WILTSHIRE COUNCIL
CABINET
26 JANUARY 2010

REPORT ON DELIVERING CUSTOMER FOCUS PROGRAMME

Cabinet Member: Cllr John Noeken, Resources

Executive Summary

Our goals

One of the three goals of the bid for unitary status was that the new council would provide high-quality, low cost, customer-focused services; providing customer-focused services is one of the priorities in the draft Corporate Plan.

From transition to transformation

Following our successful go-live as a new council on 1 April 2009 and the election of a new council, we have the necessary elements in place to move to transformation: to provide the high-quality, low cost, customer-focused services (ie designed around the customer) which the people of Wiltshire deserve and which we have promised: in our unitary bid, in our corporate plan, and in our Customer Access to Service Strategy, agreed in June 2008.

Our Customer Access to Service Strategy, which was signed off in June 2008, is in two phases. The first phase, to 1 April 2009, has been completed. The second phase, covering 2009-2012, can be distilled to four key points:

- Getting the right transactions onto the right channels, every time.
- Getting the customer to the person who can fulfil the service request in the fewest possible steps (ie "once and done" or immediate decision) – first time, every time.
- A move to services which are designed around the customer rather than our structures (our System Reviews including highway maintenance, revenues & benefits and adult care are good examples), and which are communicated in the customer's language not ours.
- Designing services overall so their balance is further towards prevention – so we can shape our total system to reduce demand as well as becoming better at responding to demand.

Delivering Customer Focus programme

This document defines what we need to do across the whole organisation in order to deliver customer focused services.

A great deal of this will be done by building on the work we are already doing

ie Workplace Transformation, Business Transformation, and Total Place.

The document defines the ways that our access channels should work for the customer.

The document defines the key areas of organisation development we need to do to change our culture and [people and organisation] frameworks which will enable Wiltshire Council to become a high-performing, customer-focused organisation.

Who this document has been written for
This document has been written for Wiltshire Council Cabinet, the Corporate Leadership Team and Service Directors as a strategic and policy document. The language and structure of the document reflect this.

Proposal

That Cabinet endorse this report and to request the Corporate Leadership Team and Customer Focus Board to implement the Delivering Customer Focus programme.

Reason for Proposal

One of the three goals of the bid for unitary status was that the new council would provide high-quality, low cost, customer-focused services.

Providing customer-focused services is one of the priorities in the draft Corporate Plan.

How customer focus delivers high quality and low cost

High quality services focus on customer purpose and what the customer values. This is where we deliver high satisfaction and a great reputation.

Low cost services operate with minimum waste (activities which do not fulfil customer purpose or deliver customer value). Low cost services also focus on root causes. These are where we deliver major cost savings.

Delivering customer focus – what it means for our customers

What will this mean for our customers at a practical level? It will mean that:

- customers access services which we deliver properly and when we say we will; they stop contacting us to chase us, and we do not waste their time for our purposes;
- customers get a much better service over the phone: calling one of our "golden numbers" and getting through to someone who can reliably deal with the service they request, immediately and consistently, at times which fit their needs;
- customers get a much better service over the web: a website that is structured around the business that customers want to use it for, that is easy to navigate and they can personalise – that feels like and is a high-quality retail services web channel;
- we bring face-to-face services nearer to customers: they access face-to-face services in campuses in their locality and/or a range of different kind of premises[1], in mobile facilities, and in their own homes, and using technology to provide virtual face-to-face services to communities which are further from our hubs;
- the combinations of services we provide in each locality reflect the needs of the communities and facilities which are available – workable, practical, local solutions, not one size fits all – developed locally with people who live and work there;
- our services make sense to customers because we have thought about the services as they should be and dismantled the barriers to delivering them – within the council and with our partners;
- our services satisfy our customers because they are good, and satisfy our council tax payers because the services don't waste a penny and they can see the difference the services make in their communities;
- our customers know that we do things before we are asked, and are confident that we deliver.

Carlton Brand, Corporate Director Resources

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[1] For example libraries, leisure centres, schools, visitor information centres, post offices, community hubs, town council premises, and public sector premises like clinics/GP surgeries etc.

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REPORT ON DELIVERING CUSTOMER FOCUS PROGRAMME

Cabinet Member: Cllr John Noeken, Resources

Purpose of Report

1.   This document defines what we need to do across the whole organisation in order to deliver customer focused services.

2.   A great deal of this will be done by building on the work we are already doing, so the document outlines briefly how transformational initiatives (Workplace Transformation, Business Transformation interventions, and Total Place) make critical contributions to delivering the various elements of customer focus.

3.   The work of the Business Transformation programme is probably the single most important dependency for Delivering Customer Focus.

4.   The document defines the ways that our access channels should work for the customer.

5.   The document defines the key areas of organisation development we need to do to change our culture and [people and organisation] frameworks which will enable Wiltshire Council to become a high-performing, customer-focused organisation.

