**Out of Hours Call Handling Specification**

### **V 6 28th November 2023**

###

Contents

[**V 6 28th November 2023** 1](#_Toc152086814)

[Core Specification 5](#_Toc152086815)

[1.0 Introduction 5](#_Toc152086816)

[2.0 Scope of Activity 6](#_Toc152086817)

[2.1 Overview of the Service 6](#_Toc152086818)

[Brief Description of the Service Elements (more detailed descriptions follow) 6](#_Toc152086819)

[Rostering 10](#_Toc152086820)

[2.2 Details of Service Options operated by Existing Participants 14](#_Toc152086821)

[2.3 Variations to Service Options at the request of Participating Organisations 19](#_Toc152086822)

[3.0 Cyber Security 20](#_Toc152086823)

[4.0 Recruitment, Retention, Training and Management of Staff 21](#_Toc152086824)

[4.1 Recruitment and Retention 21](#_Toc152086825)

[4.2 Management of Service Provider Staff 23](#_Toc152086826)

[4.3 Allocation of Staff 23](#_Toc152086827)

[4.4 Training and Development 25](#_Toc152086828)

[4.5 Support and Supervision 25](#_Toc152086829)

[5.0 Call Handling Services 26](#_Toc152086830)

[5.1 What Callers will experience at the start of a call 26](#_Toc152086831)

[5.2 Answering Calls 27](#_Toc152086832)

[**5.4** **Links with Participating Organisations’ Daytime Call Handling Services** 32](#_Toc152086833)

[**5.5** **Callers who are unable to use English** 33](#_Toc152086834)

[5.6 Callers with Communication Difficulties 33](#_Toc152086835)

[5.7 Complaints and other Feedback from Callers 33](#_Toc152086836)

[5.8 Major Emergencies 36](#_Toc152086837)

[5.10 Other Ad Hoc Call Handling Requirements 37](#_Toc152086838)

[6.2 Performance Standards applying to the Gold Standard: 38](#_Toc152086839)

[7.0 ICT, Data Interchange and their Management 40](#_Toc152086840)

[7.5 Routing information regarding Calls to other Staff 44](#_Toc152086841)

[7.6 Electronic Messaging – Additional Requirements 44](#_Toc152086842)

[7.7 Email Encryption 45](#_Toc152086843)

[7.8 Data Transfer 45](#_Toc152086844)

[7.9 System Integration 46](#_Toc152086845)

[7.10 Web Services 47](#_Toc152086846)

[7.11 Use of Address Databases and Maps 47](#_Toc152086847)

[7.12 Intentionally Blank 48](#_Toc152086848)

[7.13 Supporting Remote Access by Service Provider Staff to Participating Organisation Application Systems 48](#_Toc152086849)

[7.14 Using Personal Data 48](#_Toc152086850)

[7.15 Data Risk Management 50](#_Toc152086851)

[8.0 Risk Management 50](#_Toc152086852)

[9. Transition 55](#_Toc152086853)

[9.1 The Transition Process 55](#_Toc152086854)

[10. Implementation of the Service for New Participants 56](#_Toc152086855)

[11. Reporting and Monitoring 57](#_Toc152086856)

[11.3 Caller Experience of the Service 58](#_Toc152086857)

[**11.11**  **Review Meetings** 67](#_Toc152086858)

[Performance Management 68](#_Toc152086859)

[13. Service Documentation 72](#_Toc152086860)

[**13.4** **Particular Types of Enquiries** 74](#_Toc152086861)

[**13.5** **Process Documentation** 74](#_Toc152086862)

[14. Facilities for day-to-day Information and Communication 75](#_Toc152086863)

[**14.4** **Rota Changes** 77](#_Toc152086864)

[15 Service Development 77](#_Toc152086865)

[16.5 Use of Participating Organisation Back Office Systems 79](#_Toc152086866)

[Appendix 1- Intentionally Blank- KPIs are now covered in the Overarching Agreement 81](#_Toc152086867)

[Appendix 2- Service Options operated by each Existing Participant 81](#_Toc152086868)

[Introduction 81](#_Toc152086869)

Unless the context otherwise requires, the defined terms used in this Specification shall have the meanings set out in the Overarching Agreement or the Services Agreement.

# Core Specification

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1.11 This Specification sets out the extent of the Services required by Participating Organisations (POs). The Specification describes:

a) The scope of activity – what types of services will be required

b) Contract management

c) Call handling Staff - minimum requirements in relation to recruitment, training, supervision and development

d) Participating Organisation and Caller expectations – what Callers will hear when they call, how calls will be handled, and arrangements for specific types of call and Caller and links with Participating Organisation’s daytime services

e) ICT – telephony, other channels, interoperability of systems, capturing and using personal data

f) Risk management

g) Transition from the Current Provider to the Service Provider

h) Implementation of the Service for New Participants – planning, training, testing, implementation and early review

i) Performance management and reporting – key performance indicators, assessing Call Handler performance and the Caller perspective, formal review systems

j) Facilities for day-to-day information and communication

k) Service development including the potential use of self service facilities

# 2.0 Scope of Activity

## 2.1 Overview of the Service

2.1.1 The types of calls and enquiries processed as part of the Services relate to individual Participating Organisation’s functions and are described as Service Options in the table at Paragraph 2.2.2 below. For the avoidance of doubt, individual Service Option specifications may vary between Participating Organisations in terms of their specific requirements. In addition, the size and complexity of the scripts, processes and procedures required varies greatly between Service Options; and an individual Service Option may be sub-divided into a range of different elements.

## Brief Description of the Service Elements (more detailed descriptions follow)

2.1.2a The Service Provider can use the configuration of the Councils’ call handling system which is based on  to deliver the services. There would be no charge to the supplier for the use of this configuration. The Council will pay all licensing costs for the platform and arrange for the temporary assignment of the licenses to the provider for the duration of the contract. Bidders may choose to use their own system subject to (a) meeting the specification (b) returning intellectual property to the Councils at the end of the contract and (c) incorporating all the licensing costs of the software in their price per call. If a successful bidder (supplier) would like to use the Councils’ call handling system for other of their customers, this is acceptable subject to the payment of the royalty payment tendered in the bid back financial table. Please refer to this document.

2.1.2b The Services comprises the following elements:-

1. IVR (Interactive Voice Recognition) - the process where a Caller may choose to self-refer to a manual call-handling arrangement (Team Leader Direct Access Call/Gold/Silver/Bronze). (The call classification will be specific to the selected Services and individual Participating Organisations will match call priority against particular types of service requests)
2. Service Provider’s Team Leader Direct Access Call (Platinum) - the Service Provider makes available a direct dial extension number to Participating Organisations. This will be used by the Participating Organisation’s client officers who need to speak to a responsible person at times of extreme urgency e.g. civil emergency, child protection issue, fatal traffic accident
3. Gold 80% of calls will be answered within 20 seconds and the remaining 20% of calls will be answered within 30 seconds. For the avoidance of doubt this means that all Gold calls will be answered within 30 seconds. These times to commence at the end of the IVR message.
4. Silver 80% of calls will be answered within 40 seconds and the remaining 20% of calls will be answered within 60 seconds. For the avoidance of doubt this means that all Silver Calls will be answered within 60 seconds. These times to commence at the end of the IVR message.
5. Bronze 80% of calls will be answered within 60 seconds and the remaining 20% of calls will be answered within 80 seconds.
6. Please also refer to Appendix 1 of this Specification for a full description of the KPIs applying to this Overarching Agreement/Services Agreement
7. The Bronze standard call will be delivered through automatic means/artificial intelligence (i.e. by the use of a virtual agent or by chat bots.)
8. IVR Automatic mechanism to redirect Callers to another phones number or to the website of a Participating Organisation, or to provide information relating to known incidents e.g. Carnival (i.e. no further action required). IVR is to be included in the monthly management fee (as defined in the Pricing Schedule)
9. Team Leader Direct Access Call i.e. calls which will be dealt with personally by the Service Provider’s Team Leader- more complex calls requiring extra experience/ knowledge and insight from a more senior person in the Service Provider’s OOH call centre team. This is the ability of the Participating Organisation’s On Call Duty Staff member to directly contact a team leader/senior level officer within the Service Provider’s call centre about an urgent or complex matter at any given time without delay.

The Service Provider may substitute a senior member of its team in lieu of the Team Leader in respect of calls from customers but this does not affect the above obligations in respect of the above clause

1. End to End Calls i.e. calls which, by their very complexity, will take a call centre associate more time to deal with. i.e. placement of a homeless individual and noise for Kensington and Chelsea
2. Market Research i.e. the cost of making calls and writing up the results for Caller- based research on behalf of a PO. Agree a brief regarding scope of research with the PO.
3. Social Media i.e. the provision of a monitoring and analytic tools service on social media to alert the Participating Organisation to correspondence on Twitter or Facebook or any new channel, which they need to be aware of and possibly respond to.
4. To monitor a Participating Organisation’s Whats App network and to answer queries and provide information to users of the network. Note: it is the Participating Organisation’s to update and maintain the Whats APP network.
5. To provide information to via text to a network of customers, giving service information and updates. Note: it is the Participating Organisation’s responsibility to provide an up to date list of the text numbers to be used.
6. Administration Tasks - for out of hours i.e. responding to e-mail enquiries from Callers. Messages to be relayed to Callers will be agreed by the Supervising Officer of an individual PO.
7. Management activity i.e. administering the Services Agreement (including overheads) which is not charged to individual calls. Items within this category typically include: senior management time, software licences, and property costs.
8. Social Media Monitoring-The use of analytic tools in real time to detect correspondence relating to the Participating Organisation on Twitter, Facebook and other sites
9. Virtual Agent- A computer which interacts verbally with Callers in a flexible and intelligent manner, connecting seamlessly to a number of databases, to generate tailored responses. This could range from the simple logging of service request into a database for onward transmission to a service provider working for a PO to deliver a particular service, to a tailored discussion on the basis of scripts between a verbal virtual agent and a Caller. A virtual agent typically comprises the following elements:-
* Caller Experience Platform- Caller service entrance channels
* Artificial Intelligence – voice to data agent
* Robotic Process Automation – data response channel

POs may extend the operating hours of the Service Provider’s Virtual Agent beyond the out of hours operational time as set out in paragraph 2.15 below. Should this occur the cost per call will be unchanged.

### Rostering

2.1.3 As part of normal operations and for no additional consideration the Service Provider will receive updates from the PO’s client officers and use these to maintain an up to date roster of which officer at the PO to call about particular types of call.

The Service Provider will update the roster within 4 working hours of receiving such information.

2.1.4 For an additional fee [to be put in the bid back financial document] the Service Provider will create and make individual to POs an electronic, web- based version of their own roster to which they make reference to via use of a secure portal.

In this scenario any update from the PO must also be incorporated into the shared roster within 4 working hours

2.1.5 The Services are required to operate overnight Monday to Friday and all day on Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays. The most common hours of operation (dependent on the organisation) are 5pm-8am Monday to Friday morning and 5pm Friday through Saturday and Sunday until 8am on Monday. It will be noted, however, that required hours and days may vary across the Participating Organisations and this will be set out in that PO’s Service Agreement and in respect of the individual services that they provide to the public. It will be noted that call volumes are especially high immediately daytime services finish at 5pm up to 9 p.m. It will also be noted that volumes may increase as a consequence of particular events, such as very cold weather in winter, noise nuisance in summer. The requirements of an individual partner will be set down in the Services Agreement.

2.1.6 Participating Organisations are likely to require the Services for the full 24-hour period on bank holidays and throughout the three (3) Working Days between Christmas and the New Year. Certain Participating Organisations may require the Services to operate for a full Monday to Friday period, in addition to weekends, over the Christmas period. The supplier will not be expected to take payment in this period. POs will generally give the supplier 30 calendar days to set up the requisite arrangements. It is accepted that a shorter notice period may affect the ability of the supplier to provide this support and in these circumstances the supplier will use reasonable endeavours to deliver the required cover.

2.1.7 Management costs are subject to an affordability threshold as per the bid back financial appendix

2.1.8 Line testing will be undertaken by the Service Provider for no charge to the PO and to a frequency specified by each individual PO. A monthly report on individual PO line testing- results will be made available promptly (within 2 working days of the end of the month in question) to each PO by the Service Provider.

2.1.9 All requests for new services or service variations not included in the Bid Back Financial Appendix will be subject to a binding, fixed price quotation, provided by the service provider before commencement of the works

2.1.9 The total annual volume of Out of Hours calls received is currently approximately 112,000 inbound calls and this could increase when New Participants join the Overarching Agreement. Bidders are instructed to spread all of their costs on the volume of INBOUND CALLS ONLY.

2.1.8 The Service Provider will handle calls relating to an agreed list of Service Options specified by each Participating Organisation. This list will be based on a Schedule of Service Options as set out in table at Paragraph 2.2.2 below. They will generally be in relation to the PO’s services for which the Participating Organisation provides an out of hours service to the public and for which there are On-call Duty Staff available on rotas to deliver the required services. Current Service Option take-up varies from one Participating Organisation to another.

2.1.9 Each Participating Organisation will enter into a specific Services Agreement with the Service Provider, which will include a detailed specification of the Services and the hours and days of operation within which their out of hours call handling service is to be operated. The public will call numbers advertised by each Participating Organisation in relation to the Services, and the calls will be routed from their telephone network to the Service Provider's call centre.

2.1.10 The Services will be operated in accordance with a set of common defined performance/quality standards. Participating Organisations will be able to select from one of two different performance standards covering speed of call answering and levels of abandoned calls, for each of their Service Options. The Service provider shall ensure that Call Handlers are given extensive training in the requirements of individual Participating Organisations, including relevant local background information.

2.1.11 The Services will cater for individual Participating Organisation’s requirements by using unique scripts and relevant databases. The Service Provider will work with Participating Organisations to agree detailed scripts, procedures and guidance to be used for handling each type of call, to enable the Service Provider to handle the calls correctly for each Service Option they deliver. The scripts and/or specifications may vary from time to time as required by the individual Participating Organisations. Participating Organisations will also ensure that relevant information databases are made available to the Service Provider. Participating Organisations will also agree with the Service Provider specific procedures to be followed for a range of non-standard emergency calls (e.g. people at risk). Script modifications will be made by the Service Provider to reflect best practice agreed by both parties within quarterly review meetings or otherwise at no additional cost to the PO. The Service Provider shall also make minor changes might include changes to address, names (e.g. on call officer telephone number), changes in the PO’s supply chain no additional cost to the PO.

2.1.12 Each Participating Organisation will allocate suitable Staff to work with the Service Provider to undertake day-to-day liaison and management of their Services Agreement.

2.1.13 The core delivery channel will be voice, but the Service Provider and its Staff will be expected to be able to deal with calls from Callers with communication difficulties or with other needs requiring alternative delivery channels and techniques, for example Typetalk, a text to voice relay service used by people with communication difficulties.

2.1.14 The Service Provider may be required by Participating Organisations to handle service requests received by Email, SMS and web forms in the future. Currently, these channels are used for communicating with the Participating Organisations’ On-call Duty Staff providing out of hours services. It is possible that SMS or email will in the future be used for updating Callers on the progress of a Participating Organisation in response to their calls.

2.1.15 The Service Provider shall work closely with the Participating Organisations to enable the Participating Organisations to plan and execute changes to their services or capacity in response to any planned publicity regarding the Services. Participating Organisations recognise that specific publicity in relation to the Services may result in an increase in the number of calls received by the Service Provider and Participating Organisations will inform the Service Provider of any such publicity, where known. Following the commencement of the Overarching Agreement, the Service Provider will be expected to promote the Services to other relevant public sector organisations and to successfully execute the transition and implementation of the Services for those that wish to join the Overarching Agreement.

2.1.16 The Service Provider will be required to work with the Participating Organisations to further develop the Services (See Paragraph 15 ‘Service Development’), on behalf of the Participating Organisations, details of which are set out in Paragraph 16 of this Specification.

## 2.2 Details of Service Options operated by Existing Participants

2.2.1 The Service Options required by all Existing Participants are described below. A table showing the Service Options operated by each Existing Participant is provided in Appendix 2 to this document will be noted that whilst New Participants are likely to require some or all of the Service Options listed below, New Participants may also require certain Additional Services. Such Additional Services will be capable of being answered using scripts and associated guidance to ensure that all related calls are handled competently and, in general, Call Handlers will not be required to have specialist skills related to the Services in question in order to handle the calls. Detailed requirements for each Participating Organisation will be specified in their respective Services Agreement.

2.2.2 The following table provides the name and a brief description of examples of the types of Service Options currently being operated for the Existing Participants. In relation to Service Options for which the description of the service provided varies between different Existing Participants, the various scenarios are briefly described.

| **SERVICE OPTION NAME** | **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE PROVIDED** |
| --- | --- |
| Abandoned car removal  | Reports of abandoned vehicles passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Anti-social behaviour | Either 1. Callers signposted to police 2. Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Building security/alarms | Reports of alarms/emergencies for council buildings passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| CCTV | Callers signposted to daytime service |
| Complaints (all Council services)  | Either 1. Complaints recorded & forwarded to daytime service or 2. Information given on how to complain |
| Dangerous structures | Reports of suspected emergency incidents passed on to On-call Duty Staff |
| Data Protection | Information only provided on Data Protection Act and request process |
| Environmental Health/Trading Standards | Either 1. Reports of incidents which - if meeting set criteria - are passed on to On-call Duty Staff or 2.Reports of non-emergency incidents passed to back office staff. 3. Callers signposted to other organisations |
| Freedom of Information | Information only provided on Freedom of Information Act and request process |
| General information about Borough services  | Information only provided (based on PO’s website information) |
| Graffiti removal | Reports of graffiti - capture address and whether offensive or not - passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Hall hire | Covers only ‘unable to gain access to hall a Caller has booked’. Reports passed to On-call Duty Staff. |
| Highways emergencies | Reports of highways incidents (often from emergency services) passed on to On-call Duty Staff. |
| Homeless families | Complex service – may involve referral from other agencies. Receive ‘do place’ or ‘do not place’ instruction, otherwise eligibility determined by set of questions. Data captured then either 1.Refer to On-call Duty Staff or 2. Where placement required then telephone hoteliers, telephone escalation, fax/email confirmation, data passed to back office. |
| Housing repairs & Estates Services  | Reports of housing repairs and estate cleaning/caretaking issues either passed to On-call Duty Staff (if meeting set criteria), or passed to daytime service. (Often involves complex rotas of On-call Duty Staff & contractors). |
| Lone Worker Support | See Paragraph 5.2.3.6 for description |
| Major emergencies | Reports of major emergency incidents passed on to On-call Duty Staff. Capturing updates on reported emergencies. Providing information - status update requests. Contact with On-call Duty Staff required throughout emergency. Option of a dedicated call handler to be provided for duration of emergency. |
| Media Enquires | Enquiries from media/press to be passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Members Enquiries | Members’ enquiries passed to On–call Duty Staff. |
| Noise patrol | Either 1.Reports of noise nuisance incidents to be passed on to On-call Duty Staff during limited operational hours or 2.Information only provided |
| Parks, cemeteries & open spaces | Reports of people locked in/out, parks not locked, event complaints, suspicious behaviour, passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Parking | Either 1. Callers signposted or 2. Reports of ‘locked in carpark’, other carpark incidents passed to On-call Duty Staff. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Play equipment | Reports of play equipment considered dangerous passed on to On-call Duty Staff. |
| Registrars Emergencies | Requests for Muslim/Jewish Funerals & Bedside (terminally ill) weddings & calls from police etc. passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Rubbish Collection & waste | Either 1. Collection information provided or 2. Reports of individual mass collections required, passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Social services emergencies | Reports of urgent Social Services issues passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Stray Dogs | Reports of all stray dogs/contained stray dogs passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Street Cleansing | Reports of dumping, flyposting & requests for street sweeping passed to On-call Duty Staff. |
| Street lighting | Reports of street lighting defects passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Suicide Calls | Either 1. Caller transferred to Samaritans or 2. Details passed to On-call Duty Staff |
| Terror Threats | Details passed to On-call Duty Staff. Contact with On-call Duty Staff required throughout any emergency. |
| Travellers | Details of traveller activity passed to either 1.Police & On-call Duty Staff or 2.Back office for next day investigation. |
| Trees | Reports of dangerous/damaged trees (& threats to trees) passed to On-call Duty Staff |

2.2.3 Participating Organisation may a request for other Service Options to be added during the period of the Overarching Agreement/Services Agreements as a result of PO statutory obligation changes and the Service Provider shall co-operate with any such requests and implement the changes within the reasonable time scales required by the PO.

2.2.4 Indicative information concerning current volumes and distribution of calls handled on behalf of the Current Participants is set out in Appendix 2 to this Specification and in the issued annual reports during dialogue

2.2.5.1 A daytime step in service which does not involve the receipt of cash

~~A 24/7 temporary emergency backup/overflow service for the Participating Organisation’s normal telephone based service handling incoming calls from the public, in the event of the Participating Organisation experiencing a major systems failure or evacuation or industrial action. This will be subject to individual agreement with the Participating Organisation concerned and documented in their Services Agreement. The process is likely to involve Call Handlers informing the Callers of the problem and in some cases, taking details to be passed to the Participating Organisation when service is restored. This is likely to be subject to an affordability threshold on the basis of FTE required for anticipated call volume and price per call. Only a basic service is required- signposting and the occasional call back for social services type calls. The affordability threshold will be agreed in dialogue and this element of the service will feature in a specified method statement which will be contractually binding.~~

2.2.5.2 (Market Research) An outbound call campaign specifically requested by a Participating Organisation as a separate initiative. This will typically be undertaken during the early evening and may be to provide or to obtain information pertinent to a section of a Participating Organisation’s population. The times, details and objectives of the campaign may vary significantly and will be subject to individual negotiations between the Participating Organisation and the Service Provider.

2.2.5.3 An inbound call campaign specifically requested by a Participating Organisation as a separate initiative. This will typically be undertaken to capture responses from a section of the population that had been targeted via an advertising campaign. The times, details and objectives of the campaign may vary significantly and will be subject to individual negotiations between the Participating Organisation and the Service Provider.

## 2.3 Variations to Service Options at the request of Participating Organisations

2.3.1 The Service Provider will operate the Change Control Procedures for ALL variations to Service Options required by Participating Organisations, except for updates to Regularly Variable Data (see below).

2.3.2 Each Participating Organisation has the right to add or delete Service Options and also to amend existing Service Options. The Service Provider will note that there may be additional resource implications for the set-up and training for Additional Services.

2.3.3 Updates to Regularly Variable Data (such as PO’s staff rotas, staff contact details, external contractor contact details, service contact details, escalation contact details etc.), do not count as Variations to Service Options and will be immediately actionable when requested by Participating Organisations via the secure web-based interface provided by the Service Provider for this purpose. The Change Control Procedure will not be used in respect of variations to Regularly Variable Data.

2.3.4 In the event that the Service Provider receives a request from a Participating Organisation for the implementation of a totally new Service Option, the new Service Option will be implemented within 6 weeks of receipt by the Service Provider of notification from the Participating Organisation, or over a longer period as agreed in writing by the Parties.

2.3.5 A Participating Organisation will provide the Service Provider with two (2) month’s written notice of the withdrawal of a Service Option. The Participating Organisation will not incur any additional charges, such as early termination charges, for any withdrawal of Service Options.

2

2.3.7 Major Variations and Minor Variations will be processed in accordance with the Change Control Procedure set out in the Services Agreement. The Service Provider’s costs for such Minor Variations are to be included within the standard monthly management price for each Participating Organisation.

2.3.8 . Where a Major Variation to a particular Service Option is required, such a variation will be Implemented within 1 months of the date of the written agreement of the cost of the Major Variation (or over a longer period where agreed in writing by the Parties.

## 3.0 Cyber Security

3.1 The supplier will use its best endeavours to protect the service from cyber attacks by third parties. This will include the prevention of penetration attacks, ransom attacks and data theft.

3.2 The supplier will achieve ISO/ IEC 27001 2022 standard within 6 months of commencing work on the OOH Call Handling contract.

3.3 The supplier will undertake a test of its cyber security every year, and involve the Lead Client Officer, Michelle Bernard during the test. In addition, the report of the test should be shared with the Lead Client Officer.

## 4.0 Recruitment, Retention, Training and Management of Staff

### 4.1 Recruitment and Retention

4.1.1 The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers possess the following minimum skill set:

1. Caller service skills
2. Telephone communication skills - active listening and questioning
3. Assertiveness skills
4. Keyboard skills
5. Ability to express themselves clearly, concisely and courteously, verbally and in writing, depending upon the communication channel employed.

The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers become skilled over time in the use of the scripts and procedures which apply to the Service Options for Participating Organisations.

4.1.2 The out of hours nature of the Service means that a higher proportion of calls than normal will be from Callers in situations of crisis or emergency. It is therefore essential that the Service Provider ensures that Call Handlers can deal calmly, sensitively and courteously with Callers who may be distressed or angry and whose expectations of the Service may be unrealistic. Some Participating Organisations require Call Handlers to deal with such call types as ‘Suicide Calls’ and ‘Terror Threats’. In these cases Call Handlers will not be required to provide a specialist response, only to take required details and pass these immediately to on-call specialists whose details are provided in the agreed procedures.

4.1.3 The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers are aware of the range of mental health and learning difficulties related communication behaviours and have the relevant skills to respond to these needs.

4.1.4 It is anticipated that most responses given by Call Handlers will be governed by standard scripts or guidelines. However, the Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers are encouraged to use scripts and guidelines as means to an end rather than an end in themselves. In crisis situations, for example, the thought processes of Callers may be less logical or structured than normal. A sensitive presentation and flexible use of scripts and guidelines is therefore essential for a service such as this. The Call Handler’s role will go beyond its functional title. Part of the Call Handler’s role is to be an active partner to the Caller, enabling them to make appropriate use of a Participating Organisation’s services.

