

Report to:	QSMTM Q2
Report by:	Helen Gardner- Swift, Head of Corporate Services (HOCS) Liz Brown, Finance and Administration Manager (FAM)
Meeting Date:	03 November 2021
Subject/ Title:	Enquiries Service Statistics Report VC158613
Attached Papers	N/A

Purpose of report

1. This Committee Report (CR) is required under the Key Document C1 Governance Reporting Arrangements and its purpose is to inform the Senior Management Team (SMT) of the Enquiries Service Statistics for Q1 and Q2 of 2021-22.

Recommendation and actions

2. I recommend that:
 - (a) the SMT notes the CR
 - (b) this CR is published in full as set out in paragraph 25

Executive summary

3. This report covers the following:
 - the numbers of enquiries received 2021-22 with comparative figures for 2020-21 and 2019-20.
 - the outcome of enquiries 2021-22, with comparative figures for 2020-21.
 - analyses the number of enquiries responded to within the timescales set down in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Performance and Quality Framework 2021-22, with comparative figures for 2020-21.

COVID-19 pandemic

4. Our priority as an organisation has been to continue to provide key services and guidance within available resource while safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of our members of staff.
5. Since temporarily closing our office premises on 23 March 2020 and putting in place business continuity arrangements, we have maintained operational output within the constraints imposed by limitations on access to our office premises and our office systems. We continue to be able to respond to enquiries sent to us by email or by post and enquiries continue to be managed, as far as possible, in line with our enquiries procedures. However, as our office premises remain temporarily closed, we are not able to respond to telephone enquiries or enquiries in person.

Enquiries received

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2019-20	341	344	336	262	1,283
2020-21	177	317	172	194	860
2021-22	176	208			384

- Q1 in 2021-22 and Q1 in 2020-21 saw an almost identical number of enquiries received but the numbers are still significantly lower when compared to 2019-20 (a 48% decrease).
- Q2 saw an increase in enquiries compared to Q1 but not to the same level of the previous 2 years.

Enquiries closed by outcome

	2020-21		2021-22 Q1/Q2	2021-22 Q3/Q4	2021-22 total	
Making / responding to a request/request for review/appeal	248	29%	143		143	37%
DPA / FOIA / UK EIRs referrals to ICO	113	13%	59		59	15%
Not an FOI issue	74	9%	37		37	10%
Referred to other SIC website content	48	6%	29		29	8%
No response needed	46	5%	26		26	7%
Assessing or improving practice	9	1%	15		15	4%
Body under jurisdiction	29	3%	14		14	4%
Submitting statistics to the portal	162	19%	12		12	3%
Signposted to another body	14	2%	8		8	2%
Appeal portal	34	4%	7		7	2%
Missing code	26	3%	7		7	2%
Publication scheme - advice	12	1%	7		7	2%
Sent Word appeal form	0	0%	7		7	2%
Sent YRTK	6	1%	5		5	2%
Other assistance given	15	2%	3		3	
Press: request for comment/statement/interview	15	2%	2		2	
Governance/finance/resources	6	1%	1		1	
Request for training	2	0%	1		1	
SAR/RFI consultation			1		1	
FOISA / EI(S)Rs / INSPIRE	3	0%	0		0	
Other	1	0%	0		0	
Publication scheme/Gtl	1	0%	0		0	
Intervention general enquiry	0	0%	0		0	
Intervention specific case	0	0%	0		0	
TOTAL	864	100%	384		384	

- 1 enquiry was open at the end of the 2020-21 reporting year but is now closed and included in the Q1/Q2 figures above.
- There was 1 open enquiry as at 30 September 2021.

10. Statistics portal enquiries in Q1/Q2 are down to 'normal' levels after the peak last year caused by login and questionnaire queries from public authorities when they had to move to remote working quickly.
11. The reduction in statistics portal queries have moved the percentages of other types of enquires back to levels from previous years.
12. For information, the number of enquiries dealt with by each team is set out in the table below:

Corporate Services		Enforcement		Policy & Information	
161	42%	163	42%	60	16%

Response times

13. This report analyses the number of enquiries responded to within the timescales set down in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Key Document C7 Performance and Quality Framework 2021-22 which are:
 - 90% to be responded to within 5 working days or fewer
 - 95% to be responded to within 20 working days or fewer.

	2020-21 Total			2021-22 Total		
	No	%		No	%	
≤ 5 days	834	96.53%	96.53%	377	98.18%	98.18%
> 5 days / ≤ 20 days	27	3.43%	99.66%	7	1.82%	100%
> 20 days	3	0.34%	100%	0	0.00%	-
TOTAL	864			384		

14. Both KPIs have been met in Q1 and Q2 of 2021-22.

Risk impact

15. This report helps us to monitor and report on organisational outcomes and helps us to mitigate the risk of not performing our statutory functions and duties to a high standard.
16. The business continuity measures that are in place mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Equalities impact

17. The Enquiries Service is one of the main points of contact for this organisation and we aim to ensure that no one is unlawfully discriminated against when using this service.
18. The impact of the interim restriction of the service to email and postal enquiries, whilst the office premises are temporarily closed, is being monitored (as far as possible).

Privacy impact

19. There is no direct privacy impact arising from this report.

Resources impact

20. As this area of work falls with “business as usual”, the work required is undertaken within current resources.

Operational/strategic plan impact

21. The management and reporting on the Enquiries Service is classed as “business as usual” in the Operational Plan 2021-22.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

22. None.

Consultation and Communication

23. QSMTM minute.
24. An Enquiries report is included in the Annual Report.

Publication

25. I recommend that this CR is published in full.