6.   Cabinet is requested to endorse the report and to request the Corporate Leadership Team and Customer Focus Board to implement the Delivering Customer Focus programme.

Background

7.   Following our successful go-live as a new council on 1 April 2009 and the election of a new council, we have the necessary elements in place to move to transformation: to provide the high-quality, low cost, customer-focused services (ie designed around the customer) which the people of Wiltshire deserve and which we have promised: in our unitary bid, in our corporate plan, and in our Customer Access to Service Strategy, agreed in June 2008.

8.   Our Customer Access to Service Strategy, which was signed off in June 2008, is in two phases. The first phase, to 1 April 2009, has been

completed. The second phase, covering 2009-2012, can be distilled to four key points:

- Getting the right transactions onto the right channels, every time.
- Getting the customer to the person who can fulfil the service request in the fewest possible steps (ie "once and done" or immediate decision) – first time, every time.
- A move to services which are designed around the customer rather than our structures (FOCUS is a good example), and which are communicated in the customer's language not ours.
- Designing services overall so their balance is further towards prevention – so we can shape our total system to reduce demand as well as becoming better at responding to demand.

9.   This proposed programme to deliver customer focus over the next four years reflects the council's strategic context; where the council has made strategic decisions the programme is aligned to these. The main elements which have been considered are as follows:

- The (unitary bid) goal of high-quality, low cost, customer-focused services.
- Unitary-plus/Total Place – "Unitary-plus", where local government works in a seamless customer-focused partnership with the rest of the public sector and the community and voluntary sector was at the heart of the bid for unitary status and is a long-held ambition of Wiltshire Council's leadership. Total Place, a new central government initiative with REIP funding and support, is viewed as a means to help achieve this ambition, and a joint programme is being developed.
- The economic/financial context – in particular, the anticipated reductions in resources available for public services; economic context in which services are resourced and delivered.
- Customer expectations – these are low but generally rising, and will rise further as we improve some services (see also the PESTEL analysis done in the summer).
- Citizen and community engagement, including Area Boards, and the goal of building social capital.
- Me and my family/my community/my place/my council (Corporate Plan major themes).
- Strategic service delivery balance – increasingly towards prevention, and actively shaping the communities (society) [ie system] from which demand for service arises (see above and Customer Access Strategy 1.0 phase 2).

Strategic benefits to the council of Customer Focus

10.   There are five strategic benefits to the council of becoming customer-focused:

- Flexible: we can change our service mix and emphasis; we can change service configuration (eg theme v/s structure operation – copes with any though delivers better with some than with others).

- Scalable: especially sideways eg employment/benefits/housing, or anti-social behaviour, or social care/health.
- Sustainable: our services are interventions which address root causes of need and deprivation.
- Credible: because we can show cause and effect, objectivity, and direct links to the democratic process/community engagement.
- We can generate and release additional value for our customers and communities: the organisation "whole is greater than the sum of its parts".

Delivering customer focus – what it means for our customers

11. What will delivering customer focus mean for our customers at a practical level? It will mean that:

- customers access services which we deliver properly and when we say we will; they stop contacting us to chase us, and we do not waste their time for our purposes;
- customers get a much better service over the phone: calling one of our "golden numbers" and getting through to someone who can reliably deal with the service they request, immediately and consistently, at times which fit their needs;
- customers get a much better service over the web: a website that is structured around the business that customers want to use it for, that is easy to navigate and they can personalise – that feels like and is a high-quality retail services web channel;
- we bring face to face services to customers: they access face to face services in campuses in their locality and/or a range of different kind of premises[2], in mobile facilities, and in their own homes, using technology to provide virtual face-to-face services to communities which are further from our hubs;
- the combinations of services we provide in each locality reflect the needs of the communities and facilities which are available – workable, practical, local solutions, not one size fits all – developed locally with people who live and work there;
- our services make sense to customers because we have thought about the services as they should be and dismantled the barriers to delivering them – within the council and with our partners;
- our services satisfy our customers because they are good, and satisfy our council tax payers because the services don't waste a penny and they can see the difference the services make in their communities;
- our customers know that we do things before we are asked, and are confident that we deliver.

12. Delivering these is clearly an enterprise for the whole organisation: it unquestionably requires significant improvements to the ways customers can contact us and receive service, but it is far more about service

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[2] For example libraries, leisure centres, schools, visitor information centres, post offices, community hubs, town council premises, and public sector premises like clinics/GP surgeries etc.

delivery in its entirety: the way services are designed, delivered and managed end-to-end; staff attitudes and behaviours; the way services communicate and explain to customers how the service works; and the way delivery teams are organised and work together.

13. Two further comments about what is outlined below in the proposed programme of work. Firstly, this document includes existing initiatives through which we will deliver customer focus, but does not add any further scope or complexity to them; ie the ethos is "through or with", not "as well as, instead of, or on top of".

