

Customer Focus

North Wiltshire District Council

Customer Focus Action Plan and Progress against Recommendations

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Comments	Evidence Gathered	Target Date	Responsibility
<p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define a long-term vision and develop a strategy for delivering the customer focus priority. 	3	<p>On 7th September 2005, CMB agreed a vision for development of Customer Focus within the Council.</p> <p>The new Chief Executive has produced a report for the Appointments Panel setting out his aspirations on how to deliver this vision. One recommendation from the Chief Executive is that we have one customer contact team under one Customer Contact Manager, dealing with all customer interactions at a single point of contact.</p> <p>To take the vision forward, on 26th July 2006 the ICE Programme Board agreed a Customer Contact Programme Brief, which identified 10 discrete products forming separate projects. This Programme will need to be aligned with any restructure of the Council.</p> <p><u>Customer First Partnership</u></p> <p>NWDC is a member of the Customer First Partnership, which comprises of the four District Councils and the County Council of Wiltshire. The Wiltshire Constabulary formerly joined the Partnership in 2006. The Vision and guiding principles for the Customer First Partnership were endorsed by Executive on 1st December 2005. The Vision of the Partnership is to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent and efficient customer services 	<p>VOS1 A1</p> <p>A1 VOS1</p> <p>VOS8 A2</p>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Delwyn Burbidge, Chief Executive</p> <p>Nick Fenwick, Strategic Manager</p> <p>ICE Programme Board</p> <p>Nick Fenwick, Strategic Manager</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved choice of access • Consistent standards of customer service <p>NWDC has been actively involved with all the customer service partnership projects. The Partnership Programme Manager has provided evidence setting out the achievements to date and our contribution. The work of the Customer First Partnership is outlined in a Workplan. A full review of the 2005/06-work programme has been undertaken together with an Investment and Benefits' analysis. Following the customer focus audit in 2005, a formal response was issued to the Audit Commission in April 2006, setting out how the Partnership proposed to address the Partnership working recommendations. This included a recommendation to align customer care standards and access strategies across the County. As a consequence, the Officers Board initiated a project mandate to the Customer Services Managers Forum to undertake this work, with phase 1 of the work delivered by 31st March 2006. A Project Initiation Document has been developed for Phase 2 of this project. It was agreed at the CSMF on 14th August 2006 and will be considered in November 2006 by the Officers Board. A major product of Phase 2 is a Partnership Values Statement, which brings together the various work-stream strands. This will also be considered for adoption by the Officers Board in November 2006.</p> <p>Another aspect of the work of the Customer First Partnership is the shared services project. This project is concerned with joint delivery of services across the County. From a shortlist of 20 services, 10 were</p>	<p>A1</p>		<p>Delwyn Burbidge, Chief Executive</p>
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		<p>identified for further consideration.</p> <p>Business cases were prepared for all 10 areas with not all proceeding. However, good progress has been made already in several areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of ICT hardware and software • Joint contracts on recruitment advertising and for agency staff • Development of a potential shared service for Building Control 	A3		
Improve access to Council services by:					
<p>B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all information about Council services is clear, uses plain language and is widely available in appropriate alternative formats 	2	<p>A Communications Group has been established (pulling together key staff from across the Council) and is reviewing all internal and external communication and awareness raising of the Council's services. The review includes testing different methods of communicating through newsletters and customer forums – feedback will shape future communication.</p> <p>The Council has also signed up to the LGA's/I&DeA's Reputation project and has produced an annual plan for communication and consultation.</p> <p>In August 2006, an additional question was added to the Customer Satisfaction Surveys. These are completed by customers visiting the Front of House. The new question asks the customer if the information they received was easily understandable.</p>	B1	Results analysed monthly	<p>Laurie Bell, Strategic Manager</p> <p>Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact TL</p>

		The Draft Access Policy will go to Executive in December 2006. A Draft policy is in place and a Strategy and Action Plan is currently being developed.	B2	November 2006	Alun Davies, Strategic Manager
C.	2	<p>The Best Value Satisfaction Surveys currently being undertaken will provide a representative view of the needs of the local community. Additional questions will be included to ascertain preferred methods of access, opening hours, Customer Service Standards.</p> <p>The work plan for Phase 2 of the project to align customer care and access strategies across the Partnership sets out planned consultation with groups representing the six strands of diversity.</p> <p>Joint survey work with County Council and other District Council's in respect of the Gypsy & Traveller Community. The first draft was received by NWDC on 9th August 2006 and this was to ascertain the housing needs of their community. Publication is due in September.</p> <p>The draft Disability Equality Scheme went to Local Joint Consultative Committee on 18th October 2006 with final approval to the Personnel, Licensing and Administration Committee on November 6th 2006.</p> <p>The Council has set up a disability & equality stakeholder group to ascertain the public's perception and particularly the perception of disabled people of any barriers against accessing the services provided by the</p>	C1	March 2007	Graham Wilkie, Performance Management Officer
			A2		Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact TL
			C2		Graham Wilkie, Performance Management Officer
			C3		Alun Davies, Strategic Manager
			C3	March 2007	

