Tick One Box	For Information Only	For Decision Only	For Discussion
			X

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL   **SMT**

CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICE   **12TH AUGUST 2024**

Member Zone Update Report FQ1 2024-25 and Two Year Summary

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1   This report forms part of the ongoing monitoring of the request and information management service provided to elected members by Services via the Member Zone system. The report details service request activity in FQ1 2024-25 and for the two years since MZ's inception in June 2022. It also covers the work of the MZ Sounding Board of officers and members, which had its sixth meeting in March 2024 (See Minute at Appendix 1.)

1.2   In summary over its first two years of operation of MZ:

- Members logged 2600 requests of which 2021 were for Roads and Infrastructure Services and 579 for all other Services. The most active user of MZ has logged 384 requests.

- 2443 responses (94%) have been provided by Services of which only 210 used the escalation procedures; most through exceeding SLA by more than 20 days.

- 93% of members were satisfied with the timeliness of their responses and 95.5% with the quality out of 221 survey responses.

- Members logged 85% of all requests using digital self-service.

- The MZ Sounding Board has met six times and numerous enhancements have been made to the MZ platform at their behest. Appendix 1 has the minute of the March 2024 meeting.

1.3   In FQ1 of 2024/25

- Members logged 327 new requests with 250 for RIS and 77 for other Services.

- There was a net reduction of four open cases over the quarter down from 161 to 157 open cases, with RIS shedding 14 from their caseload and other Services increasing by 10.

- Of the 157 open cases at end of FQ1, 14 were in breach of SLA, 13 of which were from non RIS Services.

- The in-quarter satisfaction with timeliness of response was 93% (54 responses), while there was 100% (56 responses) satisfaction with quality of response and 97% (67 responses), satisfied with the final outcome.

- The Digital Service Team released two significant member requested enhancements to MZ in the quarter allowing members to close cases from their response email and adding five new eforms for specific enquiry types.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   We recommend that SMT:

- Note the performance of the MZ platform and the teams supporting members over the past quarter and two years since MZ went live.

- Note the ongoing work of the Sounding Board and officers to enhance the system and associated resources so that it enhances member enquiry management.

3.0   DETAIL

Service Request Portal Activity

3.1   A key element of the Member Zone is the request management system that allows members to make requests for action and information from Services and for both the members and Services to manage their caseloads effectively. The table below summarises the key performance metrics of that system in the two years since inception:

Item	RIS Requests	Other Services	Total
Total Requests Made	**2021 (78%)**	**579 (22%)**	**2600**
Requests in Action*	**107**	**50**	**157**
Requests Actioned by Services	**1914**	**529**	**2443**
Requests Closed by Members	**1368**	**405**	**1774 (73%)**
Open with Members	**500**	**124**	**624**

*Includes those requests awaiting response, escalated and where Services have scheduled work for completion at a future date.

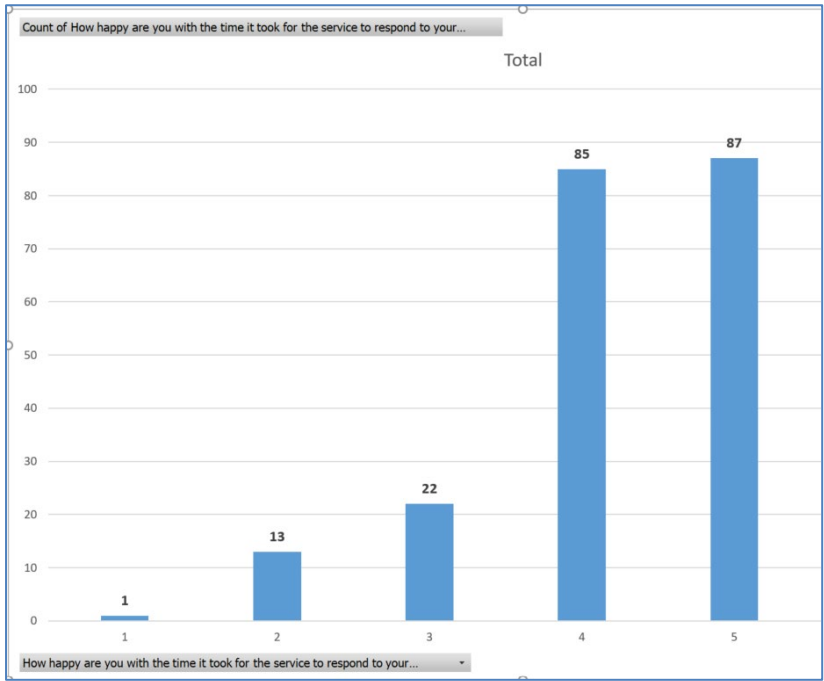3.2   Of the 157 responses <u>in action</u> as at and of FQ1, 30/06/2024:

- 112 are with the Service for response
- 20 have work scheduled for completion
- 19 have had an initial response and the member has asked for further information
- 6 have been escalated.

Of the 112 requests open with Services for response, 14 (12%) exceed their SLA response time by over one week (1 RIS and 13 Non-RIS). Note that at the end of FQ4 2023/24 there were 114 open requests and 7 of these had exceeded their SLA by more than one week, so the open caseload has fallen slightly but SLA non-compliance has doubled due to non RIS Services having more cases in breach of SLA.

3.3   Of the 2600 requests raised since inception, 210 (8%) have used the escalation process (178 automatically escalated by 20 day late rule, 31 by members and 1 by the Service). There are currently still 624 cases with members awaiting their action, which is down by 46 on the previous quarter.

3.4   327 new requests were raised by members in FQ1 of 2024/25, of which 250 were for RIS and 77 for other Services. RIS cleared 279 cases, so their active caseload fell by 14 compared to end of FQ4. Non RIS Services cleared 67 in FQ1, so their caseload rose by 10 cases.

Service Request Portal – Member Feedback

3.5   In order to monitor timeliness and quality of responses over time from a member perspective, every member is offered a satisfaction survey when they mark a case as closed. In total 16 members have so far used the feedback function. The tables below show the number of responses since we introduced this functionality in November 2022. **194 out of 208 (93%)** of respondents said they were moderately to very happy with the speed of response (in FQ1 this was also 93% with 50 out if 54 responses marked 3 or better):

Count of How happy are you with the time it took for the service to respond to your…

Total

1	13	22	85	87

How happy are you with the time it took for the service to respond to your…

3.6   **211 out of 221 (95.5%)** respondents were satisfied with the quality of response; 183 marking them good or excellent (in FQ1 this was 100% with 56 responses all marked 3 or above):

Count of Rate the quality of the response

Total

5	5	28	73	110

Rate the quality of the response
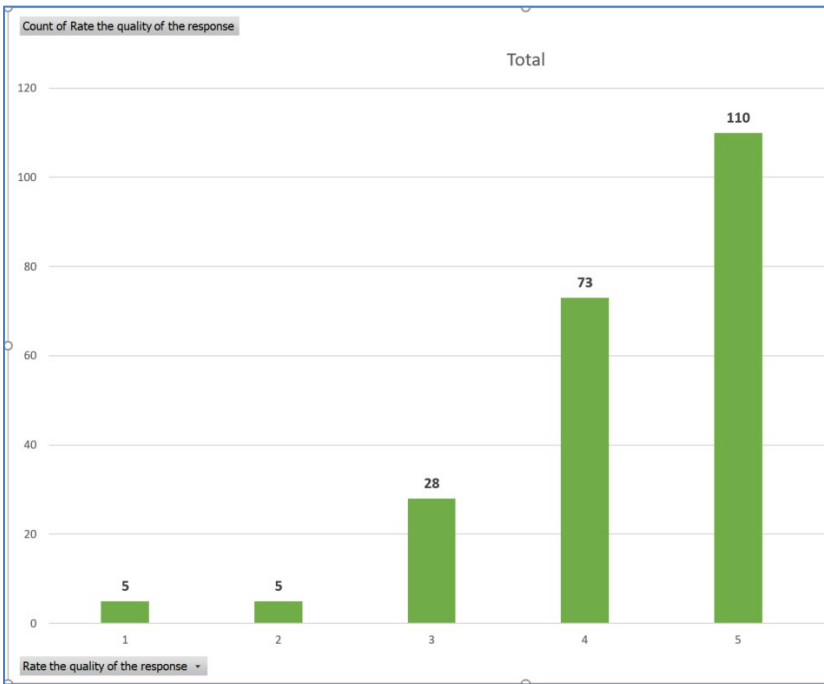
3.7   In FQ1 of 2024/25 we introduced a new survey measure at the behest of the MZ