14. Secondly, local government is prone to an ingrained mindset that customer access is all about contact centres, which are "places where Customer Services staff carry out simple transactional services".

15. This document begins instead from the position that we all – employees in all departments, elected members, and our partners – provide the council's customer service, and that all our services are designed against customer demand from end-to-end[3]. As a result, although there are some specific interventions outlined below which are focused on the part of the Wiltshire Council structure we call Customer Services, the majority of the work addresses, involves, and directly affects *every* part of the council.

Main Considerations for the Council

Delivering Customer Focus – outline programme.

Delivering customer focus – key elements we need to put in place

16. Combining our priorities for the Corporate Plan, our strategic context, and what customer-focused services means for our customers enables us to define the gaps between the council's current delivery and its ambitions.

17. The gaps we must close/levels we must reach over 2009-2013 (we have already begun on most of these) are as follows, and referenced in the work parcel descriptions in section Outline programme 2009-2013:

1. Understanding and engaging with our customers and communities and using that knowledge and engagement to prioritise and design our services, including our most important transactions.
2. Creating more local and better face-to-face access for people throughout the county.
3. Simplifying our telephony access for customers while improving its scope and quality.

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[3] Different people in different parts of the organisation deliver parts of these end-to-end services; some of these people are in Customer Services, others are in service delivery departments. A major outcome of the systems interventions in the service areas, led by Business Transformation, is getting the end-to-end service right (as an overall process) and then getting the right elements completed in the right way in the right teams.

4. Fully exploiting the web channel for service delivery, for customer awareness/communication, and for customer research/insight.
5. Creating services (and access to them) which fulfil Total Place: theming and joining up services within the council, across the public sector, and with community and voluntary sector partners.
6. Removing waste and improving value in all our service delivery work and improving service performance and outcomes.
7. Developing measures and measurement systems.
8. Reshaping our customer service and information infrastructure to support the new ways of delivering service.
9. Redesigning roles and how they are organised, both in Customer Services and across all our service delivery departments.
10. Developing significant capability across all Customer Services staff: in customer insight, in customer engagement, and in systems thinking, to benefit customers directly and to support service redesign interventions with the Business Transformation team.

Changing the balance

18. There is a strategic re-balance to be achieved – shifting how we deliver services further in the direction of interventions which are preventative: either to reduce service demand from our communities, or to maintain service provision at the simplest and least intrusive level possible – ie "early and small" (and usually less expensive) rather than "late and large" (and usually more expensive).

19. There are also two significant operational re-balances to be achieved:

- Taking service to the customer versus bringing the customer to the service across a large rural county.
- The number of ways into the organisation to access service versus the depth and scope of services provided at the entry points.

20. The *way* we will deliver customer focus (ie all of the above) is outlined in the next section as a programme, Delivering Customer Focus. The programme is set out as work parcels: some are defined and fully managed within the programme itself, and others will be delivered as elements of or workstreams within other major projects or programmes with which Delivering Customer Focus is interdependent; that is: either both succeed or neither succeed.

Outline programme 2009-2013

21. This is a four year programme covering 2009-2013; work which is a priority during the next year is clearly identified, by work parcel.

A: Strategic/major programmes in which Delivering Customer Focus is an integral part

A1. Workplace transformation: Customer Access workstream

22. This programme and its customer access workstream is foundational to how we will deliver services to customers. It covers the development of Wiltshire Council hubs in four major towns and the parallel transformation of customer access and service delivery in these towns and the areas they support.

23. The remit of the Customer Access workstream of this programme is: transformed customer access to all Wiltshire Council services, through all three stages of the customer "journey" (awareness, contact and fulfilment stages), beginning with Salisbury and the south of the county.

24. We will use the workstream to deliver, and also to develop a model for:
   - face-to-face access in a population centre with a hub (see item 2 above);
   - joint face-to-face access with sister services and partners (libraries, town councils, visitor information) (2, 5), and anticipating public sector campuses in each part of Wiltshire;
   - the right relationship between telephony and face-to-face channels (2, 3);
   - continuing to move to the right balance between taking services to customers and bringing customers to services (2, 6);
   - the way hubs support distributed customer access and service delivery in rural areas (2, 6, 9);
   - the right opening hours for face to face and telephony channels (2, 3, 6).

25. It will also allow us to develop skills in customer insight and community engagement (1), and in introducing transformed service delivery with changes to job roles and joint/cross-organisation delivery teams (9, 10).

26. This work parcel is a **priority for year 1** and is also an interdependency for Delivering Customer Focus.

A2. Business Transformation: joint work programme of systems interventions with Business Transformation and major services

27. The new council will continue to transform services using systems thinking via a mixture of methods including a number of major service interventions. These interventions will be led by Business Transformation and will be delivered jointly with service delivery areas and Customer Services. (Delivers v/s 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10.)