		<p>Council and will take appropriate action to improve access. The membership of the internal Equality and Diversity Group has been extended to include a representative of the North Wiltshire Access for the Disabled Group.</p> <p>The CRM system will provide a single view of the customer. The management information provided will help the Council to understand the needs of the community and resourced appropriately.</p> <p>We hold regular Young People's Council meetings through the year.</p>	<p>VOS2</p> <p>C4 VOS4 (C)</p>		<p>Mark Edwards, CRM/BPM Project Manager</p> <p>Lesley Taylor, Youth Involvement Development Officer</p>
<p>D.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering the need for and benefits of adopting more customer-focused practices such as revised opening hours and examine ways in which access to car parking could be improved 	2	<p>Car parking remains free for visitors to the council via a permit scheme. Signage is prominent within the Visitors Car Park.</p> <p>Our customer questionnaire addresses the question of opening hours. However, it is acknowledged that those customers completing the questionnaire are visitors who use our current opening hours.</p> <p>A new LPI is in place, which measures customer satisfaction levels within Switchboard/Revenues & Benefits Call Centre. Again, this addresses the question of opening hours.</p> <p>The Best Value Satisfaction Surveys due to be undertaken in 2006 will address the issue of opening hours and whether they are satisfactory.</p>	<p>VOS3</p> <p>B1</p> <p>D1</p> <p>C1</p>	<p>Monthly</p> <p>March 2007</p>	<p>Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact Team Leader</p> <p>Graham Wilkie, Performance Management Officer</p>

<p>E.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing plans to improve disabled access Developing an integrated pricing policy across all services that effectively balances the need to maximise income while also promoting social inclusion. Taking positive steps to embed equality and diversity and a customer-focused culture across the Council through its approach to training, performance management and policy making 	2	<p>The website has been developed and now complies with the priority outcomes. The website is more accessible to a wider audience as Browsealoud software has been installed. The website has now achieved the RNIB accreditation "See It Right".</p> <p>Comprehensive Disability & Deaf Awareness training has been organised for all frontline staff, as well a half-day training session for all other staff. The Equalities & Diversities Group is currently investigating the possibility of offering staff training in basic sign language.</p> <p>All employees and members have undergone Respect for People training. All members of staff have now taken and passed the on-line test. Out of 53 members, 40 have also successfully passed the on-line test. Respect for People training forms part of the formal induction process for all new members and officers.</p> <p>The RNID undertook a '<i>Louder than Words</i>' benchmark assessment of the Council's provisions for deaf and hard of hearing customers and employees in November 2005. The report from the RNID highlighted a number of improvements that the Council needed to make. An improvement plan has been put in place.</p> <p>Signage has been made more prominent in reception area. New signs regarding Assistance Dogs have been put in place. Hearing Loop tested and in working order in Reception and Council Chambers. A portable hearing loop is also available for use throughout the building. A wheelchair is also provided for use by</p>	<p>VOS4</p> <p>E1</p> <p>E1</p> <p>E2</p> <p>VOS5</p>		<p>Alun Davies, Equalities & Diversities Group.</p> <p>Joanne Smith, Technical Officer</p> <p>Alun Davies, Strategic Manager</p> <p>David Stirling, Asset, Design & Regeneration Manager</p>

		<p>customers.</p> <p>A new Benefits Freephone number is now in place, which is available for use by all customers phoning regarding Housing/Council Tax benefit. (Approved by the Executive Committee on 9th March 2006).</p> <p>Achieved Level 1 of Equality Standard. Currently working towards Level 2. Have introduced a diversity audit tool (e-sat) to help monitor our progress in this area.</p> <p>Equalities & Diversities Group is currently working on developing an integrated pricing policy across all services and a proposal is to be put to Corporate Management Board and Members in November/December 2006 as part of the budget process.</p> <p>Circa 50 Equality Impact Assessments completed in 2005/2006. They are available to view on the NWDC website together with a schedule of further EIA's and a programme for future EIA's. The standard template for reports has been amended to ensure that the implications of the report on equality and diversity issues are set out and considered as part of the decision making process. Furthermore, guidance has been produced to remind and assist officers undertake equality impact assessments on new policies etc. EIAs are being conducted in respect of the Council's front of house and call centre.</p>	<p>VOS6</p> <p>E3</p> <p>VOS4 (A)</p> <p>VOS8</p>		<p>Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact TL</p> <p>Alun Davies, Strategic Manager</p> <p>Alun Davies, Strategic Manager</p>
<p>Improve Council services to customers by:</p>					

