

Overview and Scrutiny, 8 January 2014 – Briefing Note

Topic:	Have Your Say, Citizen First, and the Customer Access Programme
Requested by:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Submitted by:	Ray Hennessy, Tracy Laxton, and Claire Brown
Date submitted:	18 December 2013

(note: a presentation will be provided at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to give councillors more information)

Background to Citizen First

In September 2011, a Citizen First Scoping Document was developed. This was used as part of engagement on Citizen First and to inform the scope of the Citizen First Transformation Programme. At the time of developing the Scoping Document, an initial set of aims and outcomes were identified for Citizen First which was informed by Manifesto Pledges and Council Priorities. This then formed the draft citizen First Policy.

The outline content of the Citizen First Policy was subject to a wide range of consultation with citizens, colleagues, councillors and partners (a list is included in the Citizen First Policy). In addition, citizen insight has also informed the development of the Policy: for example, the Citizen and Arrow Surveys undertaken in December 2011 / January 2012.

The Citizen First Policy was approved by Leadership Group. Mindful that there are a number of audiences for the Citizen First Strategy, a citizen facing summary has also been produced. The Summary Policy centres on the **Nottingham Promise**. The Nottingham Promise is a commitment by a range of public sector organisations to deliver good quality customer services and high customer care standards. The Nottingham Promise also includes the role citizens can play in helping us keep to our commitments.

A brief outline of Citizen First activity delivered to date includes:

- A baseline of **citizen satisfaction** of how enquiries have been handled (Manifesto Pledge), which has been followed to track progress. Also an expansion of capturing citizen satisfaction for a number of services, both face to face and on the telephone.
- **Customer care** measures and behaviours embedded in manager's appraisals.
- Increased understanding and visibility of **telephony standards** and performance, with support being provided to services where improvements are required. This has led to overall improvements.
- A policy to set out the Council's **equality offer** to its citizens and encourage better use of **plain English**. This was informed from feedback by citizen **mystery shoppers**.
- A forward plan of consultation and engagement, initially for the Council with a view to involve partners.
- Using **customer journey mapping** to identify possible improvements that could be made to the time it takes a taxi driver to get a licence.
- **Have Your Say** - a comments, compliments and complaints policy, process and system to enable the Council to capture and learn from citizen feedback.

Have Your Say

Have Your Say (HYS) was launched in July 2012. A new comments, compliments and complaints procedure was produced and we rolled out a new module on the covalent (I.T) system to capture all feedback.

This is important because of the.....

Manifesto commitment

- Make Nottingham the most citizen friendly Council in the country and ensure that when surveyed 95% of people are satisfied with the way they were treated.

Chief Executive

- Putting citizens at the heart of what we do
 - Nottingham Promise – use your feedback to improve services

Have Your Say feedback includes.....

Comment - Opinions not facts

Compliment - We got it right! Sometimes we go the extra mile

Complaint - We did not meet a citizen's expectations

Over the last 18 months we have logged in excess of 6500+ pieces of feedback and we have successful joint partnership working with Members Casework. We have promoted HYS at internal and external events and engaged with all reception points and provided a brief on promoting HYS. Some services provided by the council are not popular and we are not always able to deliver the outcome the citizen hopes for, however, it is how the citizen feels they have been treated that really counts.

Now that we have better baseline information, more can and will be done to improve the citizen's experience when they contact the Council.

Citizen First to date has focused on delivering improvements that can make sure we put the citizen at the heart of what we do as part of our 'business as usual'. This has also allowed an opportunity to develop larger transformation activity for the longer term (e.g. the **Customer Access Programme**).

Customer Access Programme

The Customer Access Programme aims to:

- **Improve** satisfaction and value for money by designing services around our customers.
- **Simplify** the ways customers access and use our services locally and make the most of digital and self-service options.

- **Safeguard** services and assets by reducing the cost of delivery and removing complexity allowing resources to be rebalanced to protect vulnerable citizens.
- **Deliver** services we can be proud of.