28. The Business Transformation programme is led by the Service Director for Business Transformation, ICT & Information Management and will be documented separately in the Business Transformation Workstream plan of the Workplace Transformation Programme. This section does not duplicate that work; it will be updated regularly to reflect changes in the Business Transformation programme as it evolves.

29. The Business Transformation programme is led in each service by the Service Director for that service. Services will come into scope in order: to deliver LGR savings, or to radically improve performance, or to reduce the cost of service delivery. At the time of writing, the services which are a priority for systems interventions and therefore are under way or currently planned to begin before end March 2010 are as follows

    - Revenues and benefits; [theme: My Council]; Revenues check stage began in September 2009 and is expected to be largely completed by February 2010; Benefits check stage will begin in early 2010.
    - Clarence; highways correspondence; [theme: My Place]; both interventions began in June 2009; Clarence is in the redesign stage; highways correspondence is reaching the end of check stage;
    - Adult social care (delivered through FOCUS programme); [theme Me and My Family]; Phase 1 will be completed in December2009; Phase 2 has begun scoping and should begin proper in early 2010;
    - Planning, development and building control; [theme: My Place]; Planning/development control has completed check stage in all hubs and has reached redesign in the second of four hubs;
    - Public protection; [theme: My Community]; is on hold pending resourcing discussions between Business Transformation and the service management team.

30. In addition, several service changes, improvements or critical delivery events are planned or under consideration in the following services:

    - Housing; [theme My Place]; to begin in 2010;
    - UK general election in spring or early summer 2010; [theme: My Council]; improving our readiness for the general election began in July 2009 and will be completed in early 2010; preparations can be accelerated in the event that an election is called before then;
    - Changes to waste collection service; [theme: My Place]; subject to public consultation during the first half of 2010;
    - Leisure services [theme My Community]; subject to Cabinet approval to proceed with the next stage of the service review.

31. The Business Transformation programme and Delivering Customer Focus are complementary and in practice there will be a high degree of interchange and collaboration.

32. The work of the Business Transformation programme is probably the single most important dependency for Delivering Customer Focus; these two programmes are interdependent.

33. Wiltshire Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Police, and the Wiltshire and Swindon PCTs are developing a joint programme to take forward Total Place across Wiltshire and Swindon. This will include shared intelligence and analysis, public confidence, joint family life services, and joint access to collaborative services which matches unitary plus aspirations

A3. Total Place: creating local public services and access shaped around a Total Place approach

34. Introducing joint access channels would obviously be part of the solution for Total Place; however, it also has the potential to be a major lever to move the organisations' service delivery and culture in the direction of Total Place, in the same way that becoming a unitary authority, BMP, Workplace Transformation and Business Transformation programmes have been and continue to be levers.

35. There are three main options for the way joint 24/7 telephony access is designed and implemented:

- Option 1: one partner becomes a (shared) service provider for all services needing 24/7 telephony access (lowest risk, lowest return/leverage);
- Option 2: partners develop joint contact channels focused on services where customers expect 24/7 telephony [the essence of the original 101 (SNEN) programme created by the Home Office] (medium risk, medium return/leverage – weak implementation of unitary-plus);
- Option 3: partners develop integrated services with single delivery teams, with joint access and shared resources (highest risk, highest leverage – strong implementation of unitary-plus).

36. This is a new **priority for year 1**, although the bulk of the work of delivery will not take place until well into 2010/11 at the earliest because scoping, option appraisal, business case and solution design should be done first.

B: Improvements to channels and contact arrangements

B1. Web channel

37. We now have a new website which has leading edge-flexibility for users and the potential to be outstanding. However, it is some way from meeting our ambitions for the web channel, which are:

- an outstanding service delivery channel, both for customer transactions and for information service delivery which reduces demand on other channels;
- a primary channel for customer awareness and service promotion;
- a highly effective channel for customer insight, research and feedback.

38. An integral part of this work will be analysing which transactions we should excel at on the web and ensuring that we deliver these to that standard.

39. This work will be done jointly by IM and the web team, Customer Services, and in continuous engagement with communications and with service delivery teams as they go through service transformation (see A2 above). (Delivers v/s 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.)

40. The outcome will be a web channel which our customers use because it is highly effective, and which is understood to be and is used by the council as a critical service delivery channel.

   This is a **priority for year 1**.

   B2. Face to Face channel

41. We will always need and want a high-quality face-to-face service channel: some customer contact and much service delivery to our customers can only be done face to face; in addition some customers can only access our service face-to-face or via an intermediary, whatever the service.

42. We have an extensive field- or community-based face-to-face channel, which includes care workers, leisure centres staff, schools and colleges staff, parish stewards, building surveyors and planners, waste and recycling workers, street cleaning and amenity staff among many others. This part of the face-to-face channel is primarily single service/department; it is frequently customer-focused and effective in its scope of service delivery.