<p>F.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring consultees are given feedback on how their views were taken into account in policy and decision-making 	<p>2</p>	<p>People’s Voice questionnaires are sent out to our citizen’s panel twice a year. Feedback newsletters are then sent to the Panel, so that they can see how their views are helping to inform Council actions.</p> <p>It has been decided that the Comments & Complaints system will be developed through CRM to enable us to have one database collating all customer interaction which will collect customer feedback and comments to inform decision/policy making. The specification has been written and includes the provision of feedback to customers in respect of their comments and suggestions. The specification has been translated into a process map, which in turn will be scripted within CRM. Lagan (CRM provider) consultants visited on 17th/18th August to assist with scripting within BPM. This was successful and confirmed that we have made good steps in understanding the product. However, a number of potential issues have been identified. We are working through these with Lagan, with the delivery date for the Comments and Complaints system being the end of December. A report was prepared for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28th September 2006, providing an update on the progress of the implementation of the Comments Complaints Policy.</p> <p>The results of the Budget consultation were reported back to Council in January 2006 and fed into the budget decision-making. A summary of how the results were addressed by the budget was produced.</p>	<p>F1</p> <p>F2</p> <p>VOS1</p> <p>F3</p>	<p>September 2006</p> <p>January 2006</p> <p>February 2006</p>	<p>Carole Northam, Communications Officer</p> <p>Mark Edwards, CRM/BPM Project Manager</p> <p>Sue Pangbourne, Strategic Manager</p>
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			F4		
<p>G.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting with local people in the development of corporate service standards and in identifying options from the change programme 	2	<p>Corporate Service Standards have been developed and adopted by NWDC. They are available in leaflet form within reception and with stakeholders. Also available on website. Customer satisfaction levels and service standards are monitored and published monthly. Customers are actively encouraged to provide feedback on the customer service standards and on the level of service received. This feedback can be given via the Charter and website in addition to customer satisfaction surveys. A report has been prepared for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on 28th September 2006 setting out performance in relation to the Charter and updating the committee with the Council's Charter Development Proposals.</p> <p>Work is being undertaken as part of the Customer First Partnership to align Customer Care standards across the County. Jackie Tavener and Helen Luty have prepared the Project Initiation Document for Phase 2 of this Project, which will be considered at the Officers Board in November 2006. An integral part of this is for consultation to be undertaken to inform this work. This is detailed in the project's work plan. In addition,</p>	<p>VOS4 (B) G1</p> <p>A2</p> <p>VOS1</p> <p>A2</p>	<p>August 2006</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact TL</p> <p>Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact TL</p>

		<p>planned.</p> <p>The CSMF has specifically focused on two areas of work arising from the Audit Commission Customer Focus Inspection. These are Customer Service Standards (see above) and Customer Access. Jackie Tavener and Helen Luty have prepared the Project Initiation Document for Phase 2 of this Project, which will be presented to the Officers Board in November 2006. An integral part of Phase 2 of the Project is for consultation to be undertaken to inform this work which is scheduled for September and will be conducted by Wiltshire County Council.</p> <p>Other work to date includes:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council has carried out customer services training with other District Councils in the area as well as County Council• Has jointly invested in a consultant to develop the reporting on the shared Lagan CRM system;• Developed a list of shared scripts to reduce duplication,• Developed a joint e-forms solution across four of the Partners which went live with three of the partners in April,• Is developing a data sharing policy for handling customer interaction.• Has gained the support of the partnership for lead IT officers as a partnership resource for CRM and e-forms support.			
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Appendix B

		The Council, with its partners, received funding to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether or not involvement in Wave 2 of the Single Non Emergency Number (SNEN) Project was possible. The implications of Wave 2 were considered by the Executive Committee on 31 st August 2006 and delegated decision making authority was granted to the Strategic Manager. The SNEN Board considered bids from Wiltshire Constabulary and Swindon Borough Council to run SNEN with Wiltshire Constabulary being the preferred supplier. The bid was submitted to the Home Office on 4 th October 2006 with expected confirmation at the end of October 2006.	H2	October 2006	Nick Fenwick, Strategic Manager
Support change in the Council by:					
I. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing robust and fully resourced project plans that identify success criteria by which the programme will be measured 	2	All customer focus development has been undertaken under the auspices of the ICE Programme Board, utilising Prince 2 project management methodology. An integral component of Prince 2 is to develop a robust, resourced, project plan. In addition, identifying success criteria at the outset enables Senior Users/customer to measure the ultimate success of the project.	VOS1	Ongoing	Pete Barnet, Programme Manager, ICE Programme Board
J. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that there are clear policies procedures and training in place to support the business process mapping work 	2	Seven members of the Business Process Management (BPM) team have been SPRINT trained. SPRINT is the BPR process the Council is currently using. SPRINT awareness took place for Team Leaders and the CRM Implementation Team and BPM Team on the 2 nd of May and for CMB and the Finance, HR&Payroll, ICT and Legal Team Leaders on the 3 rd of May. The ICE Programme Board approved resourcing of the CRM/BPM Projects at a meeting on 26 th July 2006. Training has been provided to all CRM scripters and further consultancy has been arranged in respect of the	J1 VOS1	Ongoing	Mark Edwards, CRM/BPM Project Manager

