

CUSTOMER ACCESS GROUP
Wednesday, 6th October, 2010

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Zoe Burke, J. Dyson, Jill Jones, Mark Leese, Rachel O'Neil and Jasmine Speight.

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Garrad, Dawn Price and Jenny Vaughan.

64. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8TH MARCH, 2010

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th March, 2010, be approved as a correct record.

65. CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY REFRESH

Rachel O'Neil gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

What we already know:-

- Access points still fragmented
- Rotherham had a high proportion of face-to-face activity across the borough in comparison to other Councils
- Budget pressures meant we need to increase on-line transactions
- Council Customer Services had only part transferred to RBT – further consolidation was required

What our customers are telling us:-

- Customers are confused about where and when they could access services
- Satisfaction with Joint Service Centres was high with customers enjoying being able to access a number of public services under 1 roof
- Over 16% of customers could not find what they needed on the website and contacted us by telephone
- Over 7% of customers could not find what they needed on the website and visited in person

Proposed Refreshed Strategy

- Website
 - o Customers who chose to access services and information via the Website channel would do so via the Council's website. It would be the primary provision for this channel
 - o Customers would have choices about the different ways that they could interact with the Council and access services
 - o Customers would be directed to other online services that

may not be provided by the Council directly but still formed part of their customer journey. Where possible, the Council website would take content from other sources and repurpose it so customers got a consolidated experience

- Phone
 - Customers who chose to access services and information via the Phone channel would do so via the Council's Contact Centre. This would be the primary provision of this channel
 - Co-location of Council officers and partners would be undertaken where required to ensure that the Contact Centre was sustainable, offered value for money and provided a consistent service to customers
- Letter/ In Person
 - Customers who chose to access services and information via the In Person (or Letter) channel would do so via the Council's network of Service Centres. These would be the primary physical access points for this channel
 - The Council would not replicate the services provided in the Service Centres across other Council and partner facilities

Grouping of Services

- Access Benefits and Access Care – Will require ongoing relationships with customers who would be accessing multiple functional activities over a period of time. Therefore more effective and better customer service to group the 2 functional activities under Access Benefits and Access Care. Customer Service Officers supporting the processes would be cross trained across both and have the ability to deliver all of the functional processes to
- Give Feedback or Private Information, Apply for Things, Get Information, Make a Booking, Pay for Things – These would be transactional processes that customers needed to access as “one offs” rather than as part of a wider customer journey. Customer Service Officers would be cross trained across all of the service lines to ensure maximum flexibility and benefit
- The structure for the delivery of Customer Services meant that consistent services could be provided across organisational boundaries whether internally or externally

High Level Strategic Objectives underpinned by Customer Insight

- Reduce unnecessary contact and processes that create demand
- Switch demand to self-service and facilitated access
- Enable customers to resolve their own enquiries

- Consolidate transactional services into the Contact and Customer Service Centres

Next Steps – Directorate Input

- Identify projects within Directorates which will help to deliver the Strategy. Feedback by the end of October, 2010
- Identify groups that Directorates would like to be involved in consultation
- 1st draft of Strategy out for consultation by November, 2010- revisions to Strategy completed by February, 2011
- Agreement to Strategy completed by March, 2011
- Commence the first phase of Programme in April, 2011

A report had been considered by the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet about what the Strategy should look like and been approved as the right approach. Phase 2 was face-to-face access points across the Borough.

Each Directorate should look at their own Service Plans at projects over the coming years and ascertain which would support the Strategy. Particular attention needed to be paid as to how you scoped a service or consolidated a service.

There was a lot of work taking place within Customer Service Centres with regard to avoidable contact. At the moment there was only a sample in the various Services to enhance Siebel so now starting to look at it by process, Service and why people contacted the Service initially.

If there were any specific groups that Directorates felt should be included in the consultation phase should be passed to Rachel.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

66. CUSTOMER CHARTER BENCHMARKING

Rachel O'Neil reminded the Group that it had agreed to start benchmarking the Customer Charter results against similar Councils and their Service Standards as they presented in the Charter on a six monthly basis. The second round of benchmarking was about to commence.

She asked if there was anything specific the members would like to see from a benchmarking point of view from Customer Services?

The following were raised/ highlighted:-

- Had any benchmarking taken place on telephones?
- Since the last quarter a few of the Service Standards had slipped
- CYPS has collected data on Customer Charter but had not been requested to submit it. The information would be collected corporately.
- Benchmarking exercise not specifically to see how the Authority was performing against the Charter but to ascertain if its Service Standards were in line with other Councils
- Benchmark of satisfaction?
- Worthwhile to benchmark with comparable authorities
- Rotherham's response rate was 10 days; a number of Councils was 15

Agreed:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That customer satisfaction be included in the benchmarking exercise.

(3) That any other suggestions for inclusion be forwarded to Rachel O'Neil.

67. LOCALITIES REVIEW

Rachel referred to the project which had been commenced looking at all the Council's access points in the localities to ascertain if any recommendations could be made for rationalisation. That was due to be completed by the end of the month and would then be submitted to Cabinet for approval.

The report would set out which properties there were considered to be opportunities to rationalise and thereby accrue revenue savings this year and in the future. It would tie in with approval of the Customer Access Strategy and also some ongoing work around Locality Based Service and where the staff were based.

Agreed:- That the report be noted.

68. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on 24th November, 2010, at 11.30 a.m. in the Town Hall.