43. We also have an (hub) office-based face-to-face channel for service, both for line of business and generic service access/delivery. We also have generic face-to-face service outside our hubs, encompassing libraries (including mobile libraries), visitor information centres, and town councils.

44. The whole face-to-face channel is effective in many areas, especially community-based service delivery; however, it has some specific weaknesses; for example:

   - 48% of our population lives more than five miles and 20% more than 10 miles from the hubs where we currently deliver comprehensive office-based services;
   - community-based generic face-to-face services (eg in libraries or town councils) can be inconsistent or incomplete, and provide significantly less depth of service delivery than at our hub offices;
   - some of our front line services are making steps to extend their face-to-face operations beyond the hubs but many services are (designed to be) almost entirely office-based and expect the customer to come to us rather than us taking the services to our customers;
   - many field- or community-based services tend to operate in silos rather than "thinking sideways" or seeing themselves as part of a larger service whole.

45.   Taken overall, our combined face-to-face channel, while outstanding in places, is less than the sum of its parts and operating below its potential. In addition, we continue to stimulate face-to-face demand which could be satisfied on a different channel if the service worked better on that other channel (this situation is also true for our telephony channel).

46.   As a first stage we will work on improving our community-based face-to-face service by organising how we deliver it, with other council departments (especially library, leisure and visitor information services), and with other partners (especially Town Councils across the county). Subsequently, we will consider improvements resulting from service redesign and from introducing virtual face-to-face technology.

47.   The outcome for our citizens of work on our face-to-face channel will be more local and better integrated face-to-face access to services – whether the customers live in a town, a village, or a rural location. This is an ambition which we can deliver: by service redesign, by working with our partners, and also by good use of technology. This work will be done in a way which complements workplace transformation and also service transformation. (Delivers v/s 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.).

48.   Reshaping the community-based generic face-to-face service is a **priority for year 1** and into the following year.

B3. Telephony channel

49.   At present, we have a telephony channel which is adequately effective at the basics – providing information and transaction services based on those provided by the previous five councils, and receiving and transferring calls for people in Wiltshire Council. It is integrated with our hub-based generic face-to-face channel, and because it is provided from five locations, is also resilient.

50.   However, from the customer point of view, with more than 50 numbers to access our main services, this channel is more complex to navigate than it should or could be. Once in contact with us, service varies widely between the hubs, at least in part because we are delivering four sets of ex-district services which are different in how they are organised and delivered.

51.   At present, we are running five or more legacy telephony systems "as if they are one", with a degree of success but understandable limitations. Our preferred infrastructure solution, "work anywhere" telephony, is part of the Workplace Transformation Programme ICT workstream; this will make a great deal of difference to our operational flexibility and will help to improve our efficiency.

52.   With respect to the telephone-based service, although we are continually training our staff we are constrained by the sheer range of service delivery arrangements and their varied quality. As a result, the majority of the improvements to the services which people receive over the telephone will

be outcomes of the Business Transformation interventions: moving from four service variants to a single county-wide service, better transaction design (more "once and done"), better matched skills against demand, and better matched capacity against volume.

53. At this point we will be able to deliver the county-wide "golden numbers" telephony access which we have promised.

54. The outcome of this work parcel for our customers will be better and easier access to better services. The telephony channel will be more cost-effective and will have sufficient resilience and flexibility to meet our predicted future needs; it will operate with a significantly higher proportion of value demand and reduced proportion of waste demand. (Delivers v/s 3.)

B4. Opening hours and access

55. Wiltshire Council is a 24-hour operation, with constant service responsibilities for care, safeguarding, safety and enforcement – for customers and service users who range from our most vulnerable citizens to people using our roads.

56. In addition, a wide range of services operate across an extended working day: these include libraries and leisure services, young people's services, schools and colleges, arts, local democracy, and our amenity services.

57. However, our opening hours for office-based service teams are inconsistent by channel, service and location, and are relatively short for a 21st century services organisation.

58. a) We will research our customers' expectations and engage with members about which hours which channels should operate on and which services should be available during these hours. In parallel, we will work with HR on this aspect of harmonisation of terms and conditions.

59. The outcomes will be:

- Slightly extended and consistent opening hours for telephony access to services and face-to-face access at our hub locations, by end March 2010.
- Opening hours for telephony and face to face service which reflect our customers' preferences and which are consistent by service across the county, implemented in parallel with harmonisation of our terms and conditions. (Delivers v/s 2 and 3.)

    This is a **priority for year 1**.

60. b) We have a patchwork of arrangements for access to our 24 hour services, mainly as a legacy of our operation as five councils. As a short-term solution, we will create a coherent telephony arrangement for our customers so they are clear how to contact us about care, safety and

enforcement services, and which connects them effectively to the service they need.

61. Developing and implementing a comprehensive medium-term service and infrastructure solution which covers all aspects of how our 24 hours telephony access operates is subject to the development of joint access to service with police and health stakeholders as under A3. Total Place above.

