

## OFCOM Numbering Consultation

Q8 *Do you agree with Ofcom's proposal to open a new '03' number range for non-geographic, non-revenue sharing services.*

**South Lanarkshire Council supports the proposal to open a new '03' number range for non-geographic, non-revenue sharing services. We already make use of 0845 numbers (not for revenue sharing purposes) to allow us to use the advanced network call-routing capabilities associated with non-geographic numbers. The new '03' numbers would allow us to continue to make use of this facility whilst saving the Council money and at no increased cost to our customers. In fact, if telecoms suppliers incorporate the new '03' number range into calling packages our customers who currently have inclusive or low-cost call packages will actually save money.**

**One area of concern though is the potential overlap with the initiative mentioned in the Transformational Government Enabled by Technology document published by the Cabinet Office in November 2005. Paragraph 33 (2) refers to the single national public service number for non-emergency services being taken forward by the Home Office and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. At the moment this is focusing on non-emergency policing, crime and anti-social behaviour and involves local authorities and police force partnerships. However, this could be the foundation for a wider non-emergency initiative and South Lanarkshire Council would then need to reassess its use of telephone numbers.**

Q9 *How should the '03' range be structured, in terms of tariffs and services?*

**The tariff for all '03' numbers should be local rate so as to make it easy for consumers to understand. It should be mandatory for telecoms suppliers to incorporate these numbers into their existing inclusive and low cost call packages.**

Q34 *Do you agree with Ofcom's assessment of the problems with current 08 and 09 in terms of information clarity and consumer perceptions?*

**Yes. Consumers seem to understand 0800 freephone but are confused about the charges for the remaining parts of the 08 range and the 09 range.**

Q35 *Which of these options for current 08 services do you think is best in terms of a) increasing consumer transparency and b) minimising the costs of re-structuring the 08 range?*

a) **Transparency – all of the options suggested are still quite complicated and will probably still be confusing for consumers. Can something much simpler be introduced?**

e.g.       **'03' local rate  
'080' freephone  
'085' calls up to 5ppm  
'087' national rate  
'089' calls up to 10ppm**

b) **Introduce the '03' range as soon as possible – South Lanarkshire Council for one will move to these numbers if telecoms suppliers incorporate them into inclusive and low cost call packages. Moving to '03' would then deliver cost savings for the Council and our customers. We were about to introduce new 0845 numbers but have delayed this until the outcomes from this consultation exercise are known.**

Q36 *How might early migration to the '03' range be encouraged?*

**South Lanarkshire Council would move existing 0845 numbers to the 03 range if telecoms suppliers included these new numbers in their inclusive and low cost call packages because it would mean that calls to the Council would be cheaper for customers. At the same time the Council would also achieve savings because we currently pay part of the cost of 0845 calls.**

**We want to rationalise the telephone numbers advertised for Council services so making a memorable range of about 10 numbers from within the '03' range available to the Council would also encourage us to move.**