		<p>BPM aspect of the system.</p> <p>The ICE Programme Board agreed revised resourcing arrangement from 1/9/06 – 31/3/07. This involves Mark Edwards as joint BPR & CRM Project Manager and three secondments to undertake mapping and scripting duties. A detailed workplan is being developed. Additional SPRINT training is to be arranged in October.</p>			
<p>K.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a communication plan linked to the project plan to ensure the effective internal communication of the vision and benefits of the programme to key groups such as Councillors and middle managers 	3	<p>A Communications Group has been established and a review of corporate communications is underway. An annual action plan for communication and consultation has been produced to address the key aspects of improving customer awareness of standards, what to expect, access to information and service/project news updates.</p> <p>The weekly Corporate News Update has been revised. Following consultation with staff and members, changes have been made to both layout and distribution. For example, staff requested that it be sent out weekly on a Monday morning whereas Members requested that it continue to be sent out on a Friday afternoon. The changes to Corporate News Update have been implemented and the new improved version is now circulated to officers and members on a Monday morning.</p> <p>The work of the ICE Programme Board and the Chief Executive's vision have been highlighted at the Staff Seminars. In addition, regular updates are given at Team Meetings.</p> <p>The ICE Programme Board considered a Project Brief in</p>	<p>K1</p> <p>K2</p> <p>A1</p> <p>VOS1</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Laurie Bell, Strategic Manager and ICE Programme Board</p>

		<p>respect of the Council's Customer Contact Centre. This identified 10 discrete projects, one being communication. This Project will include communication internally, externally and with Members.</p> <p>Staff focus group - this group was brought together to test communication methods and general communication.</p>	K2		
FURTHER INFORMATION					
Customer Satisfaction		<p>The Council has signed up to the LGA's/I&DeA's Reputation project, which focuses on public perception of its local authority and the services, it provides. An action plan has been developed to increase awareness of the Council's services and to place consultation and communication at the heart of policy-making and service delivery. Methods of communication are currently being piloted via newsletters. Preferred methods for accessing and receiving information were tested again with the Peoples Voice Panel in Spring 2006.</p> <p>The Council plans to carry out annual perception surveys with its customers and staff to benchmark progress and areas for improvement.</p>	F1 C1		Laurie Bell, Strategic Manager
Value for Money		<p>In addition to continuing to work with the "Daventry" benchmarking group (a family group of councils), NWDC have entered into 2 national local government-benchmarking services, namely the Local Authority Call Centre Group and the national One-Stop Shop benchmarking Group. The groups benchmarking both performance and costs, and will enable us to set clear targets for value for money and share best practice with local authorities across the country.</p>		March 2008	Jackie Tavener, Customer Contact TL

		<p>Ice Festival</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Plasma Screen/Electronic Notice Board</p> <p>“Ask the Leader” question time on website</p>			
<p>HR Strategy</p>		<p>This was adopted by Personnel, Licensing and Administration Committee on 3rd July 2006. The HR (People) Strategy provides a comprehensive People Strategy for the Council and a framework for its delivery.</p> <p>Key influences on the strategy include:</p> <p><u>Improving the Customer Experience (ICE):</u> The deliverables from the ICE programme and associated development of a strong Customer Services culture.</p> <p><u>Equality & Diversity:</u> As a corporate priority Equality and Diversity will ensure that equalities issues are at the forefront of the way services are delivered.</p> <p>The HR Strategy covers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Recruitment and Retention of a capable and talented workforce 2) Reward – The Pay and Rewards Project 3) Workforce Planning and Succession Planning 	<p>HR1</p>		<p>Elaine Orchard, HR and Payroll Team Leader</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Training and Development 5) Development of consistent, effective Communication and Consultation 6) Organisational Development and Change Management 			
Investment in Customer Services		<p>The Council has invested substantial sums of money to improve front line customer services (investment in 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 of approx. £600,000 together with ongoing revenue costs). In particular, the Executive Committee on 13th October 2005 and full Council on 21st February 2006 made decisions to increase staffing resource in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer Contact 2. Housing Benefits 3. Council tax 4. Fraud Investigation 5. Cleansing and Amenities <p>In addition, a capital growth bid was successful for the procurement of call centre recording equipment.</p>	GB1 VOS8		Nick Fenwick, Strategic Manager