

CABINET

6th April 2010

CUSTOMER CARE

Report of the Chief Executive

STRATEGIC AIM:	To be a well-managed organisation: Improving our Services Cost Effectively		
KEY DECISION	NO	DATE ITEM FIRST APPEARED ON FORWARD PLAN	January 2010

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report introduces the draft Guide to Customer Care Standards to be subject to public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Cabinet approve the Customer Care vision and standards contained in paragraphs 4.3 to 4.5 for consultation and, following a period of consultation, that the results be reported back to Cabinet.**
- 2.2 **That public consultation be undertaken as outlined in paragraph 4.7.**

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable appropriate consultation with interested parties including Customers.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A small working group from within the Council has been reviewing our current customer care standards as part of the overall Access2Services project. This work has included:-

- A review of standards at other Councils
- Feedback from Cabinet and Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel on the regular quarterly reports, specifically the customer services performance
- Feedback from Partner organisations within the LSP
- A mystery shopping exercise

- 4.2 It is intended that, in tandem with consultation about the standards, a piece of work will be supported to identify changes in working practices to facilitate an improved service. This will again be undertaken by a small working group supported by Lands End who with their significant experience have agreed to assist on this project.

4.3 The proposed vision for Customer Care is:-

The council will provide a welcoming and courteous experience for all our customers and will deal with every enquiry efficiently, to the best of our ability.

We are committed to achieving customer satisfaction but if we should get things wrong, we will correct them promptly and learn from the experience.

4.4 The proposed standards are:-

We will...

- be welcoming, polite and helpful
- be open, honest and fair
- respond quickly and efficiently to enquiries and requests for service
- use plain language in any contact we have with you
- only ask you for information that is relevant and explain why it is needed
- tell you what we can and cannot do so you know what to expect from us
- work hard to meet the needs of all our customers as individuals
- ask for your views about our services and act on any comments you make
- make sure when we are not able to help you we try to find out who can

4.5 In relation to monitoring our performance against the vision and standards the following targets are proposed:-

If you phone us we will:

Provide you with service options and enable you to speak to a member of staff within 15 seconds.

Respond to your telephone message or voicemail within one working day.

Tell you who you are speaking to

If you email or write to us we will:

We aim to respond to you as quickly as possible and definitely within five working days.

If your query cannot be resolved in this time we will acknowledge your email within one working day or two working days for letters and provide a full response within 10 working days.

For visitors we will:

Deal with you promptly aiming to keep any delays within ten minutes.

Make a private interview room available.

Offer you an appointment if you prefer.

If we have arranged a visit at your Home or Business we will:

Visit according to a time pre-arranged with you.

Carry formal identification and ensure we display this before entering your premises.

Be mindful that we are a guest at your home or business.

4.6 The working group is working on a Complaints, Compliments and Comments policy which will come to Cabinet for comment during Quarter 1 2010/2011.

4.7 Public consultation is proposed over a four week period and to comprise of:-

- a. A press release outlining the proposed standards.
- b. A web based survey.
- c. A survey of customers attending customer services and those contacting us by telephone.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	IMPACT	COMMENTS
Time	Low	There are no specific issues
Viability	Low	There are no specific issues
Finance	Low	There are no specific issues
Profile	Low	It is important that the contents of the report have the support of our customers. The consultation process will facilitate this.
Equality and Diversity	Low	The proposed standards ensure that our responsibilities are met.

Background Papers
None

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A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.