To achieve this we will deliver:

- Excellent customer services, supported by:
 - Systems which provide colleagues with the right information at the right time;
 - Increased self-service applications and automated processes
- Better, more targeted face-to-face services in more locations.
- A flexible, responsive, organisational structure.
- A service we would all be happy to receive and which would be good enough for our families.
- Significant, sustainable cashable savings.
- Interfaces to maximise the efficiency of other big tickets such as Community Buildings Programme.

The programme is currently developing a business case to restructure customer facing processes from across the organisation into a customer service function. This will allow the Council to resolve 80% of queries at first point of contact even where the customer may have multiple queries across different departments.

We are also looking at the way in which customer's access services and aim to develop our online services to allow customers the option of self service at a time and place to suit their needs. The programme will work with customers and local support groups to understand and respond to customer needs whilst developing online services that people prefer to use. Where customers wish to access these services we will support them to do so.

Questions sent in advance of the Meeting

(1) How the council deals with complaints from its citizens – Have your say? Including how data is collated and reported and fed back into service planning

How we deal with complaints

Citizens can make a complain by telephone, in person, in writing or by e-mail. Most complaints no longer have to be 'in writing' as was the case before – this was an important change, both making it easier for feedback to be received and also helps to meet our equalities commitments. At all stages, we provide the citizen with the name of who is dealing with their complaint, contact, reference number, and what happens next. We also respond in the citizen's preferred method of contact. If a colleague receives a complaint and doesn't know initially which service will deal with it, they will 'own' the complaint, log it on the system, and make sure it is effectively passed to the right person to deal with.

At any stage, if we agree with the complaint we will:

- Apologise and explain what went wrong;
- Arrange for the citizen to receive the service they were entitled to receive as far as possible;
- Change our process, where relevant, so that the mistake is not repeated;
- Occasionally, provide a gift as a token of our apology.

Details of the procedure can be located in the background papers. We have a four stage process to address complaints. In summary:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution. We'll try to resolve any concern expressed about our services quickly, usually within 2 working days.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint. We will provide a full response within 10 working days. If this is not possible, we will explain why there is a delay and advise the citizen when they can expect a full response.

Stage 3: Review. A complaint will proceed to Stage 3 if the citizen is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, or if they feel the delay in receiving a full response is unreasonable. The citizen can ask us to have someone else review the case. The Reviewing Officer will write a review of their findings and send it to the appropriate Head of Service, Director or Corporate Director, to make a decision on our response.

Stage 4: Referral to the Chief Executive. If the citizen remains unhappy with our Stage 3 response, or if they feel the delay in receiving a full response is unreasonable they can ask to go to Stage 4: the final stage of our complaint procedure. The Stage 4 Reviewing Officer will send the citizen a full report of the Chief Executive's final decision within 15 working days. We reserve the right not to escalate a complaint to Stage 4.

The feedback is automatically sent via the online form (intranet / internet) to the respective service to respond within the agreed timescales. Progress on the complaint is updated on Covalent. Currently HYS data is reported quarterly to the Citizen First Board and Corporate Delivery Board.

The system is flexible enough to report on trends, timescales of responses, nature of complaints, root case identified, etc. This can be identified at a service, department and corporate level. The overall timescales for responding to citizen feedback is good. However, there is more to do to ensure services use their feedback in a systemic way, e.g. look at trends and see if future complaints can be 'switched off'. The next phase of HYS therefore will be how we use citizen feedback to learn from and improve what we do.

To help achieve this, a Have Your Say Learning and Improvement role has now been created and recruited to. This increases the capacity to work with departments on how they analyse their feedback and report back on what we have learnt, what has changed and ensure we provide a fit for purpose response.

In December, progress on HYS was presented to the Corporate Leadership Team. Corporate Directors agreed to roll out the HYS feedback cards to all front line colleagues. The Chief Executive is keen for us to learn of the good work delivered by frontline colleagues out in the city and demonstrate 'we are putting citizens at the heart of what we do'.

(2) What are the trends for complaints, what it is the most common, frequent complaint and how you monitor citizen satisfaction?