4.1.5 In order to assist Call Handlers, each Participating Organisation will provide the Service Provider with:

1. A list of its official sub-areas, wards, locality and estate names, with commonly-used terms or abbreviated alternatives;
2. A means of validating whether or not a particular address falls within its boundaries;
3. Relevant details of neighbouring boroughs or organisations not party to the Overarching Agreement and key contact information for those Boroughs;
4. Names and contact details of other relevant public sector organisations and key service partners in its locality.

4.1.6 The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers must be sufficiently trained and have adequate understanding in the Data Protection Act 1998.

## 4.2 Management of Service Provider Staff

4.2.1 The Service Provider will ensure that a sufficient quota of management staff will be made available during all contract operating hours in order to:

1. undertake effective real time operational service management (including utilising facilities covered in 7.1.10)
2. carry out staff support and supervision in accordance with the relevant standards and guidelines as set out in this Specification and any other Good Industry Practice relevant to the Services;
3. implement call escalation processes where necessary (including for complaints arrangements as set out at 5.7)
4. operate agreed risk management arrangements as set out in Paragraph 8.

4.2.2 The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handler managers possess the relevant coaching, motivational and supervisory skills and the ability to identify and respond to individual and common learning needs.

4.2.3 Participating Organisations may require the Service Provider to carry out checks on the Staff they employ to deliver the Services. These may include the legal requirements for right to work, 2 years or more employment history with references, Disclosure Barring Service checks and document checks covering identity and employment information. In addition, individual Participating Organisations may undertake occasional sample spot checks by visiting the Service Provider's Premises and the Service Provider will at all times fully co-operate with the Participating Organisations and make relevant information available, in accordance with the terms of the Services Agreement.

## 4.3 Allocation of Staff

4.3.1 The volume and distribution of calls is likely to vary during the term of the Overarching Agreement and Services Agreements and between different Participating Organisations. Furthermore, there are likely to be periods during the operation of a multi-organisational out of hours service where fewer Participating Organisations are served due to the variations in hours and days of each Participating Organisation. Tenderers are required to submit proposals in their Method Statement 1- Management and Training of Call Handling Staff regarding staff allocation to the tasks set out in this Specification to the meet the demands of the Specification during periods of high and low call volumes. The total Staff resource across network in terms of calls per person must be adequate to achieve KPI standards.

4.3.2 The Service Provider must provide access to disaster recovery testing at no cost to the PO

4.3.3 Call centres must be within the UK

4.3.2 The Service Provider must maintain service standards in circumstances where there are unexpected peaks of incoming calls for Participating Organisations. These occur at points during the year, and examples of factors giving rise to such peaks include:

1. major emergencies
2. housing repairs in bad winter weather
3. noise services at summer weekends & bank holidays

 The Service Provider must prepare and have available and deploy sufficient processes, procedures and resources to manage the impact of any unexpected peaks in demand from either this contract or other contracts so that service standards do not degrade. The steps which the Service Provider must take in the event of such an unexpected peak of incoming calls are outlined in Paragraphs 8.9 to 8.11 (Risk Management).

4.3.3 Intentionally Blank

4.3.4 Details on call volumes, patterns and other such indicative information is provided in the Call Volume and Distribution Information (to assist Tenderers with their bid preparation. It will be noted, however, that such patterns may be disrupted from time to time by emergencies and planned events. In relation to planned events, the Participating Organisations will make every effort to provide the Service Provider with reasonable notice of any such events which are likely to have an impact on call volumes, so that the Service Provider may take steps to meet the extra demand without adversely affecting the performance of the Services in other areas.

## 4.4 Training and Development

1. The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers are adequately trained to enable them to deal appropriately with the calls received in line with the requirements of this Specification and the performance standards. The following aspects of training are particularly critical and the Service Provider shall ensure that training is provided in these aspects:
2. Initial Training for Call Handlers prior to Services commencement, and as New Participants join the Overarching Agreement;
3. ongoing training for existing Staff, for example in the event that new Service Options are implemented or existing Service Options are amended;
4. initial training for new Staff members, including those employees who have previously worked in other areas of the Service Provider's organisation and are newly allocated to deliver the Service.

## 4.5 Support and Supervision

4.5.1 The Service Provider shall follow Good Industry Practice in the management of Staff, for example, giving Staff sufficient time to complete after-call work, encouraging Staff to take time out after receiving a difficult call, providing Staff with the opportunity to complete a de-briefing with their line manager or other appropriate colleague as soon as possible after taking a difficult call.

## 5.0 Call Handling Services

### 5.1 What Callers will experience at the start of a call

5.1.1 At the start of a call, Callers will immediately hear a very short recorded greeting which will include the name of the Participating Organisation concerned and informs the Caller that calls may be recorded for the purposes of quality monitoring. This greeting must include the facility to add specially recorded information messages concerning specific incidents relating to individual Participating Organisations (see Paragraph 5.1.3 below). Callers will then be transferred to a Call Handler. Call Handlers will be provided with Question & Answer scripts to assist them to answer questions about the Services from Callers.

5.1.2 The use of Automated Attendant or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems is acceptable, for the receipt of calls from Callers in critical or emergency situations. Some organisations, however, may specifically prohibit the use of IVRs.

A Participating Organisation may require the Service Provider to implement an Automated Attendant or IVR facility to be used following the recorded greeting for the purposes of answering the initial call to enable the relevant Service Option to be identified, and the call routed accordingly. Where such a facility is requested by a Participating Organisation prior to the commencement of its Services Agreement as part of its Initial Services requirements, the cost will form part of the agreed Transition Price or Implementation Price (as appropriate) as set out in the Pricing Schedule. Throughout the period of a Services Agreement, there will be no charge for calls handled by way of Automated Attendant or IVR systems as set out in Paragraph 5.1.4 below. Where a Participating Organisation requires a new Automated Attendant or IVR facility after the commencement of its Services Agreement, the arrangements and prices for the Service Provider to implement this will be dealt with by use of the standard Change Control Procedure, with charges based on the standard rate for Additional Skilled Technical Support activity,as set out at in the additional sheet of the Bid Back Pricing Table

5.1.3 In the event of an incident that is likely to generate significant call volumes or a temporary period of disruption to the Services, the Participating Organisation may require the Service Provider to deploy/update a recorded information announcement, within 15 minutes of the request for deployment, to immediately follow the recorded greeting and provide appropriate information to Callers. This will be deployed at no additional charge to the Participating Organisation. The contents of the announcement will be agreed between the Participating Organisation and the Service Provider in accordance with the Escalation Procedure or the Escalation Procedure which forms part of the agreed process for the Service Option(s) affected. Participating Organisations may also require the Service Provider to provide Call Handlers with a short script to use in the event of any such incidents.

5.1.4 Where calls are handled solely by Automated Attendant or IVR systems, there will be no call charge to the Participating Organisations unless the call is subsequently transferred to, answered and dealt with by a Call Handler.

5.1.5 It is also likely that Participating Organisations will require the Service Provider to make use of automated self-service technology to handle calls using voice recognition and activation without Call Handler intervention, details of which are set out in Paragraph 15 (Service Development).

### 5.2 Answering Calls

5.2.1 The Services are central to the Participating Organisations meeting the urgent needs of diverse local urban communities. Individual calls are often very urgent and may relate to life threatening situations. The Services must be delivered in a manner that is responsive to the needs of these different communities, with empathy for their different cultures and their localities. It must respond to changing local conditions relating to such issues as weather, transport, local events etc. In many cases Call Handlers will need to deal with vulnerable Callers in circumstances where an accurate diagnosis of a stressed individual's problem and an emergency response are required. The Service Provider (and its Staff) must have appropriate systems in place and the relevant skills and knowledge to deal with such requirements.

5.2.2 The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers use their listening and questioning skills to identify the nature of the Caller’s needs and respond to each call in accordance with the agreed procedures and scripts set out in the Participating Organisation’s Service Documentation relating to the Service Option concerned (see Paragraph 5.3). It is vital that Call Handlers answer calls in a rigorous and skilful manner to ensure an accurate diagnosis of the requirements of the Caller and that they take the correct action. This accurate diagnosis is a critical requirement. The Call Handler will give the name of the Participating Organisation (unless given within the recorded greeting – see Paragraph 5.1.1) and their own first name to the Caller. At the conclusion of each call, the Call Handler will offer the Caller a unique reference number relating to the details of their call as recorded on the Call Management System.

5.2.3 There are several options for taking action on calls. These will vary depending on the Participating Organisation’s requirements for that Service Option and may be subject to change during the period of a Services Agreement. The Service Provider shall ensure that its Staff are sufficiently skilled to enable them to successfully complete all of the following tasks in accordance with the agreed protocols:

5.2.3.1 **Signpost:** For enquiries that fall outside of the scope of the Services, Callers will be advised of other relevant services and related telephone numbers and opening times for those services, including other public sector services. Participating Organisations will provide the Service Provider with relevant details to be used by Call Handlers in this instance.

5.2.3.2 **Transfer:** Calls may be transferred directly to the relevant duty team, or an agency with which the Participating Organisation has a transfer protocol in place (e.g. NHS Direct).

5.2.3.3 **Refer:** having answered a call in accordance with the agreed procedures and scripts, and accurately diagnosed the Caller's requirements, the Call Handler may be required to refer a Caller’s requirements via an outbound call or by sending an email, SMS text or pager message to an appropriate On-Call Duty Staff member, providing them with all relevant data. Referrals of this nature are likely to be required for a large number of calls, for example for social services emergencies, for which there is a requirement for an assessment which is outside the remit of the Call Handler. It is essential that Call Handlers refer such service requests in a timely manner within time limits set in the Services Agreement with each Participating Organisation.

5.2.3.4 **Resolve**: It is anticipated that certain out-of-hours enquiries/queries can be fully resolved by the Call Handler providing information to the Caller. Individual Participating Organisations will provide the Service Provider with details of their requirements to enable the Service Provider to develop suitable scripts and guidance to assist the Call Handler to answer such calls.

5.2.3.5 **Out of Scope Calls:** It is anticipated that certain enquiries will fall outside the scope of the Service, whilst relating to the overall services of the Participating Organisation; in this event, the Call Handler will explain this to the Caller and either (i) inform the Caller that their details have been forwarded to the appropriate daytime service or (ii) advise the Caller to call the Participating Organisation again during normal opening hours. The appropriate response to Out of Scope calls will be agreed between the Service Provider and each Participating Organisation and will be included within the Participating Organisation’s Specification. See “Out of Scope Calls” at Paragraph 11.7.3 (f) of this Specification regarding reporting requirements for such calls.

5.2.3.6 **Lone Worker Support:** The aim of this task is to help ensure the safety of Participating Organisations’ staff whose jobs involve site visits during Out of Hours periods. In such cases, the Caller will be an On-Call Duty Staff member, not a member of the public. The staff member will call the Service Provider at the point that they are about to go on site/enter premises in response to a service request and this will be logged on the Call Management System. In the event that the Service Provider does not receive a call from the same member of staff confirming that they have left the site within a pre-agreed timeframe, an automatic alert will be triggered on the Service Providers’ system. The alert will trigger the operation of urgent escalation procedures involving the management of the On-Call Duty Staff member. Where this Lone Worker Support service is required, the precise nature of the arrangements for each Participating Organisation and staff group will be defined in the operational procedures agreed between the Service Provider and the Participating Organisation and set out in the Specification/Service Documentation.

5.2.4 The tasks set out in 5.2.3.1 to 5.2.3.3 above are centred upon a ‘push’ mechanism, by which On-call Duty Staff are directly alerted to individual referrals and enquiries by the Service Provider. However, the Service Provider’s Call Management System will also accommodate ‘pull’ mechanisms for On-Call Duty Staff to receive details of individual referrals and enquiries, where these are required. An example of such a ‘pull’ arrangement is one in which the Participating Organisation’s own system is updated via a feed from the Service Provider’s Call Management System, and On-call Duty Staff review this regularly for new items.

5.2.5 Where SMS text messages are sent to an On-Call Duty Officer in the course of a referral process, given the constraints on message size, priority will be given to the following data in any message:

1. name of contact
2. address
3. contact telephone number
4. brief details of service request
5. reference number.

5.2.6 It is possible that for some call types, certain Participating Organisations may require the Service Provider to send a short confirmatory or follow up SMS text message to the Caller confirming what the Caller can expect to happen in response to their call. The contents of any such message will be defined in the agreed Participating Organisation’s Specification/Service Documentation for the particular call type.

5.2.7 When handling some call types, Call Handlers will be expected to check whether any calls have been received previously in relation to the same issue, to avoid duplication of call referrals to On-call Duty Staff and to update existing information on the status of an issue where further details are provided by the Caller. In order to facilitate these actions, the Call Management System will have the capacity to conduct a systematic and rapid search of call records by relevant fields (see Paragraph 7.4.2 below).

5.2.8 The normal arrangements operated by the Service Provider for handling calls must not involve either putting Callers ‘on hold’ or transferring Callers from one member of Staff to another. These actions are only to be used in exceptional circumstances, such as where the Caller asks to speak to a senior member of staff to make a complaint.

