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**CUSTOMER SERVICES REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Committee: Personnel and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 7 February 2013

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the draft Customer Services Final report (Appendix 1) and Improvement Plan (Appendix 2).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee is requested to agree the draft improvement plan.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The terms of reference and timetable for the review were agreed by the Personnel and Corporate Services Committee at its meeting of 20 September 2012.

3.2 It is one of four reviews agreed for 2012/13.

3.3 The review has focused on improving the Council's agreed strategy to provide a joined up front of house service utilising Customer Relationship Management technology as an enabler to improve customer service.

3.4 The draft plan was considered by Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013. No additional recommendations were made.

4.0 OPTIONS

4.1 The Committee may approve and/or amend the draft improvement plan.

5.0 BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications of the draft improvement plan are stated, where known.

5.2 Some aspects of the plan will be subject to separate project management which will include the need for a robust business case.

6.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

6.1 EIA not required at this stage.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The draft improvement plan focuses on four key areas:

- Strategy
- Staffing
- Performance
- ICT software systems

7.2 The key areas are inter-related within some of the key issues arising from the review.

8.0 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Final Report

8.2 Appendix 2 – Draft Improvement Plan

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
(i) Scrutiny Committee 21 January 2013 - Agenda Item 7 - Customer Services Review – Consideration of Draft Improvement Plan	Room 105 The Grange Ely Cams	Annette Wade Head of ICT and Customer Services Tel: 01353 665555 annette.wade@eastcambes.gov.uk
(ii) Personnel and Corporate Services Committee - 20 September 2012 Agenda Item 9 - Service Review – Customer Services - Minute Number 10		

**CUSTOMER SERVICES REVIEW**

**FINAL DRAFT REPORT**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The customer services review is one of four 2012/13 service reviews.

1.2 The review is being undertaken by:

- Head of ICT and Customer Services
- Councillor Sue Willows
- Deputy Chief Executive

1.3 Heads of Service were invited to feed into the review process and those affected by the improvement plan (once approved) will be consulted on its implementation. The draft improvement plan has been endorsed by Management Team.

1.4 Council members are also invited to feed into the review particularly in relation to improving the Council Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to enable members to receive regular information on the issues being raised by their constituents to the Council.

1.5 The timetable for the review was agreed by Personnel and Corporate Services Committee at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

DATE	COMMITTEE MEETING	REPORT
20 September	Personnel and Corporate Services	Terms of Reference/Timetable/Stage 1 Report
21 January	Scrutiny Committee	Final Draft Report/Draft Improvement Plan
7 February	Personnel and Corporate Services	Final Report and Improvement Plan

## 2.0 **REVIEW**

2.1 The core review team identified the following key work areas for investigation:

- Strategy
- Staffing
- Performance
- ICT system

## 2.2 **STRATEGY**

For the purpose of this review the strategy previously agreed by the Council to implement a 'one-stop shop' front of house service with Sanctuary Housing and Anglia Revenues Partnership and enable improved customer service through the use of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system was not challenged; only the way it is being delivered.

## 2.3 **STAFFING**

### (i) **Staffing Structure**

Stage 1 – the management structure should better match the arrangements used within other departments to improve performance, forward planning and senior manager capacity

Stage 2 – link to 2.2 explore opportunities for merging the front of house staffing structure into one organisation to improve performance and reduce management costs and bureaucracy

### (ii) **Customer Service Advisors**

Analyse existing working hours and full-time/part-time mix against customer interactions (phone/face to face) to enable best fit between volume of customer activity and staffing resources.

### (iii) **Relationship With Other Services Providing Front-Line Customer Interaction**

Explore opportunities with other departments to improve front-line face to face interactions e.g. use of duty officers, more effective joined-up diary management etc.

### (iv) **Self - Serve**

Promote self service channels to raise customer awareness of the online services and the self serve facilities available in the new reception area. Increased use of this communication channel will generate efficiency savings and capacity in both the front and back office

## 2.4 PERFORMANCE

### (i) Standards

Stage 1 – Identify relevant customer service standards including from the set of National e-Service delivery standards and work with partner organisations and internal departments to agree a core set of standards and measures.

(ii) Stage 2 – Implement across front of house ECDC teams, Sanctuary, ARP and internal departments.

### (iii) Customer Satisfaction

To develop an effective process of measuring customer satisfaction to enable an understanding of the issues or key drivers that cause satisfaction and dissatisfaction with a service experience. This information can be used to inform future service planning and service improvements and also PR and media campaigns.

