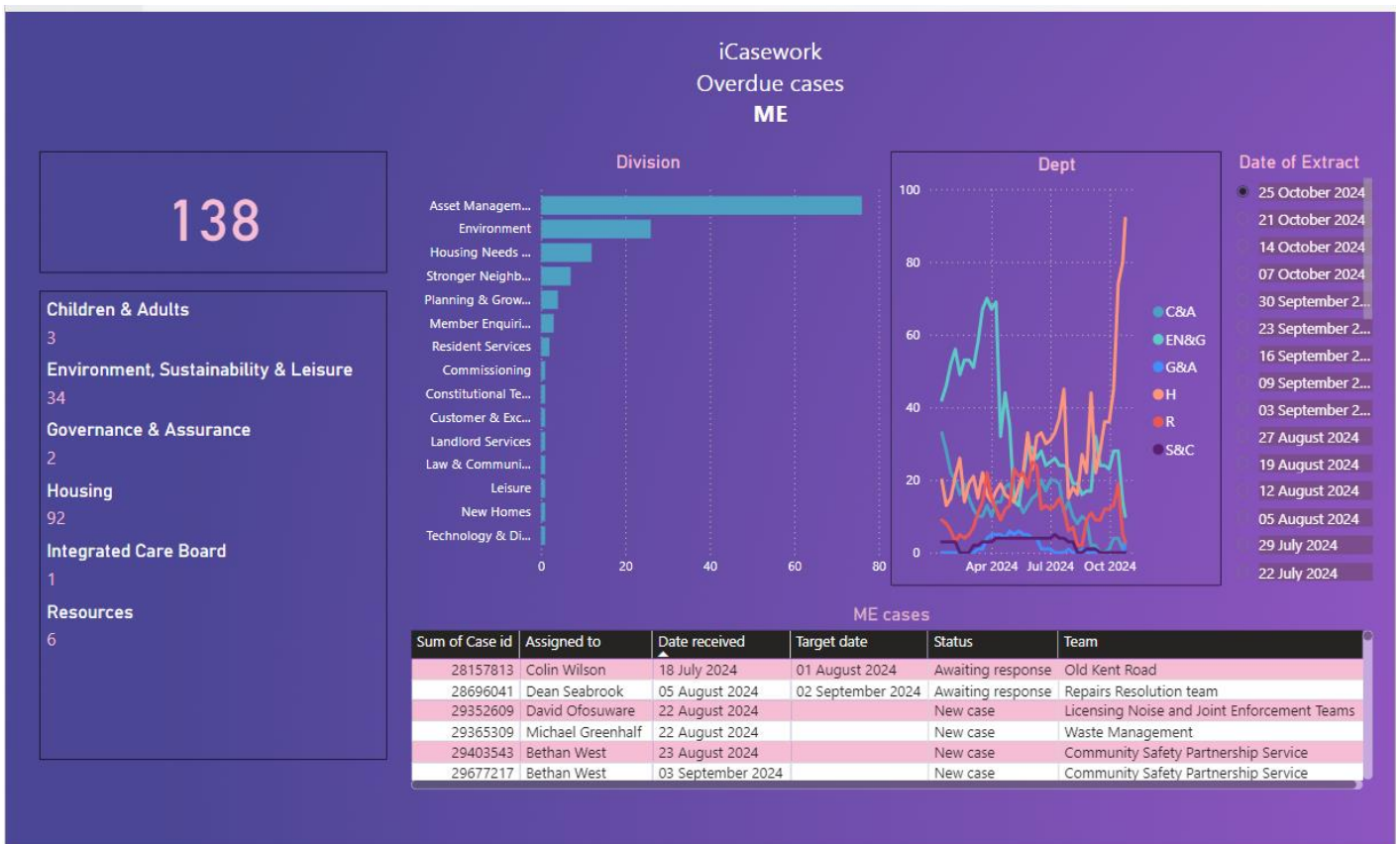
A clear governance framework guided our approach, ensuring accountability in helping us identify areas for improvement. This structure allowed us to gather feedback and make changes that meet our service quality standards.

The members working group provided valuable insights that shaped our improvements. Their feedback helped us prioritise areas such as defining complex cases more clearly, refining the escalation process, and enhancing communication for better transparency.

The information that follows highlights some of the improvement activity over recent months, but it is recognised that this remains a work in progress and whilst the projects activity comes to an end ongoing focus on responsiveness and improvement of quality continues.