Sounding Board and this was "How satisfied were you with the final outcome of your enquiry". The 67 responses in FQ1 showed 65 (97%) were satisfied and 57 (92% **very** satisfied):
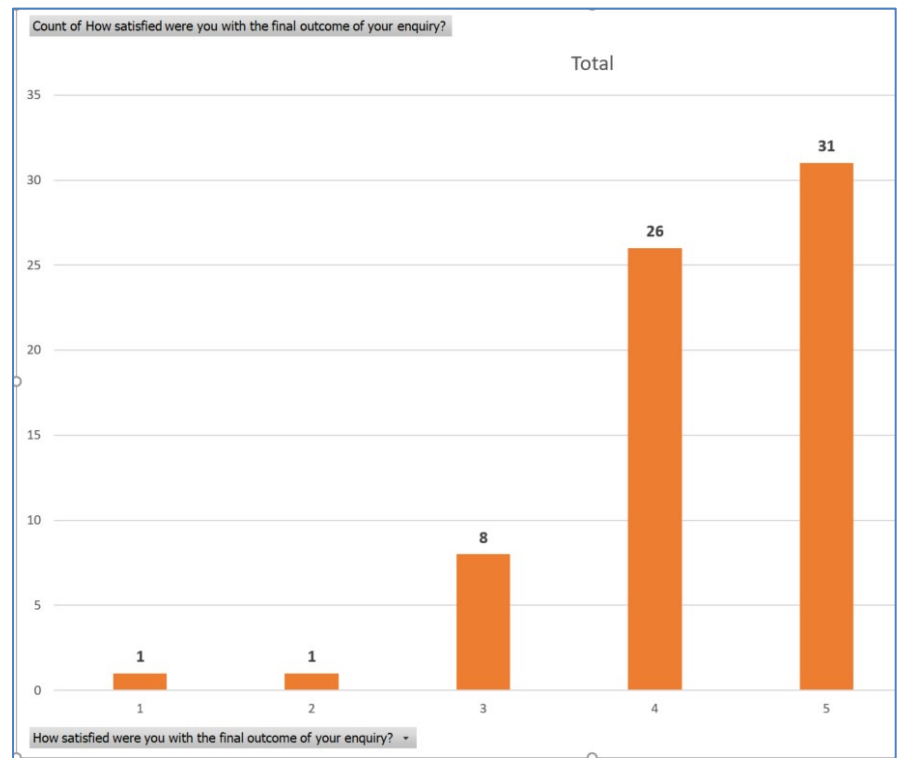
3.8 There were many positive comments in FQ1 including:

- This was an excellent response and dealt with very quickly. Thank you.
- Very thorough response with lots of details and relevant links to information. Response given in very good time.
- Very thorough

Some less favourable feedback included:

- Very slow. Department have not followed up.
- Please confirm to me what reparation works were undertaken to correct the problem with flooding. I am unaware of any actions on this matter.