**5.3** **Guidance on the use of Scripts**:

5.3.1 The way in which Call Handlers deal with calls for each required Service Option will be governed by scripts, processes and procedures developed by the Service Provider. The scripts, processes and procedures will be made available to all Call Handlers via the Call Management System, as they handle calls. The Service Provider will be required to develop accurate scripts, processes and procedures for each New Participant, new Service Options for Participating Organisations and Variations to existing Service Options for Participating Organisations. The Service Provider will develop these based on detailed information provided by the Participating Organisation concerned and will work with Participating Organisation’s staff to carry out comprehensive User Acceptance Testing for all such scripts, processes and procedures developed. Any such newly developed scripts, processes and procedures will not be made operational until they are formally signed off by the Participating Organisation concerned.

5.3.2 Scripts, processes and procedures will, in most cases, include Escalation Procedures to be followed by the Service Provider in the event that a required referral to On-call Duty Staff cannot be made, or in other defined circumstances.

5.3.3 The Call Management System will be sufficiently flexible so that only essential data is obtained and action can still be taken to help a Caller if they do not have answers to every pre-qualifying question.

5.3.4 The Service Provider will advise Participating Organisations and New Participants of the scripts it has already developed for other organisations for new Service Options that they require, so that they can consider whether or not to use these as the basis for their scripts for these Service Options.

###

### **5.4** **Links with Participating Organisations’ Daytime Call Handling Services**

5.4.1 The Service Provider will ensure that Staff are in attendance before and after the agreed Services operating period for each Participating Organisation, to facilitate a seamless handover with their Participating Organisation counterparts on emerging issues and other related matters. Prior to the commencement of each Services Agreement, the Service Provider will agree the necessary handover procedures with the Participating Organisation.

5.4.2 It is anticipated that there will be differing daily Services commencement and completion times for the various Service Options within a single Participating Organisation’s overall Service requirements as set out in the Participating Organisation’s Specification. The Service Provider will need to accommodate these requirements within its operations and handover arrangements.

5.4.3 It is anticipated that for certain Service Options, the nature of the Services provided will change in the normal course of daily operations (for example the Caller may need to be informed that there is no emergency noise complaint service after 3 a.m.). Call Handlers will manage these minor changes using the relevant scripts, guidance notes and handover procedures.

5.4.4 The Participating Organisation will agree the relevant procedures with the Service Provider for signposting or referring enquiries that arrive during the hours the Services is provided but which are outside the scope of the Services.

### **5.5** **Callers who are unable to use English**

 A number of the Existing Participants require the Service Provider to provide access to facilities to assist Callers who are unable to use English. Service Providers must be prepared to enter into partnerships, where necessary, with relevant capable suppliers of translation and interpreting services that they can use to deliver this service on behalf of Participating Organisations that require it.

### 5.6 Callers with Communication Difficulties

The Service Provider shall ensure that Call Handlers are aware of the Typetalk Relay Service and its operation, as Callers with hearing impairments may utilise Typetalk to access the Service.

### 5.7 Complaints and other Feedback from Callers

5.7.1 Any expression of dissatisfaction from a Caller with the Services regarding availability, performance, delivery or entitlement to a Participating Organisation’s service, must be taken seriously, acknowledged sensitively and handled as a complaint. Full details of all complaints, compliments and any feedback must be documented and categorised by the Service Provider and all complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Procedure detailed below. The relevant Participating Organisation will be informed promptly within the required timescales (as agreed between the Participating Organisation and the Service Provider) of any complaint for the purposes of escalation and resolution in accordance with Paragraph 5.7.5 below. The obligation to investigate complaints by the Service Provider will relate to the service only.

5.7.2 The Participating Organisation will operate procedures that allow the Service Provider to be informed promptly of any complaint about the Services as received by the Participating Organisation itself.

5.7.3 Wherever possible, initial verbal complaints will be resolved by the Call Handler or their supervisor. The Service Provider must ensure that such calls are passed to a supervisor whenever this is requested by the Caller. Where this is not possible, the Caller must be called back by a suitable member of Staff within 60 minutes.

5.7.4 If this does not resolve the complaint, full details of the complaint must be passed to the appropriate Participating Organisation staff under the agreed Escalation Procedures in the Participating Organisation’s Service Documentation, in accordance with 5.7.5 below. The Call Handler will explain the procedure to the Caller so that the Caller knows what to expect as a follow-up to their complaint, by when and from whom. The Participating Organisation will provide any relevant information that will assist the Service Provider’s Staff to answer questions about the procedure, including timescales for resolution.

5.7.5 At the point that any complaint is received by the Service Provider or its Staff, the Service Provider will send an immediate notification or acknowledgement to the relevant Participating Organisation. The complaint will be promptly logged by the Service Provider via an online system, setting out full details of the complaint for scrutiny by the Participating Organisation in real time. The Service Provider will fully investigate the complaint and provide a written report to the Participating Organisation within five (5) Working Days of receipt of the complaint, together with audio recordings of relevant calls if this is requested. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Service Provider will log the target date for the provision of the report on the online system. Full details of any action taken by the Service Provider to achieve resolution of the specific complaint will also be recorded on the system. All such information will be readily available to Participating Organisation’ Supervising Officer in real time. The Service Provider will issue an e-mail alert to the Participating Organisation’s Supervising Officer at the point of complaint resolution. The Participating Organisation itself will draft and send complaints response letters to complainants, using the relevant information provided by the Service Provider.

5.7.6 In certain cases, complaints require extremely urgent investigation and resolution. In these cases, when notified of the urgency by the Participating Organisation, the Service Provider will investigate, resolve and provide a report together with audio recordings of relevant calls, within one (1) Working Day.

5.7.7 It is also possible that complaints about the handling of individual calls may be made by back office staff of the Participating Organisation concerned. The Service Provider will deal with these complaints in the same manner as complaints received from members of the public, as outlined above.

5.7.8 Participating Organisations may also require the facility for their authorised staff to log securely and remotely into the Service Provider's Call Management System and access call records in order to investigate individual complaints. The Service Provider will ensure that Participating Organisations and their authorised officers are given sufficient access to the Service Provider’s Call Management System throughout the Term of the Services Agreement.

5.7.9 It is equally important that suggestions or compliments about Participating Organisation services that arrive during the out-of-hours period are acknowledged, documented and promptly sent to the Participating Organisation’s Supervising Officer. Any suggestions or compliments about the Services that arrive in the Participating Organisation’s normal operating hours will be copied to the Service Provider.

### 5.8 Major Emergencies

5.8.1 Service Providers must assist the PO in dealing with major emergencies for no additional cost. The Service performed by the Service Provider in relation to ‘major emergencies’ is a particularly critical from the point of view of public safety and will be central to each Participating Organisation’s statutory emergency plan. The Service Provider’s performance in this regard is of vital importance and each Participating Organisation is likely to agree specific procedures (over and above the standard procedures as contained within the Overarching Agreement and the Service Provider’s Business Continuity Plan-which will form part of the contractually-binding Method Statement 8) with the Service Provider. Key aspects of the requirements are likely to include:

1. The receipt of initial reports of an emergency situation from the public or other public services and to ensure that the correct actions are immediately taken.
2. To ensure the rapid availability of sufficient Call Handling Staff to deal with a sudden significant increase in the number of vitally important calls regarding an emergency.
3. Provide accurate information or advice to members of the public who call the Participating Organisation
4. Respond flexibly and accurately to the instructions of the Participating Organisation’s designated emergency planning officers.

**5.9** **24/7 Operations - Emergency Overload or Loss of Capacity**

5.9.1 The supplier will provide a 24/7 temporary emergency backup/overflow service for a Participating Organisations normal telephone based service handling of incoming calls from the public. This may be required by a Participating Organisation in the event of an internal system failure or a major increase in calls due to local, regional, or national emergencies or industrial action.

5.9.2 It is not expected that the Service Provider will be required to carry out all the activities of Participating Organisation staff during these periods; it is expected that the Service Provider’s Staff will simply take calls and pass them on to the Participating Organisat**i**on using whatever emergency facilities have been made available to them, or via normal communication channels when these have been resumed.

### 5.10 Other Ad Hoc Call Handling Requirements

5.10.1 It is possible that Participating Organisations may require the Service Provider to provide ad hoc call handling requirements which are neither covered by the specific service requirements as set out in this Specification nor contained within the listed items in the Pricing Schedule. An example of such requirements is where a Participating Organisation has advertised and set up a dedicated telephone number to take calls relating to a particular incident or issue. In these circumstances the Service Provider will arrange for Call Handling Staff to be available to take calls and this will be charged at an hourly price per Call Handler provided**,** as set out in the Bid Back Financial Appendix. Normal prices for each call handled will apply in addition to this hourly price.

6.0 Performance Standards-

6.1 The Service Provider will provide the Services in accordance with several different standards of performance including the Team Leader Direct Access Call, Gold Standard’ and the ‘Silver Standard’. Different prices will be applied to calls handled according to which of the two standards is purchased by a Participating Organisation. Participating Organisations will select which of the two standards to be applied to each Service Option. Participating Organisations will make an initial selection of the service standard to be operated for each Service Option at the point of Services Agreement commencement and will have the ability to change the standard applied to individual Service Options at any time during the term of the Services Agreement, giving one (2) months’ notice, without incurring any additional charges for such variation.

6.2 Performance standards per call type will be as per the table in the Overarching agreement

## 6.2 Performance Standards applying to the Gold Standard:

1. For all Service Options provided in accordance with the ‘Gold’ Standard, the service level minimum for each Participating Organisation will be to answer 80% of all calls received by the Call Management System within 20 seconds following the conclusion of the initial recorded greeting. This Standard will be achieved per Service Option for each Participating Organisation and not as an average.
2. For all Service Options provided in accordance with the Gold Standard, less than 5% of all calls received for each Participating Organisation on the Call Management System will have been logged as abandoned. This Standard will be achieved per Service Option for each Participating Organisation and not as an average.

6.3 **Performance Standards applying to the Silver Standard:**

1. For all Service Options being provided in accordance with the Silver Standard, the service level minimum for each Participating Organisation will be to answer 80% of all calls received on the Call Management System within 60 seconds, following the conclusion the initial recorded greeting. This Standard will be achieved per Service Option for each Participating Organisation and not as an average.
2. For all Service Options provided in accordance with the Silver Standard, less than 10% of all calls received for a Participating Organisation on the Call Management System will have been logged as abandoned. This Standard will be achieved per Service Option for each Participating Organisation and not as an average.

6.4 Performance Standards applying to Platinum, Gold, Silver & Bronze Standards: shall be

1. The maximum period of systems failure that prevents, hinders or impacts on the availability of a Participating Organisation’s Service Options to the public during the hours of the Service (for any reason) is 30 minutes.
2. Passing on a valid service request in a timely manner. Time limits to be set by each individual Participating Organisation and set out within their Service Documentation as appended to the Services Agreement. Where time limits have not been specified by Participating Organisations, the default period will be within 10 minutes of the conclusion of the call.
3. Accuracy of call diagnosis and action taken in line with agreed Participating Organisation procedures. This will be monitored by each Participating Organisation using sampling, based on data to be provided by the Service Provider (see Paragraph 11.2.4)
4. Accuracy and legibility of call details recorded and passed to Participating Organisations. This will be monitored by each Participating Organisation using sampling, based on data to be provided by the Service Provider (see Paragraph 11.2.4).
5. Full compliance with the Escalation Procedures, as agreed between the Participating Organisation and the Service Provider within the Services Agreement, in the event of a service problem. Full compliance is essential.
6. Performance criteria for monitoring the Caller experience (as set out in Paragraph 11.3) No more than 10% of respondents (for a Participating Organisation) will be assessed as being dissatisfied.
7. The timely and effective resolution of queries and complaints from the public and Participating Organisations themselves. Fully investigate and provide information, including audio call recordings, as requested within five (5) Working Days and within one (1) day when notified as “urgent” from [ ].
8. Timely production of performance reports. Data is to be provided within five (5) Working Days of the end of the each reporting period (within two (2) Working Days in the case of weekly reports).
9. Failure to meet an agreed deadline for a mutually signed off change request for a ‘Major Variation’.

## 7.0 ICT, Data Interchange and their Management

7.1Telephony

7.1.1 Each Participating Organisation will make arrangements for calls to its existing voice and textphone numbers to be diverted to (and back from) the Service Provider at the agreed times.

7.1.2 The Participating Organisations will divert their out of hours telephone calls to numbers provided by the Service Provider. It is essential that the Service Provider’s Call Management System is able to recognise which Participating Organisation is being called.

7.1.3 Different Participating Organisations operate different arrangements with regard to the telephone numbers they advertise to the public in order to contact services out of hours. Some advertise a single number for all their out of hours services. Others utilise different telephone numbers for different Service Options. Other Participating Organisations have a mixture of these two arrangements, with a combination of a number of different telephone numbers and an overall number. The Service Provider must be able to deal with these different scenarios and handle calls efficiently. Where a Participating Organisation uses a single telephone number for a particular Service Option, the Service Provider’s Call Management System must be able to automatically recognise the Service Option being requested. The Call Management System must automatically present the Call Handler with the correct script or guidance.