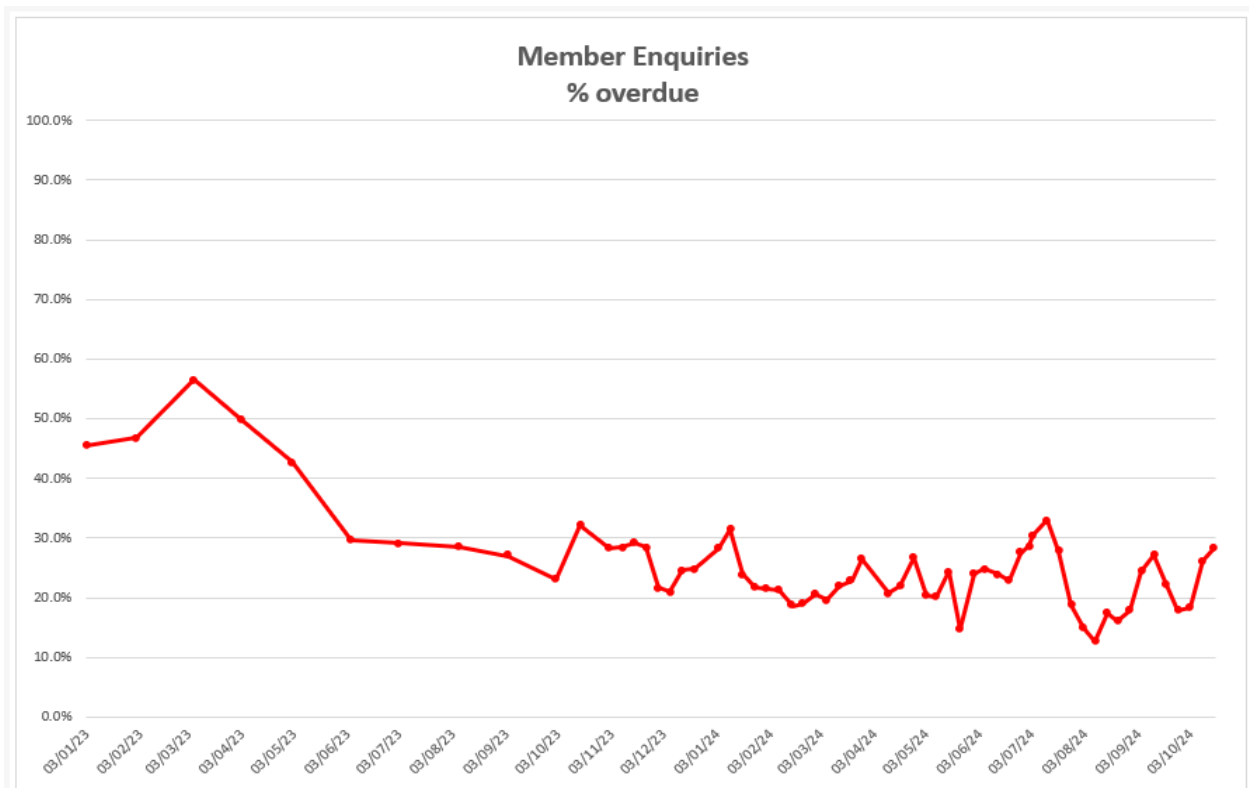
# Corporate Management Team Performance Reporting

Creation of reporting (Power BI) which is available to staff and Directors to allow oversight of members enquires particularly highlighting overdue enquiries, ensuring accountability across all services within the council. Since its inception we have seen an improvement and a reduction in overdue cases across service areas.

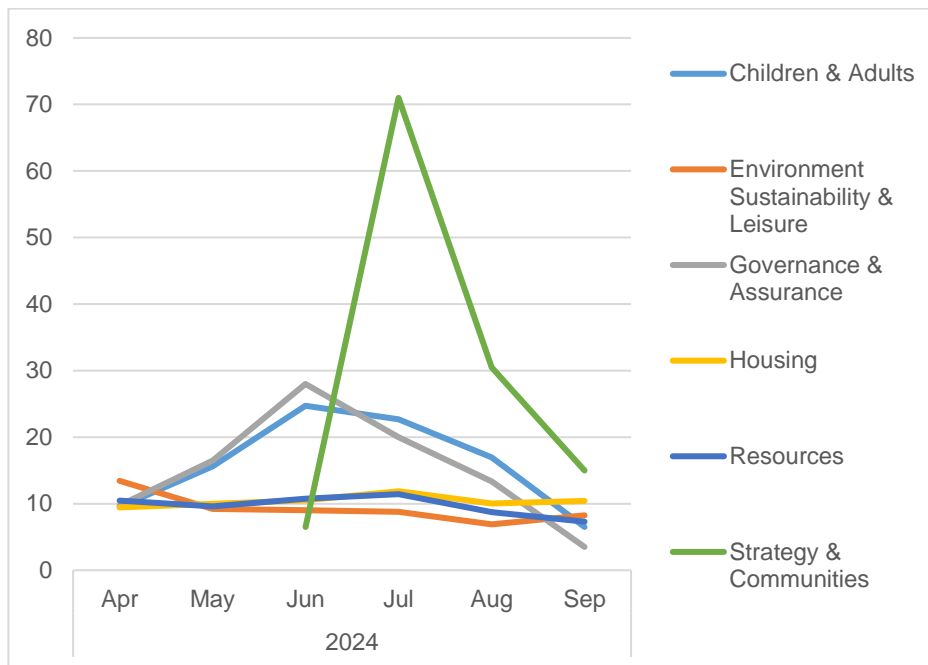


# Performance Improvement

Over recent months we have seen the average time to respond to members enquiries reduce to be within the 10-day target. This becomes challenging when there are peak periods, but significant progress has been made in reducing the number of overdue members' enquiries since the establishment of the Members Improvement Team. The team have worked closely with a number of services to ensure timely responses to enquiries. Where issues arise, the team offers support to resolve problems and prevent future delays.