Member Usage of Member Zone

3.9 It is important that the maximum number of member requests possible are routed to Services via the MZ portal as this allows Services to deal with them in a structured, efficient way and avoids perception of a two tier service to members. It also helps members control their caseloads. The average number of requests made per member since inception to 30th March 2024 is 73. The table below shows the number of requests per member since go live:

Banding of Number of Requests Made	Number of Members in this Banding
Zero – 60 requests made (Low)	16 members
61 – 100 requests made (Moderate)	14 members
101+ requests made (High)	6 members

3.10 The highest number of requests made by a single councillor is **384**. Online self-service or automation is the most popular way to raise and manage requests with 2239 (85%), of all requests managed this way, thus freeing up Member Services to help members in other ways.

Member Zone Development

3.11 The Member Zone application and Service is continually developed in response to the needs of Members and Services. Since March 2024 the following enhancements have been released and were encompassed in MZ Member Update Briefing No.7:

- A quick closure option for members on the email that they receive when a Service has responded to an enquiry. It saves the Member having to go into MZ to update the case and will help improve the case closure percentage.
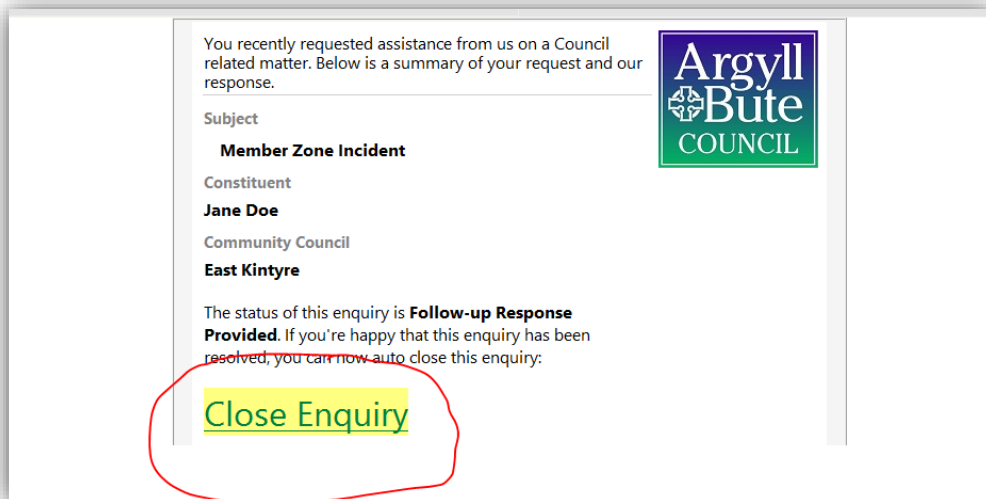
- New dedicated online forms for members to use when logging requests regarding Abandoned Vehicles, Fly Tipping, Memorial Benches, Play Parks and Public Toilets.
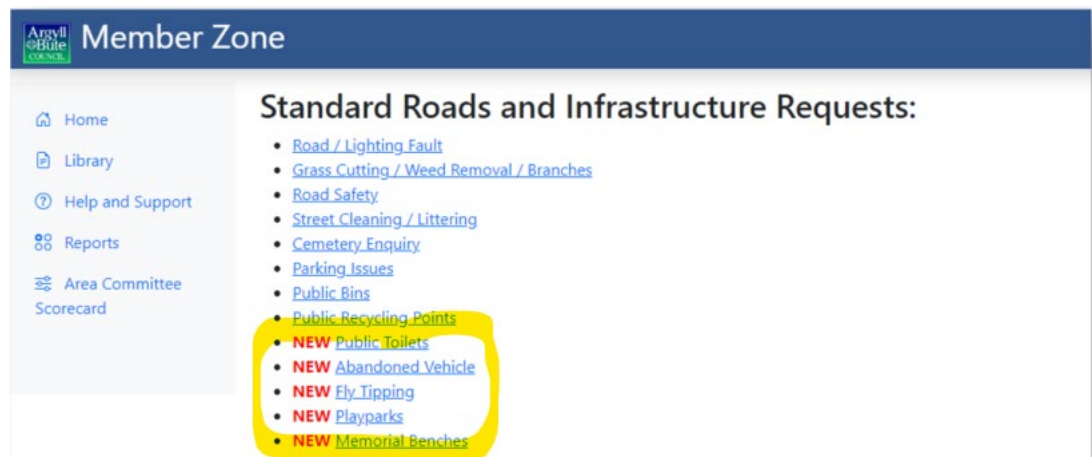
- New management reporting improvements for the monthly reports to DMT, including a 'Reason Overdue' field for Services to complete explain why any cases have breached SLA by more than two weeks and a random case selector for the RIS MZ response quality checks.