7.1.4 The Call Management System must have Automated Attendant/IVR systems capability to create menu options for Callers to use. In circumstances where a single telephone number is used to provide access to a number of Service Options, use of Automated Attendant/IVR may be requested by a Participating Organisation so that the Service Provider is able to identify different Service Options in order to handle calls as efficiently as possible. Requirements for other uses of Automated Attendant/IVR are set out in Paragraphs 5.1.2 to 5.1.4.

7.1.5 Certain Participating Organisations may request that their calls are prioritised by particular Service Option/s. They may also require that, in periods of high call volumes, Callers to certain Service Options will be given priority over others.

7.1.6 The exact requirements of each Participating Organisation will be set out in their individual Specifications and Service Documentation and agreed as part of their Transition or Service Implementation arrangements.

7.1.7 The Service Provider will configure their telephony thresholds and Call Management System so that a peak in demand for one Participating Organisation does not delay or prevent calls from getting through for other Participating Organisations. The Service Provider must ensure the availability of sufficient external telephony channel capacity to handle the maximum volume of concurrent incoming (and outbound) calls, including any peaks due to special circumstances, in order to ensure that service availability requirements are met or exceeded at all times. The Service Provider must monitor use of channel capacity using relevant information from its telephony provider. The Service Provider will also arrange for detailed telephony channel utilisation monitoring data provided by its own telephone service organisation to be made available to each Participating Organisation on a monthly basis (if required).

7.1.8 If outbound calls need to be made by the Service Provider in response to out-of-hours enquiries, the Call Management System will have the capacity to allocate such calls to the Participating Organisation concerned for accounting purposes.

7.1.9 The Service Provider’s Call Management System must be able to facilitate:

1. Three-way calling (for any interpreting facilities)
2. Call transfer to other services where appropriate
3. Computer telephony integration
4. Audio recording of all calls. The system must enable such individual audio recordings of calls to be accessed quickly and easily using searches on key fields and the facility for immediate play back. Call recordings must be tagged to individual customer records.
5. Call recordings must be retained for 6 months

7.1.10 The Service Provider is expected to use appropriate “Workforce Management” techniques as part of their Call Management System in order to monitor the pattern and volume of calls and to identify and respond to fluctuations in call demand in real time. These technology-based techniques facilitate the optimum use of available Call Handlers at any point in time, in response to variations in call volumes and in accordance with pre-specified requirements (which must reflect Participating Organisation priorities).

**7.2 Other Communication Channels**

The use by each Participating Organisation of the other communication channels referred to in Paragraph 2.1.14 will be agreed as part of Service Transition and Implementation and detailed in the Specification/Service Documentation.

**7.3** **Technology Capability**

The Service Provider will have sufficient ICT infrastructure and Staff with the necessary skills and sufficient time/ availability to be able to work with the individual Participating Organisation’s ICT staff to implement and operate the Services, during the term of the Overarching Agreement, and meet the specific requirements of each Participating Organisation and the requirements outlined in the (non-telephony) Systems Specification for Existing Participants and New Participants, which will be detailed during competitive dialogue.

7.4 Capturing Caller and Contact Data

7.4.1 The data captured about Callers and their calls must be that needed to handle those calls in line with the agreed scripts, procedures, processes and performance reporting requirements. The Service Provider together with each Participating Organisation will, in the Service Documentation, define fields for the data that must to be captured from Callers, including information relevant to specific Service Options.

7.4.2 In order to meet the requirements to check whether any calls have been received previously in relation to an issue (as detailed in Paragraph 5.2.7) the Service Provider’s Call Management System must be able to facilitate the rapid search by each Call Handler of the following fields:

1. name of caller
2. address of incident
3. Service Option type
4. time of call

This is to enable Staff to respond immediately when a Caller is following up an earlier call, to avoid duplication of call referrals to On-call Duty Staff and to update existing information on the status of an issue where further details are provided by the Caller.

7.4.3 Participating Organisations may also require the facility for their authorised staff and client officers to log securely and remotely into the Service Provider's Call Management System. This is for the purposes of running reports and accessing call records in order to investigate individual issues. The Service Provider will ensure that Participating Organisations and their authorised officers are given sufficient access to the Service Provider’s Call Management System throughout the Term of the Services Agreement.

### 7.5 Routing information regarding Calls to other Staff

Having answered calls in accordance with the agreed procedures and scripts, Call Handlers will frequently be required to refer a Caller’s requirements via an outbound call or by sending an email, SMS text or pager message to an appropriate On-Call Duty Staff member, providing them with all relevant data. In order to meet these requirements (detailed in Paragraph 5.2.3.3), the Call Management System must correctly and automatically identify the point of contact (On-call Duty Staff member) for each different Service Option (or for each subcategory within a particular Service Option). The specific points of contact may vary by, for instance, type of housing repair or location of social services caller. The Call Management System must correctly maintain up-to-date details of and provide full access to the rotas of the relevant On-Call Duty Staff in connection with this requirement. These rotas must be able to be updated by the Participating Organisation at any time, in real-time.

### 7.6 Electronic Messaging – Additional Requirements

In addition to notifying On-Call Duty Staff of the details of calls they are required to respond to, for some Service Options there is a requirement for the Service Provider to assist individual Participating Organisations to log certain service requests in their own local systems (for example, to ensure external contractors are invoiced correctly).

In these circumstances identified officers in each service need to receive an electronic message, setting out full details of the request, immediately upon a service request being received, or alternatively to immediately receive an electronic message alert so they can check the secure web based interface (see Paragraph 14), which the Service Provider has updated, and decide whether to transfer the details into a back office system. E-mail,SMS and pager messages and alerts may be required for this purpose.

### 7.7 Email Encryption

The Service Provider will have the capability to ensure that outbound emails are securely encrypted (where this is required by Participating Organisations) for some or all of a Participating Organisation’s Service Options, as well as the capacity to read all inbound encrypted messages issued by a Participating Organisation through compatible software. In addition, where this is required by Participating Organisations for some or all of their services, email communication must contain the necessary Information Protective Marking up to Impact Level 3 (Restricted) in accordance with the National Protective Marking Scheme. The purpose of this is ensure that p**ersonally identifiable data is protected with strong encryption and identity-based access control.**

### 7.8 Data Transfer

The Call Management System must be able to generate a **one-way** XML (Extensible Mark-up Language) feed including all the fields for each service request for each Service Option. It must also be able to generate such a feed in other interface file formats. The Service Provider must be able to encrypt such feeds and files if required. It will be the Service Provider’s responsibility (if required) to set up a secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) gateway, secure web services or similar for all the data to be transferred and select the fields requested by the Participating Organisation. Setting up any Interface between this feed and local Participating Organisation Caller Relationship Management (CRM) or other systems, will be a shared responsibility between the Service Provider and the Participating Organisation. The precise arrangements for this feed for each applicable service type and the frequency with which it is provided, will be agreed between the Service Provider and each relevant Participating Organisation.

### 7.9 System Integration

~~For some Participating Organisations, the Service Provider will be required to develop, implement and operate real time integration between its Call Management System and Participating Organisation’s CRM, middleware or back office systems, via a secure gateway, for the purposes of updating the records in this latter system and processing service requests. These arrangements are not currently operated for any Existing Participants and are most likely to be required in the future in relation to Daytime Services. The Service Provider shall lead on the development and implementation of any such real time integration, in liaison with Participating Organisation technology staff~~.

For some Participating Organisations, the Service Provider will be required to develop, implement and operate real time integration between the Call Management System and Participating Organisation’s CRM, middleware or back office systems, via a secure gateway, for the purposes of updating the records in this latter system and processing service requests where instructed to do so by a Purchasing Organisation. *These arrangements are not currently operated for any Existing Participants however maybe required in the future for some Participating Organisations or Services. Where the PO requires real time integration, the Service Provider shall lead on the development and implementation of any such real time integration, in liaison with Participating Organisation technology staff.*

Such work would be subject to the development of an agreed price between the Service Provider and the PO on the basis of the rates contained in the Additional IT support sheet of the Bid Back Financial Table

### 7.10 Web Services

The Service Provider's Call Management System must provide a secure web based interface that Participating Organisations can interrogate to retrieve call information or run reports regarding their operations, via Secure Socket Layer connection i.e. with an ‘https’ URL. Any such facilities operated by the Service Provider must utilise ‘2 factor authentication’ for nominated users. The facilities must allow access by staff from a particular Participating Organisation and any such access will be limited to that Participating Organisation’s data only. The system must have the capability to offer different levels of access to different staff. The Service Provider must operate the access control arrangements for all required staff from each Participating Organisation.

### 7.11 Use of Address Databases and Maps

Call Handers must validate the addresses of Callers and reported incidents, so that addresses are recorded in a precise and correct manner. The Service Provider must operate a database of current valid property addresses for each Participating Organisation to be used by Call Handlers, for this purpose. To keep these databases up-to-date, the Service Provider must update them on a regular basis, at a frequency required by each Participating Organisation. This may involve the Service Provider using or applying updated address files provided by the Participating Organisation itself. The precise format of these files will be agreed with each Participating Organisation. Property identifiers or Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRN's) must be included in all Service Request and incident related data passed by the Service Provider to Participating Organisation staff.

For some Participating Organisations, the data maintained will include property ownership information to be used by Service Provider staff, for instance, to establish if a repair order will be issued with respect to a particular property.

Call handlers must use commonly available Internet-based map facilities to establish the location of incidents, when this is required.

### 7.12 Intentionally Blank

## **7.13** Supporting Remote Access by Service Provider Staff to Participating Organisation Application Systems

Participating Organisations may require Call Handlers to access and update a Participating Organisation’s own back office systems with service request information. An example of this will be for Call Handlers to raise orders for housing repairs directly on that Participating Organisation's housing system. In such circumstances, the Service Provider will be required to make available and utilise facilities for direct remote access and update by their staff to such back office systems.

This is particularly likely in relation to the operation of Daytime Call Handling Services. In these circumstances, a secure link from the Service Provider's telecommunications facilities to the Participating Organisation’s own network may be required. The Service Provider will take the lead role in establishing this link , will liaise accordingly with Participating Organisation technology staff and must comply with the Government Connect Code of Connection (as adopted by the Participating Organisation for its own requirements).

### 7.14 Using Personal Data

7.14.1 The Service Provider will comply with its statutory and contractual obligations whether as Data Controller, Data Processor or otherwise in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations as enacted into UK statute. Chuhr to provide suitable drafting.

7.14.2 It will be noted that Participating Organisations may require that a data processor agreement is entered into between a Participating Organisation and the Service Provider and the Service Provider will co-operate with this requirement throughout the Term of the Services Agreement.

7.14.3 The Service Provider will hold the minimum amount of personal data necessary to provide the Services and, wherever possible, such data will reside on the Participating Organisation’s system.

7.14.4 The Service Provider’s staff and any visitors to the Service Provider’s Out of Hours Services contact handling area must sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure that personal data is not discussed/disclosed outside the Service Provider’s Team supporting Services delivery and is used only for the purposes of the Overarching Agreement/Services Agreement and, where necessary, for use by an independent agency for Caller satisfaction research.

7.14.5 Where personal Caller and contact data is held by the Service Provider, this data will at all times remain the property of the Participating Organisation and will be held in a form which can readily be exported to that Organisation. Arrangements for export of such data will be agreed with individual Participating Organisations. The secure export and deletion of such data (including audio recordings of calls) at agreed intervals and at the end of the lifetime of the Overarching Agreement/Services Agreement is set out in Clauses 24 and 25 of the Services Agreement.

7.14.6 The Service Provider must operate and monitor an agreed policy for the operation of portable data storage devices with its PCs and networks. Files on such devices and network traffic that may travel on public network infrastructure, must be suitably encrypted.

7.14.7 The Service Provider will also keep, maintain and provide access to all individual call handling information records and audio recordings in line with individual Participating Organisation retention policies and requirements, as and when required by an individual Participating Organisation. The Service Provider must have the capacity to operate different retention policies for all data relating to different Participating Organisations, and for different Service Options within the overall operation for a single Participating Organisation. Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) standards must be the minimum operated.

### 7.15 Data Risk Management

All potential risks to data held by the Service Provider are to be managed against the ISO 27001 standard, and the on-going risk analysis process must include the identification of the information assets at risk, the potential threats or threat sources, the potential vulnerabilities and the potential consequences (impacts) and the controls and mitigation action required. Once a risk management process has been established, regular reviews must be undertaken at least once every twelve (12) months and the results reported at Joint Contract Review Meetings. The storage of information assets will be subject to audit by a suitably qualified body independent of the Service Provider, if requested by individual Participating Organisations, at the expense of the Participating Organisations concerned.

## 8.0 Risk Management

8.1 The maximum permissible period of any Participating Organisation Service Option being unavailable in the event of a system failure or premises incident is detailed in the Performance Standards at Paragraph 6 of this document and further defined within the Service Documentation of each Participating Organisation. Service Providers must operate adequate business continuity measures and activation arrangements for them to meet this requirement, including in the following situations:

1. failure of internal telephony;
2. failure of external telephony connectivity;
3. failure of broadband/Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) or other connectivity;
4. failure of internal PCs, workstations or network;
5. site power failure;
6. site incident leading to evacuation for longer than five (5) minutes;
7. shortage of Call Handlers whilst call traffic is close to the projected volumes;
8. shortage of Call Handlers because call traffic far exceeds projected volumes;
9. peak in demand from a particular Participating Organisation or from another account which affects staffing capacity for the Participating Organisations overall.