Although significant work has been carried out to reduce the number of cases overdue, the graph above does indicate that the level of overdue cases has risen in September. Work continues with the services to close these cases and offer assistance where needed. Analysing these patterns allows us to identify recurring trends, providing a data-driven approach to offer targeted assistance to services during high-volume periods. This continuous collaboration enables us to proactively address challenges, adapt resources to fluctuating demands, and sustain improvements over time. Our commitment to trend analysis and support will ensure that we continue to build on this progress, with the ultimate goal of achieving timely, effective, and consistent responses for all our members.



We have seen a slight increase in overdue enquiries, however, the graph indicates in September that the average time to complete a member enquiry on time is 9 days.

## Member Review Team

A dedicated Member Review Team has been established to Serve as a conduit between Members and Services to ensure that where complex and multi service cases have not been adequately dealt with, these are actioned and resolved satisfactorily by the team within the agreed timescale. They have dealt with 56 cases to date. The team also monitor overdue cases and work with the appropriate services to ensure they are dealt with and have actively worked to close an additional 491 cases.

## Members Enquiries Handling Procedure Guide

The Members Enquiries Handling Procedure Guide has been developed as a reference guide and training tool for members. The document provides Members with an overview of the key parts of the Member Enquiries process so Members can understand the process and how their enquiries will be handled.

## Second Acknowledgement Letters

As of 1st August 2024 second acknowledgement letters now include the name and department of the officer handling the enquiry. The performance of both first and second acknowledgements is monitored monthly to ensure timely responses.

## Revised Members Enquiries Logging Templates

We are exploring the possibility of an optional logging template as an alternative to the current members inbox and portal. We understand that members time is limited and we want to ensure the process is as straightforward as possible so using the template will be completely optional, not a requirement.

## Original Case Details in Responses

A system update now ensures that the original case details submitted by members are automatically included in all response templates. This standardisation improves the clarity and consistency of responses.

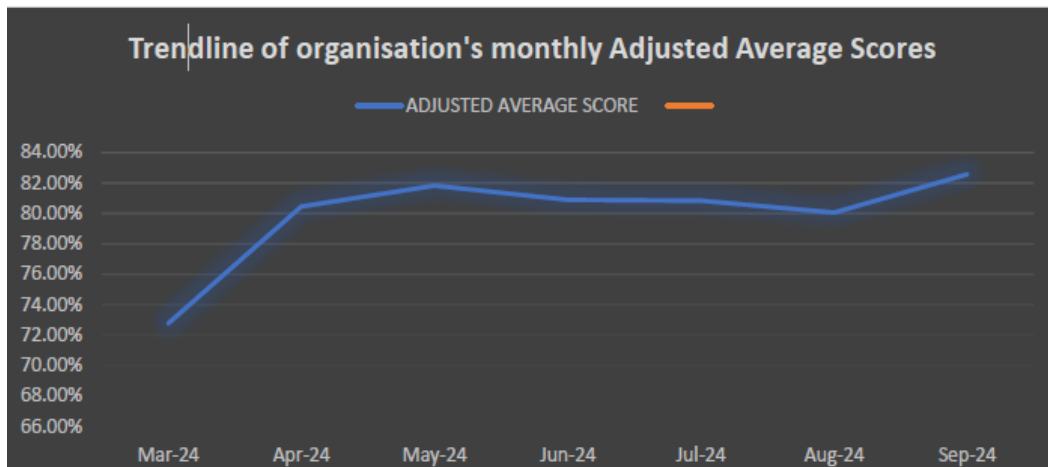
## Quality Assurance

We have established a quality assurance team that monitors the entire process of handling a member's enquiry. This team provides monthly assessment scores to identify areas for improvement. If any services fail to meet corporate standards or comply with the procedures for a member's enquiry, the team conducts meetings with the relevant service manager to offer training and support.

The following data shows significant improvements since the initiative began in March.

**Members Enquiries - organisation monthly average scores**

	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24
ADJUSTED AVERAGE SCORE	72.77%	80.45%	81.83%	80.89%	80.83%	80.05%	82.57%
AVERAGE SCORE	83.62%	89.42%	81.80%	80.21%	80.83%	80.05%	82.57%
Enquiry response delayed by (in working days)	-4	-2	9.51	3.42	0.32	3.48	0.52



## Feedback Mechanism

The feedback system has been implemented to provide direct evaluations of formal email responses. Users can rate the responses on a scale of 1 to 5 by clicking on the appropriate emoji icon at the bottom of the email. These evaluations are tracked by case, assignee, and service. Although current data is limited, increasing feedback participation will help improve service quality.

Additionally, a root cause analysis of escalated cases is being conducted. Over time, as more cases are reviewed, patterns in the causes of escalations will emerge, allowing for better understanding and resolution of these issues.