- New additions to the MZ Information resources including RIS Operational Updates to Edition 153 and upload of all Sounding Board Papers up to SB Meeting 6 and the enhanced feedback survey noted above at para 3.7.

3.12 The Sounding Board met in March 2024 and the minute of the meeting is at **Appendix 1**. The meeting scheduled for June 2024 was rescheduled for after recess due to the calling of the General Election and the busy end of session making it difficult for Members to free up time.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The Member Zone continues to evolve with input from members and Services. It is now an embedded system with regular self-service usage by the majority of members and sound oversight. It has good feedback scores for quality and timeliness from those members that complete the feedback survey and the caseload is well controlled. There remains a minority of members who do not use it much, either because they raise few requests or because they go to officers directly.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy	None
5.2 Financial	Self Service and automated elements enhance the efficiency of Member enquiry management
5.3 Legal	None
5.4 HR	None
5.5 Fairer Duty Scotland	
5.5.1 - Equalities:	None
5.5.2 - Socio-economic Duty:	None
5.5.3 - Islands:	None
5.6 Risk	Reduces risk of reputational damage and failure demand
5.7 Climate Change	None
5.8 Customer Service	Improves constituent enquiry management

For further information contact:
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services
Bob Miller Customer Engagement Manager

Appendix 1: Minute of Sixth Member Zone Sounding Board, March 2024 (below)

Appendix 1: MINUTE OF MEMBER ZONE SOUNDING BOARD

MEETING 6 HELD ON 19th March at 10am, Via MS TEAMS

Present

Bob Miller	Customer Engagement Manager
Jamie Robertson	Digital Engagement Services Developer
Mark Calder	Project Manager RIS
Anna Alderson	Customer Liaison Officer RIS
Helen MacLeod	Member Services Officer
Councillor Dougie McFadzean	Elected Member
Councillor Kieron Green	Elected Member (part meeting)
Councillor Fiona Howard	Elected Member

Apologies

Cllr Iain Shonny Paterson	Elected Member
Councillor Liz McCabe	Elected Member
Susie Sinclair	Directorate Support Officer
Jane Jarvie	Comms Team Manager

Item	Details	Action
1	**Welcome and introductions** Bob welcomed everyone to the sixth meeting of the group, noted the apologies and thanked those who attended.	
2	**Minute of Previous Meeting** The meeting reviewed and accepted the minute of the previous meeting held in October 2023. It noted that all the actions were either completed or were covered later in the agenda.	
3	**Review of Current Member Zone Request Portal Performance** The latest Request Management Update Briefing covering MZ performance up to 08/03/24 was provided and it was noted that the MZ service performance had generally improved since the last meeting, with fewer outstanding requests, fewer requests in breach of their SLA and post request member survey feedback higher. There remained concern at the significant number of members who were still not using MZ as the established system and process for correctly logging requests to officers. This gave rise to concerns around fairness, with some members bypassing the system to get a speedier response to the detriment of their colleagues and officers not being able to deal with requests in an orderly and efficient way. BM noted that MZ admin rights had been given to Director support staff to allow them to put requests that were being made direct to Directors into MZ and that Directors were pushing back to members who were escalating matters to them without having used the MZ escalation process. Requests made out with MZ cannot be properly tracked or accounted for and do not allow for a level playing field of treatment. BM undertook to issue a reminder brief to members of the rationale and benefits of using MZ. Cllr Howard asked why some responses made direct by constituents appeared to be dealt with more speedily than equivalent queries made by members. BM noted that wherever possible members should encourage constituents to make direct requests, as member requests	**Bob**

