

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
3 JUNE 2015
CUSTOMER ACCESS PROGRAMME
REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. Purpose

This Committee is asked to consider an update on the work taking place in the Council in how it deals with citizen complaints, including the development of different methods for citizens to engage with the Council as part of the Customer Access Programme.

2. Action required

Councillors are asked to consider and comment on the information provided.

3. Background

- 3.1 In January 2014, the Committee received a presentation on Have Your Say, Citizen First and the Customer Access Programme with an outline of key activity delivered to date. The update focussed on citizen satisfaction of how enquiries had been handled, the use of plain English and the use of customer journey mapping to identify possible improvements.
- 3.2 November 2014, the Committee heard from the Chief Executive who outlined the Council's approach to put citizens at the heart of its operating model in the path from 'good to great'.
- 3.3 The Citizen First Policy¹ relates directly to one of the Council's priorities as set out in the Council Plan. The Council is committed to improving customer care and to focus more effectively to meet the needs of our citizens. The Citizen First Strategy has therefore been developed to help us meet the commitments the Council has made as an organisation. The Citizen First Programme provides a cost effective ways for citizens to access Nottingham City Council services as well as improving those already in place. It aims to ensure that Nottingham City Council and partner organisations deliver consistently good quality customer service and high customer care standards. The Citizen First Policy outlines what we need to achieve and how collectively we can achieve this to improve the customer care for our citizens.
- 3.4 The Citizen First Strategy outlines what we need to achieve and how collectively we can achieve this to improve the customer care for our citizens. It is centred on improving access to services and will help colleagues to deliver those services more effectively. The Strategy can be broken down into five key elements:

¹ What is the Citizen First Policy?

<http://gossweb.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nccextranet/index.aspx?articleid=12712>

- (i) To work with partners to establish a single standard for service delivery.
- (ii) To improve the range and quality of access citizens have to services and information.
- (iii) to ensure that we deal with citizen enquiries more quickly, clearly and effectively.
- (iv) To engage with citizens better and use their feedback to continually improve our standard of service.
- (v) To find better ways of working.

3.5 The Customer Access Programme focusses on the way the Council delivers its services and helps to ensure that the Council's customers are at the heart of everything it does. In order to meet this ambition, the programme will focus on providing simple and efficient system processes.

3.6 At the moment customers are often unable to complete multiple tasks in one visit or phone call. This means that colleagues are often involved in unnecessary activities and do not always have the right information available at the right time. In light of this, colleagues spend time signposting customers to other departments for a response.

3.7 The Customer Access Programme aims to:

- (i) **Improve** satisfaction and value for money by designing services around our customers.
- (ii) **Simplify** the ways customer's access and use our services locally and make the most of digital and self-service options.
- (iii) **Safeguard** services and assets by reducing the cost of delivery and removing complexity allowing resources to be rebalanced to protect vulnerable citizens.
- (iv) **Deliver** services we can be proud of.

3.8 There are a range of potential benefits to the Customer Access Programme. The Programme will aim to bring improved customer satisfaction and value for money from having services designed around customers. It will also aim to make us more efficient by simplifying the ways in which customers access and use Council services by making effective use of our local and digital services.

4. **List of attached information**

Appendix 1 – Citizen First Policy 2012 - 2015

5. **Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information**

None

6. **Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

Minutes of meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 January 2014.

7. **Wards affected**

City-wide

8. **Contact information**

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