It is important to remember Have Your Say is all feedback from citizens and whilst we acknowledge the complaints and focus on areas of improvement we also need to learn about the services we deliver well and share good practice across the organisation. Councillors may wish to note that the analysis below doesn't include Social Care feedback: whilst citizen can (and do) provide feedback through Have Your Say, the feedback is currently maintained and reported separately.

Comments (Q2) Top 5	Compliments (Q2) Top 5	Complaints (Q2) Top 5	Root Cause (Q2) Top 5
Leisure Centres	Leisure Centres	Council Tax	Quality of service [33]
Libraries	Libraries	Leisure Centres	Quality of service [28]
Traffic Management	Council Tax	Benefits	Quality of service [35]
Council Tax	Benefits	Traffic Management	Policy [13]
Benefits	Traffic Management	Libraries	Other [26]

At the moment the same Departments are consistently logging feedback they receive from citizens. However, more work needs to be done to ensure all services are both logging and using citizen feedback to improve services (as mentioned above). In addition to increased capacity to work with services, Corporate Directors have agreed to champion HYS this could change to include some of our larger frontline services.

(3) Explanation of what channel development is and how it fits into the Council's citizen first programme?

Channel in this context refers to the way customers contact the Council, this could be via telephone, face to face or through web based processes. Channel development or channel shift is about developing services that can be delivered more efficiently, for example online services, so that colleagues can focus efforts on those areas in which they add the most value.

The Customer Access Programme will produce a Strategy which will describe the way in which we will develop services through all channels and the way in which we will promote those services so that customers are aware of the options and opportunities available to them.

Channel development was conceived through the Citizen First Programme but due to its size and complexity it is now a part of the Customer Access Programme.



(4) How will the council interact with its citizens in the future? How can it be sure it does not disenfranchise individuals and communities who may not have or use IT/smart phones to contact the council etc?

In the future the Council will interact with its citizens through the right access point for the customer and the interaction. As access to digital services develops and use of technology increases the Council will respond to that and find new ways to connect with those people who prefer those means. We will however ensure that traditional services are available and improved so that excellent customer service is a feature of all our interactions regardless of the way they are accessed.

New technology and streamlined processes will enable colleagues offering support to customers over the phone or face to face in our contact centres to provide a seamless service that properly addresses the customer's needs rather than single issue resolution.

The Programme will also work with the community to establish a digital inclusion strategy and provide appropriate IT to allow those who wish to use online services to do so regardless of their demographic.

Queries and comments made through the website feedback facility show that more online services will make the Council more inclusive, particularly for customers who face challenges with their mobility or language.

Background papers and links

Citizen First Policy and Summary:

<http://gossweb.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nccextranet/index.aspx?articleid=12713>

Nottingham Promise: <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottinghampromise>

Have Your Say (Citizen Information and Webform):

<https://secure.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/haveyoursay/>

Have Your Say Policy and Procedure:

<http://intraapps.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/haveyoursay/>

Plain language guidance:

<http://gossweb.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nccextranet/index.aspx?articleid=16425>

Customer Access Programme, Outline Business Case: Can be found at Item 7 of the Executive Board, 18 June 2013

<http://open.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/comm/agenda.asp?CtteMeetID=5013>

Contacts

Councillor Nicola Heaton, Portfolio Holder for Community Services. ☎ 07947 898 704.
Email: nicola.heaton@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Ian Curryer, Chief Executive - Sponsoring Corporate Director (Customer Access). ☎
0115 8763600. Email: ian.curryer@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Mark Gannon, Customer Access Programme Director. ☎ 0115 876 3500. Email:
mark.gannon@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Claire Brown, Customer Access Programme Manager. ☎ 0115 876 3207. Email:
claire.brown2@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Angela Probert, Sponsoring Corporate Director (Citizen First). ☎ 0115 8763440. Email:
angela.probert@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Lisa Black, Citizen Lead for Transformation. ☎ 0115 8763930
Email: lisa.black@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Ray Hennessy, Citizen First Programme Manager. ☎ 0115 8762005. Mobile:
07534453059. Email: ray.hennessy@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Tracy Laxton, Business Administration Manager. ☎ 0115 87 64254. Email:
tracy.laxton@nottinghamcity.gov.uk