Item	Details	Action
	had an additional layer of triage and control via the Caseload Controllers for each Service and their role was to direct and manage that request on behalf of the member. He also observed that the survey feedback showed a high satisfaction with the response times to both initial response and follow up responses. Cllr McFadzean noted that there appeared to be a low percentage of members completing the feedback survey and therefore it may be based on the experience of only one or two frequent responders. Bob undertook to check how many members had given feedback to date and to review the email prompt that was sent inviting participation in the survey and other promotion of it.	**Bob**
4	**Current in progress and planned MZ system developments** Jamie demonstrated the new survey question that was requested at the last SB to differentiate between how the enquiry had been handled versus the actual outcome. This is now live and will be reported on to the next SB. Bob covered a number of other enhancements made since the last meeting including: o Colour coded operational reports enhancements for RIS o New 'Reason Overdue' function for Director's DMT Monthly Report (Caseload Controller Briefing) o Director's Admins given escalation permissions o Override on "Urgent" request for Case Controllers Jamie also explained a new piece of functionality that will soon be released that will allow members to close a case direct from within the email they are sent with the update from the Service. This means no need to log into MZ to close a case. Mark noted that the Project moving WDM Roads and Lighting system to the cloud had now gone live and this will allow progress to be made on some outstanding WDM related MZ development requests. Jamie will now investigate: • The enabling the reporting of multiple potholes along a single stretch of road and street lighting section faults. • The uploading of photographs to WDM.	**Jamie**
5	**Member Zone Information Resources** Bob noted the information related additions to the MZ library since the last meeting including: o Area Committee Scorecard Link o Bin Collection Calendars 2024 o RIS Operational Updates to Edition 139 o Upload of all Sounding Board Papers Councillor Howard asked if it was possible to have a briefing regarding the number and type of customer contacts coming in to the Council. Bob noted that we would soon be at business year-end and he completes an	**Bob**

Item	Details	Action
	annual review of customer contact activity that he would happily issue as a Briefing Note to MZ.	
	Mark noted that RIS responses often required an inspection of an issue to fully inform a specific response to member and that a RIS Briefing note on the inspection process and outcomes may be beneficial to add to the MZ library.	**Mark**
	Jamie will also review the support documentation for MZ and the how to use it guide, given that it has evolved significantly since inception. This will include a new video guide of the key functionality that may encourage members who do not use the system frequently.	**Jamie**
6	**Member Support**	
	Helen noted that most members were now using MZ on self-service basis and so the MZ related calls on Member Services were low. A member who had been ill for a spell had some cases auto closed and had raised this as an issue. Bob noted that the cases could be re-opened and Jamie undertook to liaise with Helen on the matter after the meeting.	**Helen/ Jamie**
7	**A.O.C.B.**	
	Councillor McFadzean raised a concern about certain members posting snapshots of officer responses to MZ queries onto social media, despite this having officer names and other sensitive information in it. Mark noted that this practice could be detrimental to officers, who were now aware of this and as a result were depersonalising and being more formal in their responses; which was not always a beneficial development. Bob noted that this was covered under the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the Council Monitoring Officer has and would take action if required. As there was no other business, Bob thanked all attendees for their positive input.	
8	**Date of Next Meeting**	
	The Board agreed that the next meeting would take place before council recess in July.	**Bob/ Susie**