Any of the above events will automatically trigger use of the agreed Escalation Procedure (See Paragraph 8.9).

8.2 The Service Provider will have appropriate back-up equipment, technical infrastructure, premises and staff to guarantee full Services continuity. Service Providers will need to provide sufficient evidence of 24-hour ICT support arrangements and the required size, skill set and speed of response of the related support team. This will include the immediate on-call availability throughout all periods of Services operation, of fully skilled experienced and qualified Staff covering all aspects of the technical operations in use, including, but not limited to:

1. the Call Management System
2. telephony and data, local and wide area networking
3. all the Service Provider’s systems including Automated Call Distribution(ACD) system, e-mail, auto attendant/IVR, self-service facilities
4. linkages & interfaces to all Participating Organisation systems accessed
5. all hardware (IT and telecommunications) and its related operating systems.

8.3 The Service Provider must have a Business Continuity Plan) that meets good practice guidelines in order to effectively protect the Participating Organisations from the consequences of a business interruption or a series of interruptions that will integrate with the Participating Organisations’ own business continuity arrangements. The Business Continuity Plan will include plans for restoring and maintaining the delivery of the Services and for maintaining communication with the Participating Organisation.

8.4 The Business Continuity Plan will be tailored to the particular requirements of the Services and will be available and kept up-to-date at all times. The Business Continuity Plan will be reviewed and (where necessary) revised as part of the Transition Procedures and any revised Business Continuity Plan will be made available to Existing Participants within six (6) weeks of the Initial Services Commencement Date. Thereafter, the Business Continuity Plan will be updated periodically in accordance with the terms of the Services Agreement and the most up-to-date version will be made available to representatives of all Participating Organisations at any time during the Term. The Business Continuity Plan must include contingencies for each of the scenarios detailed in Paragraph 8.1 and, in addition, must include contingencies for both of the following:

1. a short-term incident where disruption lasts from a few minutes to one (1) day
2. a longer term disruption affecting the use of critical facilities for a period of greater than one (1) day

8.5 The Service Provider will test its Business Continuity Plan and systems no later than three (3) months after the commencement of the Overarching Agreement and thereafter at least every 6 months, in accordance with Clause 49 of the Services Agreement. A joint representative of the Participating Organisations will be invited to attend all such tests (with travel costs met by the Service Provider) and will review the outcome of the tests and associated documentation with the Service Provider.

8.6 Such testing must include:

1. Rapidly transferring call handling to alternative live facilities
2. Setting up a replacement centre to cover short-term disruption to critical services
3. Handling dummy calls for all Participating Organisations.

Full test results must be provided to the Supervising Officer of each Participating Organisation within one (1) week of the test. The Service Provider must also provide details of any on-going testing to ensure that its capacity to cover longer term disruption to critical facilities is successfully tested and is confirmed to be at all times fully operational.

8.7 The Participating Organisations reserve the right to audit the Service Provider’s Business Continuity Plan and associated arrangements, but may accept audits carried out by a UKAS accredited auditor, provided the scope of the audit covers the Services delivered by the Services Agreements.

8.8 The Service Provider will promptly as directed by the Participating Organisations (and in any case within three (3) months) implement any actions or remedial measures which the Service Provider or the Participating Organisations consider to be necessary as a result of audits, tests or exercises, business interruptions, emerging risks, a change to the services covered by this contract or any underlying business processes.

8.9 The Participating Organisation and Service Provider will agree an escalation procedure whereby appropriate and sufficient Participating Organisation and Service Provider staff are available and notified at all times of the day and night in the event of a critical incident that may affect:

1. the Service Provider’s ability to deliver the Services;
2. call volumes to the Participating Organisation’s service;
3. any Participating Organisation system or communications facility on which the Service Provider depends to deliver the Services.

8.10 Any such incidents are to be reported immediately by the Service Provider to the nominated Participating Organisation staff in line with the agreed Business Continuity Plan and contact list, as set out in the Service Documentation. In the event of any such critical incident, the Service Provider will provide regular status update reports to the Participating Organisations affected until the issue has been successfully resolved.

8.11 The Service Provider must operate the Services to the required standards throughout the term of the Overarching Agreement and Services Agreements. Any unexpected or known peak in demand for a particular Participating Organisation or on another account, or a permanent loss of or increase in other business, must not adversely affect its technical and human capacity to achieve these standards. Where a Participating Organisation experiences a high call volume due to exceptional circumstances, the Service Provider shall respond by providing additional Call Handlers and technical capacity as required.

8.13 The call volumes of individual Participating Organisations may be very low at certain times, particularly in the early hours of the morning. As a result of this, the Service Provider’s Call Handling Staff may not be able to readily identify a situation where there has been a failure in the systems that connect Callers to a particular service via the Call Management System. Such failures can potentially occur with either the Participating Organisation’s or the Service Provider’s communications systems and facilities. To reduce the risk of such unidentified failures, the Service Provider will operate an automated system to trigger test calls every half hour in any instance where the call demand per hour from individual publicly advertised telephone numbers drops below a particular threshold (thresholds to be agreed with each Participating Organisation). In addition, an initial daily test call will be made by the Service Provider for all such publicly advertised telephone numbers, immediately following each regular transfer of the Call Handling Service from each Participating Organisation to the Service Provider. In the event that a failure is identified, the relevant Escalation Procedure will be triggered.

8.14 The Service Provider will implement and operate systems and procedures to ensure that emails and SMS messages sent to the On-Call Duty Staff of a Participating Organisation, are successfully despatched and received.

8.15 Participating Organisations will seek to resolve as soon as is reasonably possible any problems with their own telecommunications or IT facilities which impact on the delivery of the Service.

8.16 The Service Provider will have in place and operate a specific procedure (that must be agreed with the Participating Organisation) in advance of the commencement of the Services, to immediately notify the relevant Participating Organisation of any information security incidents that may impact on the processing of personal data.

8.17 In emergency circumstances where the daytime call handling service of a PO may have failed, the Service Provider will be required to use its reasonable endeavours to assist the PO to handle daytime calls through the use of human and physical assets deployed on this contract. In these circumstances the PO in question will use the costs tendered for “daytime step in services” on the dedicated sheet within the Bid Back Financial Table. The Service Provider will have tendered a cost per agent, a cost per inbound call and a cost per outbound call. In these circumstances the Service Provider would be working with a simple script from the PO in question. When the Service Provider is instructed to provide step in daytime services they will be issued with a list of mobile telephone numbers to which requirements defined as urgent at the time of instruction may be referred. For certain types of calls affected by the daytime step in the Service Provider will be expected to set up an IVR response. The Service Provider must implement the daytime step in cover within [30 minutes]. This emergency cover would not last longer than 3 working days and would be for a minimum of [0.5] working day (in order to allow the Service Provider to recover its reasonable costs). As an emergency measure this cover will be unlikely to cover the accepting of payments on behalf of the PO.

9. Transition

9.1 The Transition Process

9.1.1 The Service Provider will carry out the Transition of each Existing Participant’s services in accordance with the requirements of the Transition Procedures set out in Section XI and the terms of the Transition Agreement. Each Existing Participant will pay to the Service Provider the appropriate Transition Price for this transitional work, as set out in the Bid Back Financial Appendix.

9.1.2 Tenderers must provide a credible Transition Plan (in Method Statement 7- Mobilisation including a detailed project plan) for the successful transition of the current services and operations of the Existing Participants from the Current Provider within agreed timescales and the Service Provider is required to provide full details of the methodology and resources to be utilised as part of the Transition. The Transition Plan must cover the full range of transition activities for each of the Existing Participants and each Service Option delivered, as well as any IT, telecommunications and systems arrangements that they require. It will also include all the activities required to set up and operate the Service Provider’s call handling arrangements as set out in this Specification.

## 10. Implementation of the Service for New Participants

10.1 New Participants may enter into a Services Agreement to purchase the Services at any time during the period of the Overarching Agreement, subject to the restrictions that no New Participants will be allowed implement the Services during the first six (6) months following the Initial Services Commencement Date or up to twelve (12) months prior to the expiry of the Overarching Agreement. Where a New Participant is interested in entering into a Services Agreement for the provision of the Services, the procedures in Section IV – Services Agreement Procedures will apply

**Where New Participants seek to enter into a Services Agreement, TUPE may apply in respect of their existing call handling staff.**

11. Reporting and Monitoring

11.1 The Services will be monitored using a range of quantitative and qualitative measures.

**11.2** Call Handler Competence

11.2.1 The Service Provider will assess the competency of each Call Handler by reviewing their performance in detail on a randomly selected sample of at least ten (10) recorded calls per month per Call Handler across all Participating Organisations. For new members of Staff (including any temporary staff) this will include at least twenty-five (25) calls within the first month of their employment in the provision of the Services. The criteria for assessment will include:

1. Timely answering of all calls
2. Appropriate greeting
3. Level of courtesy
4. Speed and tone of voice
5. Use of appropriate terminology
6. Use of listening and questioning skills to collect and verify information
7. Accuracy of diagnosis of the requirements of the Caller and that the correct action is taken
8. Accuracy and legibility of call details recorded
9. Appropriate use of scripts
10. Appropriate responses
11. Appropriate application of guidelines
12. Summary of actions at end of call
13. Sign off
14. Competence in using information resources
15. Accuracy and completeness of after-call work (using computer records).

11.2.2 The Service Provider will assess the performance of Staff in sending and receiving emails and the use of other channels against the above criteria where relevant, plus adherence to agreed salutation, sign-off, signature and other relevant conventions.

11.2.3 The results of this monthly assessment will be shared with the Participating Organisations.

11.2.4 The Service Provider will deliver to the Participating Organisations upon request a random or specified selection of audio call recordings covering a defined period for performance monitoring purposes. On average this will be no greater than twenty (20) audio recordings per month per Participating Organisation. This may be a regular monthly requirement or in response to ad hoc requests. The records must be made available within three (3) working days of the request, or at the end of a monthly period, as required. In the event of a complaint requiring urgent resolution (see Paragraph 5.7.6), when notified, the Service Provider will provide the Participating Organisation with a copy of the audio call recording within one (1) working day of the request. The Service Provider will also provide their quality scoring of these calls.

### 11.3 Caller Experience of the Service

11.3.1 Participating Organisations are likely to wish to undertake follow-up research with Callers, at a frequency and scale determined by the Participating Organisation, using the information provided by the Service Provider in regard to Callers to the Services and the handling of those calls, which the Service Provider will provide in accordance with this Specification and Clause 51 of the Services Agreement.

11.3.2 To undertake a Caller satisfaction survey, the Participating Organisation may contact, on a statistically valid sample basis, a number of Callers to each of the Participating Organisation’s Services. These Callers will be selected to reflect the overall profile of users of the Service and of each separate Service Option.

11.3.3 Such Callers will be contacted by the Participating Organisation (or an independent agency) and asked questions about their overall experience of using the Participating Organisation’s Out of Hours Service. This includes (but is not restricted to) their perception of:

1. how easy it was to get through;
2. how courteous the Call Handler was;
3. the extent to which the Call Handler listened carefully to the Caller;
4. how clearly the Call Handler explained what action will be taken and outlined any differences between what action could be taken outside normal hours and within normal hours, and, where appropriate, when the Caller could expect a subsequent call from the Participating Organisation;
5. for those Callers who were signposted, how much relevant information the Call Handler gave about the agency concerned.

11.3.4 Participating Organisations may require the Service Provider to employ a suitably qualified external organisation to undertake an independent Caller satisfaction survey of the callers for a Participating Organisation, using a random sample of Callers, in accordance with the procedures set out in this Paragraph 11 and Clause 51 of the Services Agreement.

11.3.5 Any such survey will be carried out in such a way to ensure that responses relate to the Callers use of the Service (as delivered by the Service Provider) as opposed to any other services provided by the Participating Organisation, such as the On-call Duty Staff response to the particular requirements of the Caller.

**11.4 Mystery Shopping**

11.4.1 Participating Organisations may also use mystery shoppers where appropriate to confirm that the Service provides a specific response to a particular situation.

**11.5 Daily Performance Reporting**

11.5.1 Daily performance reports provided by SMS or email

On a daily basis, no later than 10 a.m. the following morning (or Monday for the weekend just gone), the Service Provider will send each Participating Organisation a short summary of the previous days total performance by SMS text or e-mail. These details will include the total calls received and answered under each of the Gold and Silver Standards as appropriate and the percentages that were answered within the minimum Performance Standards (whether Gold or Silver as appropriate) and the total number of calls received and answered.