62. The outcome will be workable arrangements for relevant 24 hour telephony access in both the short and medium term. (Delivers v/s 2, 3, and 6.)

     This is a **priority for year 1**.

B5. Cash handling at our front desks

63. We have varied practices and widely varying views of the desirability and risks around taking cash payments at our receptions. This is a policy issue which will require a decision from members and input from stakeholders in finance and service delivery.

64. The outcome will be an agreed policy and process for handling cash payments which works for customers, which covers all services and which is both marketed to customers and followed by the council. (Delivers v/s 2 and 6.)

C. Organisation development and culture

C1. Customer insight and community engagement

65. A customer-focused council designs all aspects of its services, processes, and structures around the needs and preferences of the customers of those services. It can only do so by gathering high-quality, detailed and objective information, and then by using this information to prioritise and design services in an effective dialogue with citizens and customers.

66. The outcome of this work will be sustainable collection, analysis and use of customer insight and intelligence for service planning, decision making, and service design. (Delivers v/s 1.).

67. This is an element of Total Place and delivering in line with that programme is a new **priority for year 1**.

C2. Customer awareness and communication

68. Effective communication with customers and potential customers about how to access services and the part they play in service delivery is essential. We will work with communications, the web team, service delivery and business transformation teams to ensure that communications across all channels are appropriate, targeted and

effective in supporting access to services throughout the customer journey of awareness, contact and fulfilment. We will target particularly those who can easily be excluded from service through our communication style, content, or choice of communication channel. (Delivers v/s 4 and 6.).

69. The outcome will be that our customers are always completely clear about how to contact us and how to access service – especially about what we will do next and by when, and about their part in effective and efficient service delivery by us and our partners.

   This is a **priority for year 1**.

   ### C3. Measures and measurement systems

70. The purpose of measurement is to understand and improve the business. We will measure and report how customer-focused we are as an organisation, looking at four areas of customer focus: awareness, contact, fulfilment, and transparency (decision-making). Our performance in each of these areas will be assessed by combining a set of lead and lag indicators. We expect the specific measures in each area to evolve over time as we improve our understanding; a preliminary set of measures and indicators have been developed. (Delivers v/s 7.)

71. The outcomes will be:

   - reliable and objective measurement of how customer focused the council is;
   - NI14 (value and failure demand) measurement and reporting;
   - performance data to understand and improve the business.

   This is a **priority for year 1**.

   ### C4. Customer Services transformation

72. Wiltshire Council's Customer Services (CS) function co-delivers an immense range of services to customers as part of the overall end-to-end delivery of those services. As individual services are transformed through systems interventions, the transactions which this CS function performs and the activities which CS staff members undertake will also be transformed.

73. In addition, the CS function has some additional areas for its own transformation, in order to add the most value possible to the council and our customers:

   - listening to customers – both individual customers (demand) and populations of customers (customer insight): to understand them and use that knowledge to serve customers, to inform service priorities and design, and to improve performance.
   - gaining and using skills in systems thinking: a capability for the council to use.

74.   A further area for evaluation and development is our customer service and information infrastructure. At present we have a CRM system which staff use to navigate the council's very wide range of service processes. As the CS transformation progresses we will develop CS' infrastructure and ICT requirements to support new ways of delivering services; this is interdependent with Total Place.

75.   A transformed Customer Services function will necessarily need leaders, behaviours, and skills which create and sustain that team and new way of working. The CS transformation therefore includes organisation development and job design work for Customer Services.

76.   The outcomes of this work will be:

- a CS function which is highly flexible, is appropriately skilled to complete customer transactions, and delivers perfect service, every time
- a CS function which is exceptionally good at listening to and responding to customer demand, and highly skilled at supporting and leading service improvement with service delivery teams and Business Transformation. (Delivers v/s (8, 9, and 10.)

77.   Implementing Stage 1[4] of making Customer Services a systems front end to Wiltshire Council is a **priority for year 1**.

78.   Developing new types of roles in CS within the current job evaluation framework is work with which we will **make progress in year 1**.

C5. Organisation development: skills, behaviours, role design, and organisation design (CS, whole organisation)

79.   Because a customer-focused council regards customer service as everyone's job, it follows that job design, organisation development, performance management, and reward and recognition affecting all council roles are essential to Delivering Customer Focus. (Delivers v/s 9 and 10.).