### (iv) Avoidable Contact

To measure avoidable contact, where both public and businesses fail to get useful value from time spent contacting the Council. This may be for many reasons e.g. having to repeat information when passed from person to person, not getting all the information they need in one go, progress chasing an expected service or reporting a service failure. By identifying customer contact that is “avoidable” the Council is better placed to resolve customer issues at first point of contact and redesign how services and information are made more accessible to the customer and not waste resources on activity that has no value to our customers, who as result, experience frustration, dissatisfaction and lack of trust in the Council as a whole.

## 2.5 ICT SYSTEM

The existing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software is not fit for purpose. It requires the double entry of data for users (i.e. is not integrated) and does not have the facility to easily provide essential performance and management information which is crucial to inform future service planning. (Note – the CRM system was bundled free with the Council’s e-forms software).

(i) Stage 1 – Investigate options for replacing the existing CRM software and make recommendations for its replacement.

(ii) Stage 2 - Roll out the replacement CRM system throughout the Council and provide appropriate training.

(iii) Stage 3 - Integrate CRM with Council’s core back office systems to avoid double entry and generate capacity in the front and back office.

REVIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICESDRAFT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ITEM	KEY AREA	KEY TASKS	LEAD	BUDGET	TIMESCALE	CONSULTEES
1A	STRATEGY – One set of staff	Multi-tasking between teams (ARP, Sanctuary and ECDC) to improve customer service, flexibility and capacity (Note – consideration re: separation of duty requirements).	Head of ICT and Customer Services	No additional requirement	Jan 2014	Staff and management of Sanctuary, ARP and ECDC front of house teams plus Unison
1B		Joining up teams to facilitate management improvement & capacity gains in addition to other benefits (above)	Deputy Chief Executive	Any restructuring proposals to be considered separately including financial implications	April 2014	As above
1C	Self -Serve	Self service promotion to raise customer awareness of the on line services and facilities available.	Head of ICT & Customer Services	No budgetary requirements at this stage however any costs will need to be assessed	May 2013	Customer Services, ARP and Sanctuary staff
2A	STAFFING Structure – Short and longer term	Restructuring existing ECDC Customer Services team to deliver an increase to senior manager capacity and more effective day to day operational management of the front of house staff.	Head of ICT and Customer Services supported by HR	17k available	Jan 2014	Customer Services staff and Unison

ITEM	KEY AREA	KEY TASKS	LEAD	BUDGET	TIMESCALE	CONSULTEES
2B		See 1B				
3A	PERFORMANCE	Develop a core set of customer service standards and targets.  Improve arrangements between Council service teams and Customer Services.	Head of ICT and Customer Services	No budgetary requirements at this stage however any costs will need to be assessed	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	Heads of Service, Customer Services, ARP and Sanctuary staff
3B		Implement across ECDC, ARP (ECDC) and Sanctuary (ECDC) and provide regular management performance reports. (Note this will require commitment across the Council).	Head of ICT and Customer Services	See 3A	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2013 (however performance reporting is linked in part to the implementation of a new CRM system)	See 3A
3C	Customer Satisfaction	Develop a process for measuring customer satisfaction of the Council services and the service provided by front and back office staff. To include Sanctuary customers for front office reception services	Head of ICT and Customer services	See 3A	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	Heads of Service Customer Services, ARP and Sanctuary staff
3D	Avoidable Contact	Develop a process for monitoring and reducing avoidable contact.	Head of ICT and Customer Services	No additional requirement.	June 2013	Heads of Service, Customer Services, ARP
4A	ICT SYSTEM	Investigate options for replacing the existing software	Head of ICT and	Bid to be submitted for	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	Heads of Service, Customer

ITEM	KEY AREA	KEY TASKS	LEAD	BUDGET	TIMESCALE	CONSULTEES
		and make recommendations for its replacement, (to include member requirements e.g. for those who require or wish to better understand the issues affecting their constituents and wards).	Customer Services	Capital funding		Services, ICT, Users
4B		Implement agreed approach	Head of ICT and Customer Services	See 4A	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2013	Training for all users
4C		To integrate CRM with back office systems to avoid duplication and generate efficiency savings.	Head of ICT & Customer Services	From ICT capital programme (funded by Improvement East)	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014 (1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot)	Heads of Service Customer Services, ICT, Users