

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

11th June 2013

MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT - QUARTER 4, 2012/13

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Phil Mould - Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	√
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr - Head of Customer Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides Members with details of customer feedback data for the fourth quarter of 2012/13, along with some transactional data relating to the Customer Service Centre. It also provides a final update on the Action Plan put in place to support the Every Customer, Every Time - Everybody Matters, Customer Experience Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:

the update for the period 1st January 2013 - 31st March 2013 is noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The report, attached at Appendix 1, sets out details of customer feedback, including complaints, compliments, Local Government Ombudsman complaints and other customer satisfaction feedback. It gives information on how well we have handled complaints against our agreed timescales.
- 3.2 It also provides some transactional information for the Customer Service Centre and One Stop Shops.
- 3.3 The 'Every Customer, Every Time - Everybody Matters' Customer Experience Strategy was adopted early in 2011 and was supported by a three year Action Plan.
- 3.4 This action plan has now been completed, ahead of schedule, and many of the actions have now become on-going normal business.

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- 3.5 Customer Service is an integral part of our transformation towards a systems thinking organisation and as such we are now using systems thinking principles to develop customer care and customer service provision.

Financial Implications

- 3.6 There are no direct financial implications.

Legal Implications

- 3.7 There are no specific legal issues arising from this report. Any legal issues arising from complaints are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.8 The Every Customer, Every Time - Customer Experience Strategy was launched in March 2011 and sets out our vision for excellent customer service provision and improve the customer experience when having contact with the Council.
- 3.9 Quarterly reporting is intended to ensure Members are aware of progress and updated in respect of customer feedback, especially complaints made in respect of service provision.
- 3.10 Good customer service improves value for money by reducing failure demand. Improvements to the way we handle complaints has resulted in less Officer time spent chasing responses and re-investigating.
- 3.11 Customer service and excellent customer care is embedded in every transformation work strand. The Customer Services Management Team continue to work closely with service in transformation to support their work and to ensure a consistent approach to customer care quality.
- 3.12 The Customer Service Team provide a range of support from guidance to training, assistance with difficult situations to help with writing complaint responses. Customer Feedback also continues to be closely monitored by Customer Service Officers and concerns escalated to the Head of Customer Service to address with the relevant Head of Service.

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Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.13 It is important to monitor aspects of customer service to ensure that we are improving and developing. Customers need to know that we respond properly to complaints, act on the issues raised and report on them. Customer feedback is a valuable tool for understanding what is going well, and what not so well, within the organisation. These form vital information for all transformation reviews.
- 3.14 Managers are now responding to complaints in person and more quickly, thus resulting in a more responsive service and one which better understands the real issues. This in turn is leading to better outcomes for customers. This new model for handling complaints is currently being rolled in to services across the organisation.
- 3.15 Measures provide us with useful information about what is happening in our organisation and help us to understand where changes may impact.
- 3.16 Although led by the Head of Customer Services, the Customer Experience Strategy applies to all services and all customers and progress against the action plan involved Officers from many services working together to the benefit of customers.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

It is important to analyse the Council's complaints or compliments and for the Council to identify whether there are any trends which need to be addressed and any lessons learned in order to improve the Council performance and service to the Customer. The Customer Service Centre data is important for monitoring service delivery and identifying areas for change or improvement.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Making Experiences Count, Quarterly Customer Service Report Quarter 4 2012/13

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The details to support the information provided within this report are held by Head of Customer Services.

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