80.   Our target culture is articulated in the document *What we will be like*. Many parts of the organisation are already exemplary in this respect and we wish to encourage and build on these. However, across the organisation – though not universally, and with material improvement over

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[4] For year 1 this includes:
- the ability to capture, categorise and report on demand coming into Wiltshire Council (in a way which is useful to us, practical from a workload point of view, and satisfies our obligations to report NI14) (see C4).
- implementing an effective process and roles for detecting access problems and fixing/escalating them, and rolling in new ways of delivering services, both minor and major (see C4).

the last few years – aspects of our current culture are not customer-focussed. These include:

- internal focus/complacency – "we get very high satisfaction ratings".
- intransigence/patronising/reasons/excuses not to change: 'we know best'/professional mindset; retaining control of service; hiding behind statutory framework or data protection.
- reluctance to use complaints as a route to improving service;
- silo structure and thinking, resulting in gaps, duplication and discrete customer relationships.
- a view that "it's not my job to deal with customers";
- lack of fact-based (customer insight/demand/consultation) decision-making – "make the figures fit our plans"/"we've already decided".
- a culture of "protecting budget" – driven by the budget design and process – results in leaders and managers having to work counter to it in order to take a customer-focused approach.

81. The People Strategy programme is led by the Service Director for OD and Human Resources and is documented separately. This document articulates how Customer Focus will be embedded in our HRM and OD/culture so therefore this section (ie C.5) does not duplicate that work; it will be updated regularly to reflect changes in the People Strategy programme as it evolves.

82. The Service Director for OD and Human Resources has outlined a timetable (below and in Appendix 1) for work supporting Delivering Customer Focus which in his view is realistic, and can be expected to achieve the outcomes that the programme seeks.

83. The **priorities for year 1** are:

- Customer focus embedded in performance management: objectives, workplans, development, recognition.
- Customer focus embedded in induction[5].
- Developing and implementing standards for customer service across the organisation, including improving our skills in working with our customers (continues into 2010/11).

For all milestones in this work parcel see below.

3.3 Governance and delivery

Governance

84. Delivering Customer Focus will be governed by the Customer Focus Board, a board of CLT. The purpose of the Customer Focus Board is to lead across the council on achieving high quality, customer-focused services over the four years to June 2013; it will include an elected

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[5] Customer Focus in design of new jobs and recruitment may also be included in 2009/10 or 2010/11.

member with responsibility for Customer (either cabinet member or supporting portfolio holder).

85. The SRO is Carlton Brand, Corporate Director Resources, and the Programme Manager is John Rogers, Head of Customer Access.

86. This document defines an overall programme to deliver customer focus over 2009-2013 and within that the priorities for year 1 of the programme. Both the overall programme and the priorities for year 1 will be signed off by CLT and by Cabinet (January 2010), and have been reviewed by Scrutiny (November 2009).

Dependencies

87. Delivering Customer Focus has five major dependencies, three of which are interdependencies.

   1. Workplace transformation (interdependency, as above)
   2. Business transformation (critical interdependency, as above)
   3. ICT and IM - scope, scale and rate of progress
   4. People Strategy - scope, scale and rate of progress
   5. Culture change - scope, scale and rate of progress (interdependency)

88. The members of the Customer Focus Board, the SRO, and the Programme Manager will be responsible for monitoring and managing these dependencies and their impacts.

Delivery milestones

Delivery milestones schedule.

Year	External: customers and communities	Internal: staff, information and infrastructure.
2009/10	► Consistent opening hours Monday-Friday. (*Telephony achieved*) ► Short-term solution for 24 x 7 access to safety and enforcement services. ► Model service communication for one service (leisure, tbc). ► Standards in place for voicemail, email, and letters/written responses.	► Basic measures for telephony and for fulfilment (cross-organisation demand capture at first point of contact). ► "Customer focus" implemented in our performance management: objectives, work plans, development, and recognition. ► "Customer focus" embedded in induction. ► Developing and implementing standards for customer service across the organisation, including improving our skills in working with our customers (continues in 2010/11). ► Customer focus awareness/influencing campaign (internal communications to staff and members) begins.
2010/11	► First set of transformed/redesigned services go live county-wide. ► Golden numbers for transformed/redesigned services. ► New opening hours introduced for telephony and face to face. ► Joint 24 x 7 access to safety, enforcement, and treatment services. ► Web channel achieves retail business quality for key web transactions. ► Community-based generic customer access: consistent and good quality service signposting available at libraries, town councils and visitor information centres. ► Service communications all raised to model communications standard.	► "Work anywhere" telephony goes live. ► Salisbury hub goes live. ► "Customer focus" embedded in leadership style and behaviours, through leadership development and role-modelling. ► Developing and implementing standards for customer service across the organisation, including improving our skills in working with our customers (continues from 2009/10). ► Customer insight required for service planning and budgeting

Year	External: customers and communities	Internal: staff, information and infrastructure.
2011/12	► Second set of transformed/redesigned services go live county-wide. ► Golden numbers for transformed/redesigned services. ► Community-based generic customer access: consistent medium-depth service delivery at libraries, town councils and visitor information centres, including through virtual face-to-face service in key locations.	► Trowbridge and Devizes hubs go live. ► "Customer focus" embedded in job design.
2012/13	► Third set of transformed/redesigned services go live county-wide. ► Golden numbers for transformed/redesigned services. ► Virtual face-to-face service in all secondary locations. ► Customer communication effective at influencing attitudes and behaviours which support sustainable services.	► Chippenham hub goes live. ► "Customer focus" has right emphasis in job grading and reward.

