
Meeting: Customer and Central Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 21st June 2010
Subject: Remodelling of Customer Service Programme
Report of: Steve Male, Portfolio Holder Customer, Systems & Property
Summary: The report proposes key operational changes to Customer Services that enable the Council to improve its customer management in line with the adopted Customer Services Strategy, whilst increasing value for money and addressing the pressures of an increasingly difficult fiscal environment.

Advising Officer: Richard Ellis, Director of Customer and Shared Services
Contact Officer: Clive Jones, Assistant Director Customer and Systems
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

In the remodelling of the Council's Customer Services operation, the vision and priorities of the Council have been taken into account.

The proposals lay the foundations for the future operating model of the authority.

Financial:

Capital costs for these proposals which involve the modification of Customer Service Centres and the procurement of a CRM are already included in the existing Capital Programme for 2010 /1011.

Capital costs for the development of Community Hubs, will require the individual business case to be developed and submitted for approval before any of the projects can proceed.

The CRM procurement while approved as a capital scheme will be subject to the normal procurement procedures of the Council. The revenue implications where identified are shown in the summary table below. Business cases will go through the Efficiencies Implementation Group (EIG) to ensure savings are achieved:

Work Stream	Non Cashable Revenue Savings (£000)	Cashable Revenue Savings (£000)	Ongoing Revenue Costs (£000)
Single Contact Centre	0	200	98
Community Hubs	Waiting business case	Waiting business case	Waiting business case
Customer Access Points	0	30	3.5
CRM	Expected but difficult to quantify	Expected but difficult to quantify	Expected but difficult to quantify
Service migration	Waiting individual service business cases	Waiting individual service business cases	Waiting individual service business cases
Total Indicative	0	230	101.5

Legal:

Wider public sector transformation as proposed in the Total Place pilot will require significant legislation change on a national level.

As per the constitution of the Council, all partnership arrangements will follow the Audit Commission's guidelines on partnership governance outlined in the "Governing Partnerships: Bridging the Accountability Gap" (October 2005) document.

The governance of Total Place projects is proposed in the Total Place report issued on the 5th February 2010 to central government.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

The report has identified programmes that do require staff association consultation. Consultation is nearing completion with staff and staff associations to minimise the impact in relation to the creation of a single contact centre. Consultation will be required when Community Hub requirements are defined.

Equalities/Human Rights:

As each work stream is developed an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken to ensure that the operation of the programme does not discriminate against any groups.

Community Safety:

There are no Community Safety implications arising from this report.

Sustainability:

The provision of more localised service delivery and improved internet self service will contribute to the overall reduction in CO₂ emissions of the community by reducing the requirement for citizens to travel to a Customer Service Centre. These CO₂ savings are slightly negated by the requirement for Customer Service staff to travel to Bedford.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. that the Committee comments on and endorses the recommendations made in the Remodelling Programme project work streams**
- 2. that the Committee note the Remodelling Programme will be going before the Executive for final approval at their meeting on 13th July 2010**

Introduction

1. The recent Total Place pilot has identified areas where the wider public sector can deliver improved customer outcomes at less overall cost.

The review of the authority's web provision has identified:

- Simpler navigation is required to enable more customers to self inform.
- Additional transactional services need providing on the authority's web site to enable increased self service.

In the context of improving service, whilst reducing costs, an operational review has been undertaken in Customer Services; pulling together the wider partnership learning from Total Place, the necessity to encourage customers to use the self service channel of the web and implementation of best practice in operations.

Objectives / Aims

2. The remodelling proposals for Customer Services are intended to achieve the following objectives / aims:
 - Increase the accessibility of face to face and self service channels.
 - Provide wider public sector service delivery more locally, initially in the critical area of employment in partnership with the DWP for the more vulnerable groups of our society.
 - Reduce operating costs.
 - Improve the consistency of customer management.
 - Increase the number of enquiries resolved at first point of contact
 - Reduce avoidable contact
3. The Remodelling of Customer Services report has identified 7 work streams that enable the authority to meet the stated aims above

Programme Work Streams

4. Papers providing the detailed options and information for each of the 7 identified work streams are attached to this report.
5. The draft Executive report is also attached to this report to provide this Committee with a summary of the recommendations.

6. This Committee is asked to consider the attached papers and endorse the recommendations or note the actions and plans contained therein.

The 7 identified work streams are:

- (a) Creation of a single contact centre in Technology House, Bedford
- (b) Review of the telephone numbering strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council
- (c) Customer Access Points
- (d) Creation of Community Hubs
- (e) Changes to the operating hours of the Customer Service Centres
- (f) CRM procurement
- (g) Migration of services into Customer Services

Appendices:

Appendix A – Remodelling of Customer Services Executive Report 13th July 2010

Appendix B – Programme Streams 1 & 2 – Telephony Channel

Appendix C – Programme Streams 3,4 & 5 – Face to Face Channel

Appendix D – Programme Stream 6 – CRM Procurement

Appendix E – Programme Stream 7 – Service Migration Plan

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

none

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands