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#### **At the meeting of the Environment Select Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> June Members requested information on barring the use of ring-back and phoning back Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.**

Officers from Nextiraone and Xentrall were contacted regarding the suppression of the 1471 function when residents receive a telephone call from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

The message relayed by BT using the 1471 function is termed a Calling Line Indicator (CLI). This is suppressed deliberately by SBC and a generic number (528998) is provided instead. The use of this function was considered to be more appropriate as it was felt that residents would receive a better service, if a resident was given a specific officer's number the officer in question may not always be available meaning that in some cases the resident would not be able to access any information immediately, would have to wait to have their query dealt with or receive an explanation of time-frames. Certain officers may also receive a high number of direct calls from residents. There may also be confusion if residents were provided with, or had access to, many telephone numbers which would negate the use of 'golden numbers' or the telephone numbers of the Customer contact centres.

The suppression of the ring-back function has to be implemented Council wide or not at all.

#### **Reference was also made at the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> June to the advertisements that were relayed whilst individuals were on hold when phoning Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

The Committee discussed the advertisements / messages relayed whilst on hold when contacting Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. Reference was made to the appropriate use of these adverts (i.e. what services were advertised and whether residents contacting the Council should effectively pay to listen to advertisements of Council services and events).

Officers from Nextiraone and Xentrall were again contacted regarding this. The use of such advertisements is at the discretion of individual services, and are implemented by Nextiraone at the request of services. These are used predominately by Leisure services and Tristar Homes. The customer (the service which has requested that their advertisement be implemented) is responsible for the advertisements and must manage it accordingly, removing messages once they are out-of-date for example to ensure that accurate data is provided to the public. The use of such advertisements does not have a wide take-up rate throughout the Council and the use of such advertisements can be isolated to certain groups of phone lines to ensure that inappropriate or specific messages are not relayed to everyone contacting the Council but can instead be targeted only at specific customers who are likely to use certain groups of phone lines. The caller is also not put on hold for any longer than they would if the advertisements were not in place (i.e. the caller does not pay an increased call charge to listen to all or part of a message and it is also worth considering that this provides another communication channel for services to get important messages across to the public.