**11.6 Weekly Performance Reporting**

 The Service Provider will compile and submit to each Participating Organisation weekly reports which will contain the following data for each Service Option and/or each access number:

11.6.1 Number of calls attempted (by hour, for each day and with total for week). This data must relate to calls detected by the Service Provider’s telephone network rather than by the Service Provider’s ACD facilities;

11.6.2 Number and percentage of answered calls relative to total call attempts (by hour, for each day and total for week);

11.6.3 The relevant service standard being operated (i.e. Gold or Silver etc.);

11.6.4 Of all attempted calls, the numbers and percentage of calls (by hour, for each day, and overall for the week) which were:

a) abandoned overall

b) answered and abandoned within 20 seconds

c) answered and abandoned within 60 seconds

d) answered and abandoned within 20 to 60 seconds

e) answered and abandoned above 60 seconds;

11.6.5 Numbers of outbound calls made to pass details of the services requested to On-Call Duty Staff (by hour, for each day & total for the week), with the same information for e-mails, SMS texts & pager messages (where applicable).

**11.7 Monthly Performance Reporting**

 The Service Provider will compile and submit to each Participating Organisation monthly reports that will contain the following data:

11.7.1 Monthly totals and percentages for each of the specified weekly reports (above) for both each individual access number and each Service Option;

11.7.2 Overall totals of the numbers of calls handled under each of the Gold and Silver standards covering all Service Options;

11.7.3 The following data for each Service Option applicable to that Participating Organisation:

a) percentage of all attempted calls that were answered and abandoned (where the service required for an abandoned call can be established by the access number dialled or by agreed use of Automated Attendant/IVR);

b) average talk time;

c) average call handling time (includes talk time and after-call work time, including time for outbound calls);

d) number of minutes where the Service Option was not available due to system or other failure;

e) the number of individual calls made to On-Call Duty Staff together with their average call duration in minutes and seconds;

f) separate totals and percentages are also required for each of various specified categories of ‘out of scope’ call types. The Service Provider will obtain details of these call types by ensuring that Call Handlers record details of them as they arrive, using lists of categories of such ‘out of scope’ calls as provide by each Participating Organisation. This data is required to allow Participating Organisations to take any relevant action to minimise the volume of such calls;

g) for each Service Option and covering those calls where a service request was passed to an On-Call Duty Staff member or external contractor using phone, e-mail, SMS text or pager, information on the time taken to pass such service requests will be provided. This will include the total number of cases, the average time taken to pass on the request, the maximum time taken to pass on a request and a separate list of all cases where the time taken was above the maximum period allowed under the service standards for that Participating Organisation (as defined in Paragraph 6 of the Specification or as separately defined in the Service Documentation for the Participating Organisation). In the case of e-mails, SMS texts and pager contacts, the time reported will be the time from completion of the incoming call until successful dispatch of the e-mail or text;

h) separately, the Service Provider will provide an exception report setting out full details of each service request requiring dispatch of an e-mail where that dispatch has taken longer than the maximum period allowed under the service standards for that Participating Organisation, giving the reasons for the delay (e.g. error by Call Handler, technical problems with the operation of the provider's e-mail service, etc);

i) in addition, in the case of e-mails, and where service standards for that organisation require use of auto receipt facilities when sent to On-Call Duty Staff, the Service Provider will monitor responses and provide a summary and exception report;

11.7.4 List of each IT, application and telecommunication fault giving details of:

a) impact on normal operations

b) time taken to resolve

c) steps taken to resolve

d) each contact with Participating Organisation staff under escalation arrangements;

11.7.5 List of any period of the non-availability to the public of any Service Option during any period of scheduled access, giving full details of:

a) the cause of the incident

b) the total duration

c) steps taken to resolve

together with a rolling total of such incidents and total time lost for each Service Option over the last year;

11.7.6 Full details of the reasons why the Service Provider has failed to comply with agreed escalation procedures, in the event of any such incident.

11.7.7 A summary of internal Call Handler assessment results (as per ‘Call Handler Competence’ Paragraph 11.2 above).

11.7.8 A list of all Service complaints in any way dealt with by the Service Provider over the last period, providing:

a) a summary of the complaint

b) name and address of complainant

c) date received

d) date of acknowledgement

e) date of response

f) summary of outcome of investigation into complaint

d) whether or not the complaint was fully or partially justified;

~~11.7.9 The total number of Call Centre Staff (Full time equivalent) currently employed to deliver the Services (split between Daytime and Out of Hours Services) and the percentage turnover amongst these staff for the last twelve (12) month period (rolling figure);~~

11.7.9    The total number of Call Centre Staff (Full time equivalent) currently employed to deliver the Services and the percentage turnover of staff for  the last twelve (12) month period (rolling figure);

11.7.10 Full details of any period of non-availability of the Service Provider’s Key Personnel of designated calibre over the previous month, together with details of current status and measures taken;

11.7.11 A full report of any scheduled business continuity test, giving details of its completion and outcomes;

11.7.12 A full list of all change control requests received and/or being processed during the previous month, together with agreed target date, projected completion date and actual completion date for each.

11.7.13 The date of supply of that set of performance reports.

11.7.14 ~~The Service Provider will also send details of call volumes handled each month for each of the Participating Organisations under each of the Gold and Silver Standards to the Strategic Monitoring Manager, within one (1) week of the close of each month. This is for the purpose of monitoring the total volumes of calls being handled by the Service Provider under the Services Agreement. Data for volumes of daytime calls and daytime call handling minutes must also be provided.~~

11.7.14     The Service Provider will also send details of call volumes handled each month for each of the Participating Organisations under each of the Gold and Silver Standards to the Strategic Monitoring Manager, within one (1) week of the close of each month.  This is for the purpose of monitoring the total volumes of calls being handled by the Service Provider under the Services Agreement. Data for volumes, *where the voice recognition call agent has been implemented must also be provided.* Where the emergency daytime cover (8.17) has been implemented full details as above must be provided.

**11.8 Annual Performance Reporting**

11.8.1 An Annual Summary Report will be produced for each Participating Organisation including all of the weekly and monthly report data as set out in 11.6 and 11.7 above. The Annual Summary Report will be produced immediately after each anniversary of the Initial Services Commencement Date.

11.8.2 Each Participating Organisation will also receive an annual report summarising performance in each of these areas for the total of all Participating Organisations who are using the Overarching Agreement, in order to allow for comparison of performance with other Participating Organisations. It will also include a list of any staff who have previously been transferred under the TUPE Regulations from that Participating Organisation to the Service Provider and are employed in the delivery of the Service as at that time.

**11.9 General Performance Reporting Requirements**

11.9.1 The Service Provider will supply all such monitoring data to the Participating Organisation within **five (5) Working Days** of the last day of the reporting period. In the case of weekly reports, the Service Provider will supply the monitoring data to the Participating Organisation within **two (2) Working Days** of the last day of the reporting period (e.g. by the end of Tuesday following a normal Monday to Sunday week period).

11.9.2 Service Provider will have the flexibility to respond within one (1) Working Day, at no extra cost, to urgent ad-hoc requests from any Participating Organisation for simple aggregated data that may reasonably be required (e.g. for an update on call volumes by the Participating Organisation concerned). The Participating Organisation will also be given full access to all data captured on each and every call, where required. This will be provided by secure remote access to the Call Management System.

11.9.3 Participating Organisations are likely to wish to reconcile incoming Service Provider call volume, distribution and duration information with data from their own call logging systems. The Service Provider shall fully co-operate with this and help to rapidly resolve any discrepancies.

11.9.4 Financial and Metrical data (See also Paragraph 11.10 below) must to be submitted in ‘Excel’ format, although copies of the same data may be submitted in PDF format or made available on the Service Provider's web-based facility in a format that can be downloaded into ‘Excel’ .

**11.10 Financial Reporting**

11.10.1 Participating Organisations will be invoiced monthly for the Services provided in the previous month. Invoices are to be dispatched within two (2) weeks of the conclusion of the preceding month to which the invoice applies.

11.10.2 Each invoice will be accompanied by a full statement detailing each element of the charge. The details to be provided for each charge type include:

a) name of chargeable unit

b) unit price

c) volume this month (inbound and outbound, identified by service type)

d) total cost for this month

 Per call and per call minute charges will be detailed and will tally with the call volume totals on the monthly performance reports. A copy of each invoice issued to all Participating Organisations will be sent to the Strategic Monitoring Manager who will undertake the central contract management role on behalf of all Participating Organisations.

11.10.3 Each Participating Organisation will receive a full Annual Summary Statement of the charges levied by the Service Provider at the end of each annual period (as detailed in Paragraph 8 of the Pricing Schedule). The Statement is to be provided within one (1) month of the annual period end date.

### **11.11 Review Meetings**

11.11.1 A review meeting between the Service Provider and each Participating Organisation will be held at least quarterly and will cover as a minimum:

a) Action update from previous meetings;

b) Service Provider’s comments on reports they have submitted to the Participating Organisation;

c) Review of performance levels achieved;

d) Participating Organisation feedback;

e) Any other Service Provider feedback;

f) Briefing notes from the Participating Organisation on future issues likely to affect the Service;

g) Review of any Service complaints received and how they were dealt with;

h) Review of processes and procedures. A timetable must be agreed for periodic review of processes and procedures for each Service Option to ensure that such processes and procedures are reviewed at least once a year. Any process changes agreed at any time will be incorporated in an electronic process manual which must be accessible to all relevant Service Provider staff and available in real time. All Service Documentation must be updated accordingly;

i) Briefing notes from the Service Provider on future issues likely to affect the Participating Organisation (e.g. introduction of new technology that may benefit the Service);

j) Review of key themes emerging from call handling assessments

k) Review of Caller survey activity;

l) Review ICT interoperability (data flows, etc.).

11.11.2 The strategic objective of the review meeting will be to develop and continuously improve the Service provided.

11.11.3 An overall Joint Contract Review Meeting between the Participating Organisations’ Joint Management Board and the Service Provider’s Key Personnel (as defined in Section VIII of the Overarching Agreement) will be held at least quarterly and more frequently if required by either party.

## Performance Management

11.12 For every aspect of the Services the Service Provider shall generate a performance report, based on all KPIs (refer Appendix 1 of this Specification) and deliver this to the PO’s client officer at the Performance Review Meetings. The performance report will detail achievement against specified standards for each element of the Services. To support the PO client officers in their work in managing the Services Agreement the Service Provider will make available access to their database to allow the PO’s client officers to run performance reports independently.

Performance monitoring and day-to-day review of the Services as provided by the Service Provider will be conducted by each Participating Organisation in accordance with the terms of their Services Agreement. The name and contact details of each Participating Organisation’s Supervising Officer will be provided to the Service Provider prior to the commencement of the Services Agreement, for all communication requirements in this regard

11.13 The contract monitoring role of Supervising Officers on behalf of individual Participating Organisations will include:

a) day-to-day operational liaison;

b) regular meetings with the Service Provider;

c) performance monitoring against agreed performance measures;

d) agreeing, amending and monitoring local Service Documentation;

e) authorisation of invoices and other payments, including those relating to incentives and deductions;

f) joint service planning with the Service Provider;

g) in the event of poor performance, the service of Default Notices, the levy of Abatements and, where necessary, termination of the Services Agreement.

11.14 The Strategic Monitoring Manager, as nominated by the Joint Management Board, will be responsible for strategic contract management and monitoring of the Overarching Agreement on behalf of all Participating Organisations, including:

1. amendments/variations to the Overarching Agreement;
2. regular Overarching Agreement reviews to monitor overall contract performance including outputs/volumes and outcomes against the KPIs applying.
3. co-ordinating quarterly Joint Contract Review Meetings and feedback from the Participating Organisations;
4. liaison with the Service Provider and Participating Organisations regarding areas of concern;
5. initial liaison with the Service Provider regarding the New Participant organisations joining the Overarching Agreement (an introductory role only);
6. liaison with Participating Organisations experiencing significant problems with poor performance;
7. facilitating the sharing of good practice and joint service improvement.
8. Strategic co-ordination and development of service delivery and contract development
9. co-ordination of any future service plans and central gathering of information such as TUPE data for tendering activities;

11.15 The Strategic Monitoring Manager must be consulted, in each and every event:

 in the development of all New Participants’ Specifications.

In circumstances where the Strategic Monitoring Manager has concerns that a proposal may have a detrimental impact on the Overarching Agreement and Services Agreements, then the Manager will convene an urgent meeting of the Participating Organisation’s Joint Management Board to take a decision on the proposal. The decision of the Participating Organisation’s Joint Management Board will be final.

11.16 The Service Provider will be required to comply with and support both strategic and local monitoring arrangements.

11.17 The Service Provider will nominate at least one (1) representative Contract Manager to act on its behalf. The Contract Manager must be fully competent and conversant with the Services, the terms of the Overarching Agreement and Services Agreements, performance management procedures and individual the Participating Organisations specific requirements. The Contract Manager will be given sufficient authority by the Service Provider to make decisions and resolve issues on behalf of the Service Provider. As the number of Participating Organisations procuring the Services increases, it is expected that the Service Provider will review its contract management resource requirements and, in particular, Contract Manager numbers and provide more than one such individual as appropriate, to ensure that the Overarching Agreement has at all times sufficient Service Provider contract management.