Resources

89. This programme summary outlines several priorities for year 1. All except Total Place – joint 24/7 telephony access (work parcel A3 above) have progressed within an acceptable tolerance in their scope and pace of delivery, using the existing revenue budget resources managed by the Head of Customer Access.

90. The resource requirements for Phase 1 of joint 24/7 telephony access (work parcel A3 above) are being defined.

91. To continue with the Delivering Customer Focus programme to plan in 2010/11, Customer Services will assign 7FTE as its contribution to this corporate programme. However, additional resources will be required in 2010/11 to deliver the programme to time and quality and at the current level of risk to the interdependent programmes, ongoing service delivery, and benefits realisation.

92. These additional resources will be identified from within existing 2010/11 budgets.

Communication to staff, members and partners

93. Delivering Customer Focus will be supported and enabled by a communication programme to build awareness, understanding and commitment among staff and members. Engaging with service and partner stakeholders (eg voluntary and community organisations, police, fire and health) will also be an important element. This programme is under development with the Head of Communications.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

94. Delivering Customer Focus is expected to reduce the environmental impact of delivering service, by reducing wasted work, by reducing customer travel, and by improving service delivery on electronic channels.

95. There are no environmental legislative implications for Delivering Customer Focus.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

96. Delivering Customer Focus supports and enables equality and diversity in our service design and delivery.

97. Delivering Customer Focus is the programme which we propose to use to deliver stage 2 of our Customer Access to Services Strategy. The Equality Impact Assessment for the Customer Access Strategy stated that:

"There is a HIGH implication in the development and implementation of this strategy for the delivery and promotion of fair, non-discriminatory and equitable access to services. The strategy aims to:

- adopt, promote and implement a more customer-focused approach;
- promote equality of opportunity in both access to service and service development;
- eliminate any potential discrimination in access to services;
- promote and encourage active citizenship of all in our diverse communities;
- promote involvement of diverse communities in developing services access."

Risk Assessment

98. The principal risk of not proceeding with the programme is a reduced likelihood of achieving customer focus in our services.

99. This will materially affect the quality of our services to customers and their satisfaction with the service and the council as a whole. In addition, we will have failed to deliver on a corporate priority and one of the three commitments in the unitary bid.

100. Although there is a range of pace and scale which will succeed in delivering customer focus, there is also a minimum rate of progress below which we will not achieve coherence and critical mass, and the programme will fail overall.

101. In addition, removing the wrong work parcels would remove the added effectiveness of all three areas of work operating in concert – the remainder would be less than the sum of its parts.

Financial Implications

102. This programme does not require major investment except (possibly) to deliver new telephony and ICT capability as part of Total Place (work parcel A3); depending on the scope of work, this investment could exceed £1million and would be subject to a specific and well-grounded business case before proceeding.

103. Much of the financial investment on which the programme relies is already included in growth bids for ICT and HR, and within the Workplace Transformation programme.

104. The remaining investment falls into two categories: firstly, discrete ICT investment to improve service performance. This would only be requested on the basis of self-financing business case once the requirement had been defined.

105. Secondly, resources to lead and deliver work parcels. Approximately half of these will come from the existing Customer Services resources, as paragraph 89 above, and the balance will require additional financial or people resources. These additional resources will be identified from within existing 2010/11 budgets (as paragraph 90 above).

106. The outstanding LGR benefit from Customer Services (further annual saving of £376K ie over and above the annual £322K already achieved) will be placed at risk if we do not deliver this programme.

107. The Finance department have verified this statement.

Legal Implications

108. We are not aware of any adverse legal, human rights, ethical or governance implications of this report.

109. Implementing this programme will tend to maintain and improve the reputation of the council and local government generally, and build trust and confidence in the council.

110. The Legal department have verified this statement.

Options Considered

111. Delivering Customer Focus outlines <u>how</u> we will achieve our goal of customer-focused service and implement stage 2 of our Customer Access to Service Strategy.

112. The programme has been shaped around and with the existing strategic programmes and initiatives, including Workplace Transformation, Business Transformation, Pay Harmonisation/People Strategy, and Area Boards.

113. In doing so we have considered alternative governance arrangements, and within each of the major areas of the programme we have considered alternative priorities and alternatives for scope. The programme design and milestones as outlined above represent seven months of consultation and discussion across the council.

114. Over the life of the programme we expect our plans to evolve in the light of new opportunities and constraints; however, the goal of Delivering Customer Focus remains our guiding principle for design, planning and decision-making.

Conclusions

115. The Delivering Customer Focus programme is an appropriate means for Wiltshire Council to achieve its goal of providing customer-focused services.

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Date of report: 6 January 2010

Background Papers
None

Appendices
Customer Access to Services Strategy