11.18 The role of the Contract Manager(s) will be to act as the main point of contact for the Participating Organisations, both jointly and individually, for any issues or problems relating to the delivery of the Services. The Contract Manager will, throughout the Term of the Services Agreements, be available between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and also work closely with all Staff (both Call Handlers and their managers) on a regular basis. The Contract Manager(s), or his authorised representative, will be contactable at all other times in the event of problems or emergencies arising and this will also form part of the agreed escalation procedures (the Escalation Procedures) set down in the Roster for each PO. The Service Provider will ensure that the Service is adequately managed at a senior level throughout the period of the out of hours operation. The Service Provider will provide adequate cover during any periods of absence by the Contract Manager(s) and such interim staff will possess equivalent skills and knowledge. In the event of the Contract Manager(s) leaving the Services Provider’s employ or changing jobs within the Services Provider’s organisation, the Service Provider will provide the Strategic Monitoring Manager with two (2) weeks’ notice of the Contract Manager(s) departure and provide a replacement within the two (2) weeks’ notice to ensure that there is a sufficient handover period, subject to the approval of the Lead Authority. A succession of two or more temporary post holders will only be allowed subject to the approval of the Strategic Monitoring Manager.

11.19 All Contract Managers shall communicate effectively at all levels and to have good negotiation skills, a constructive approach to problem-solving and a clear understanding of time and project management.

11.20 The Service Provider must give the Participating Organisations a period of three (3) months prior written notice of any significant proposals to change its organisational structure and/or the location of its service delivery arrangements. Any proposed changes to such structure or arrangements which conflict with terms of the Overarching Agreement and/or Services Agreement and/or Participating Organisation strategies will only be agreed at the discretion of the Lead Authority in writing.

12. Poor Performance and Termination

12.1 See Section VI –Performance Monitoring of the Overarching Agreement

13. Service Documentation

13.1 Whilst the Participating Organisation is expected to identify and take reasonable and relevant action regarding any gaps in the information provided, the Service Provider will not make any assumptions regarding the knowledge of the any Participating Organisation and both Parties will reasonably ensure that they have provided the other Party with correct, current and complete information.

13.2 The information/data listed below in Paragraphs 13.3,13.4 and 13.5 must be provided by the Parties, whether individually or jointly, in accordance with the timescales and terms of the Overarching Agreement and Services Agreement, and execution of each Services Agreement is conditional upon the timely provision of this information/data.

13.3 Such information/data must include the following:

a) hours and days of operation for the overall Service;

b) the Service Options required;

c) arrangements for the provision of schedules of On-Call Duty Staff for the Participating Organisation in advance of each working period;

d) details of the channels, contact details and timescales (if different from those set out in Paragraph 6 “Performance Standards”) and specific arrangements for Service Provider Staff to contact the Participating Organisations’ On-Call Duty Staff with details of individual Caller service requirements;

e) the agreed schedule of fields to be recorded on the Service Provider’s system covering individual call details for each Service Option type;

f) a complete set of Escalation Procedures;

g) contact details of all key Participating Organisation and Service Provider staff;

h) contact protocols and business continuity arrangements as required by each Participating Organisation in relation to the performance of the Services Agreement, which will be included in the Service Provider’s Business Continuity Plan and accompanying procedures;

i) procedures for the signposting and referral of calls received by the Service Provider which are outside the scope of the agreed Service Options;

j) translation facilities to be used, where applicable;

k) the agreed Complaints Procedures;

l) the specific arrangements for invoicing, service reporting and joint review;

m) individual Participating Organisation requirements for the Service Provider to retain Call Handling information records in line with Participating Organisation data retention policies;

n) individual Participating Organisation requirements for audio recording of calls handled on their behalf;

0) individual Participating Organisation requirements for checks on Service Provider Staff employed to deliver the service;

p) Checklists to be used by Call Handlers to record details of ‘out of scope’ calls, see Paragraph 11.7.3 (f)

### **13.4 Particular Types of Enquiries**

13.4.1 Prior to Service implementation, the Service Provider will agree with the individual Participating Organisations clear policies and procedures for identifying and responding to the following types of enquiries:

1. Major emergencies and serious incidents;
2. Enquiries which alert potential or actual neglect or abuse of a young person or vulnerable adult;
3. Enquiries from Callers at risk of committing suicide or harming themselves or another person;
4. Enquiries involving the Police, Fire or Ambulance Services;
5. Enquiries involving the NHS or other public services which are not Participating Organisations;
6. Enquiries from Participating Organisations’ council members;
7. Abusive communications;

### **13.5 Process Documentation**

13.5.1 The Participating Organisation and the Service Provider will agree a written procedure for each Service Option and this will include:

a) the hours and days during which the each Service Option is provided to the public;

b) the detailed responses to be given to Callers and the scripts and processes to be used to handle and take action in relation to calls received, dependent upon their precise nature, covering all potential circumstances;

c) how to authenticate the Caller’s identity;

d) what information to gather from the Caller and where to record it;

e) specific advice regarding calls from persons under 16 years of age;

f) what to tell the Caller about any personal data they disclose including: what the purpose is of holding the information; what the data will be used for/not used for; who will have access to such information and how long will it be retained;

g) the arrangements under which Caller details are to be referred or forwarded;

h) names and contact details for signposting, transferring, forwarding or referring calls, with accurate and regularly updated information about on-call rota arrangements;

i) a description of procedures in terms of Participating Organisation action and feedback to the Caller, with indicative timescales;

j) a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs), with appropriate answers;

k) relevant information sources on the Participating Organisations websites;

l) access, where available, to check the status of forwarded or referred cases in the event of a follow-up enquiry (‘You said someone will get back to me in an hour – what’s happening?’). This may involve Callers quoting the call reference number which the Service Provider's Staff have allocated to the matter;

m) contact details of lead officers in the relevant Participating Organisation’s departments in the event of query;.

n) all appropriate scripts for all of the above.

## **14. Facilities for day-to-day Information and Communication**

14.1 The Service Provider’s IT systems shall have a secure web-based interface that Participating Organisations can interrogate to retrieve individual call related information, run reports and facilitate any other client reporting requirement. The secure web-based interface will be made available for use at all times and will be flexible and easy to use. Such web interface system will be utilised for the vast majority of communication and information supplied between the Service Provider and the Participating Organisations for the day-to-day operation of the Service (with the exception of referrals for individual service requests) .The Service Provider will maintain all necessary access controls to the web interface system for its own Staff and nominated representatives from all Participating Organisations.

14.2 The web interface system will be made available to:

a) the Service Provider’s Staff, both management and operational

b) Participating Organisation Supervising Officers

c) Participating Organisation back office staff (regarding individual Service Options in their areas).

14.3 Uses of the web interface will include:

a) Any urgent communications between the Parties (Note: it is not to be used as a substitute for telephone communication when this is necessary)

b) Contact details

c) Rotas and Rota changes (see Paragraph 14.4 below)

d) Regular updates to Regularly Variable Data for individual Service Options

e) Logging and progressing Change Requests including regular feedback and updates

f) Logging Complaints which require investigation together with responses to them

g) Non-conformance issues, requests for investigations and responses

h) Full current Service Option specifications including scripts in use

i) All performance reports with, a sequential history maintained

j) Any end of the shift communications and handover details

k) Emergency escalation contact points

l) Invoicing details and queries

m) Call recordings.

### **14.4 Rota Changes**

Individual PO s may require electronic rota management at an additional annual cost i.e. to accommodate changes in staff being rostered for a particular activity for the forthcoming year

This will be discussed in Competitive Dialogue

The web based interface is to include facilities for Participating Organisations’ back office staff to log changes to On-Call Duty Staff rotas in real-time, so that these changes may be automatically accessed by the Call Handlers when they utilise the Call Management System to handle individual calls. This facility will deal with immediate and future pre-dated changes to rotas and will allow Participating Organisations to keep the accessed rota details up-to-date, including any last-minute changes. The use of this facility by Participating Organisations is to be an option for use at their discretion.

## **15 Service Development**

15.1 The Service Provider is required to work with the Participating Organisations to develop the Services to meet new requirements, to achieve improved efficiencies and savings in the operation of the Service and to make effective use of new technology-based facilities as and when they become available.

15.2 Tenderers are asked to include in their Method Statement 6- Innovation that they may have for present and future development of the Service, in order to continuously improve the Services to the public, as well as to deliver value for money through real cost savings. Proposals referencing improvements achieved for similar services which Tenderers have implemented for other clients, will be particularly relevant and will be highlighted. Tenderers proposals will include details of the likely charges and savings to the Participating Organisations.

15.3 ~~A particular area of Service development is likely to be the use of self-service technologies to facilitate some types of service requests and enquiries from the public using voice recognition and activation without agent intervention (for both out of hours and daytime operations). The Service Provider will be expected to have access to existing technical facilities and capabilities which will enable such self service solutions to be readily and cost effectively developed and operated. Where such solutions are deployed, Participating Organisations expect to achieve major cost savings where calls are handled without the use of Call Handlers. Certain Participating Organisations are already working on initiatives in this regard, particularly in relation to simpler types of calls.~~

 A particular area of Service development is likely to be the use of self-service technologies to facilitate some types of service requests and enquiries from the public using voice recognition and activation without agent intervention (*such technology could be utilised* for both out of hours and daytime operations). During dialogue the Council wishes to discuss the likely cost of such automated systems and may choose to add an additional sheet to the bid back financial appendix to cover the costs of such developments before dialogue is closed. If this is done the final tender may include a price for a self- service technology which could be used out of hours or in the daytime. The Service Provider will be expected to have access to existing technical facilities and capabilities which will enable such self service solutions to be readily and cost effectively developed and operated. Where such solutions are deployed, Participating Organisations expect to achieve major cost savings where calls are handled without the use of Call Handlers. Certain Participating Organisations are already working on initiatives in this regard, particularly in relation to simpler types of calls.

15.4 In circumstances where a Participating Organisation is interested in the use of self-service solutions, there are a number of potential scenarios that the Service Provider may be required to respond to:

15.4.1 The Service Provider may be requested to develop, implement, operate and maintain self-service solutions for handling some types of calls. Such facilities will be operated by the Service Provider using their own equipment. These solutions must include the capacity to capture comprehensive Caller-related and service request data from those Callers using the facility, in the course of processing each service request.

15.4.2 The Participating Organisation may deploy its own local self-service solutions for dealing with certain call types. In these circumstances, the calls routed to the Service Provider will be limited to those that are not handled by the self-service solutions.

15.4.3 The Participating Organisation may make use of third party facilities for developing and operating self-service solutions. In these circumstances the Service Provider may receive some calls which are routed on from the third party’s facilities and/or from the Participating Organisation itself.

### 16.5 Use of Participating Organisation Back Office Systems

In some cases Service Provider Staff may be required to enter data into, and carry out transactions on, Participating Organisation’s back office systems in order to process service requests. In these circumstances the Service Provider must ensure the correct and effective use by Call Handlers of Participating Organisation back office systems. To assist with this, the Service Provider must:

1. take measures to ensure high quality of service performance including correct diagnosis and action taken
2. develop scripts, processes and procedures to ensure different call types are handled correctly
3. provide effective, relevant training for call handlers
4. undertake IT integration and software development

# Appendix 1- Intentionally Blank- KPIs are now covered in the Overarching Agreement

# Appendix 2- Service Options operated by each Existing Participant

## Introduction

This Out of Hours Service is exceptional in that all transactions are auditable and fully computerised in the overall management of both telephone and data systems. Not all new joiners will have the technology to benefit from this initially.

The current service profile is summarised in Table 1 below.

| **Contact Centre** | **Barnet**  | **Ealing**  | **Enfield** | **Haringey** | **Haringey Housing Department** | **Hammersmith &Fulham**  | **Barking & Dagenham** | **Barking Homes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Abandoned car removal** |  |  |  |  |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Anti-social behaviour** |  |  |  | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Building security/alarms & Maintenance** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Dangerous Bridges** |  |  |  |  |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Dangerous structures** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Emergency Planning** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Environmental Health** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Estate Services** |  |  | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |  |
| **Fleet Emergency** |  |  |  | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **General information/ Out of Scope** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Decant Issues** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **x** |  |
| **Graffiti removal** |  | **x** |  | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Highways emergencies** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Homeless families** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |  | **x** |  |
| **Housing repairs** |  |  | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |
| **ICT Out of Hours** |  |  | **x** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Lone Worker Support** | **x** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Media Enquires** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Noise patrol** |  | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Parking** |  | **x** | **x** |  |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Parks, cemeteries & open spaces** |  | **x** | **x** |  |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Play equipment** |  |  | **x** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Registrars Emergencies** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Social services emergencies** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Stray Dogs** |  | **x** |  | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Street Cleansing** |  |  |  | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Street lighting** |  | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Suicide Calls** |  | **x** | **x** | **x** |  |  |  |  |
| **Terror Threats** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |  |
| **Trees** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |  |  |
| **Waste Collection** |  |  |  | **x** |  |  |  |  |
| **Illegal Encampments** |  |  | **x** |  |  |  |  |  |

Table1

## A screenshot of a computer screen  Description automatically generated

Notes:-

1. Relates to the period December 22 – October 23
2. Key:-
	1. Calls offered
	2. Calls answered
	3. SLA %
	4. Calls abandoned after SLA target (number)
	5. Calls abandoned after SLA target (%)
	6. Average speed of abandon
	7. Average speed of answer
	8. Average handling time