

To: City Executive Board

Date: 11th September 2013

Report of: Head of Customer Services

Title of Report: Draft Customer Contact Strategy for Consultation

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To agree the Council's Draft Customer Contact Strategy (attached at Appendix 1) for consultation. The consultation will take place between September 2013 and January 2014 and take a number of different forms as set out at paragraphs 5 and 6. The outcome of the consultation together with the proposed Strategy will be brought back to City Executive Board in February 2014.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Cllr Susan Brown

Policy Framework:

Recommendation(s): To approve the Draft Customer Contact Strategy for consultation.

Appendix 1: Draft Customer Contact Strategy for Consultation

Appendix 2: Risk Assessment

Appendix 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction

1. Oxford City Council has an aspiration to create a world-class city for everyone and deliver world-class services.

World class customer service for Oxford City means:

- Consistent; right first time service delivery.
 - Proactively seeking customer feedback to inform service delivery.
 - Customer service being at the heart of our values and behaviours.
 - Working in partnership with complementary organisations to provide added value to our customers
 - Enabling as many customers as possible to access our services using the most efficient and cost effective channels (web and contact centre), whilst ensuring our face-to-face service is available for those customers who most need it.
 - Ensuring our end to end processes are as efficient as possible and that the customer journey and contact can be tracked.
2. The Council's current Customer Contact Strategy was agreed in October 2009. The strategy has been reviewed in light of current working practices, best practice and changes in technology. It is proposed that the draft strategy, attached at Appendix 1 is now consulted on to inform the future direction of customer contact for the City Council.

Draft Customer Contact Strategy

3. The Draft Customer Contact Strategy at Appendix 1 is intended for extensive consultation with users and stakeholders. The customer insight gathered throughout the consultation will be reported to the City Council's Executive Board in February 2014 together with a final proposed Strategy.
4. In developing the draft strategy we have pulled together a picture of who our communities are, and what they might need from the City Council in order to make their experience of using our services positive because their interaction with us has been quick and easily accessible. We have used the 2011 census to provide an initial outline of our potential customer base.
5. The Draft Customer Contact Strategy sets out where we are now, what areas we believe we need to develop, and how we will consult and work with our customers and stakeholders to inform how we develop future service delivery. Using demographic data, consultation will be carried out using a number of methods to ensure we offer varied opportunities for customers to give their feedback. Consultation methods will include:
 - Customer Focus Groups – Groups will be representative of the community and be used to discuss and inform service improvements
 - Surveys – surveys will be carried out to ensure customers unable to attend focus groups are able to be involved in the consultation process. Surveys may be carried out on the web or in paper form to ensure all customers are able to access them.

6. The detailed work to be undertaken is included in the Strategy itself at Appendix C, summarised below are the key milestones in the consultation process and the estimated dates for delivery.

- Draft Customer Contact Strategy for Consultation agreed by City Executive Board. (September 13)
- Inform delivery of accessible, user friendly access channels - We will ask customers whether there are additional ways they would prefer to access our services, for example using social media or mobile applications. We will also ask them what they believe great customer service is, including what our customer service standards should be and how they would like to be able to provide customer feedback. We will use our demographic data to identify hard to reach groups and investigate how we can reach them. We will also use our demographic data to analyse who our partner organisations should be. (September to December 13)
- Involve customers in service design to remove avoidable contact - To understand how best to encourage self-service generally via both the web and telephone and more specifically for housing repair requests. (August 13 to January 14)
- Customer Contact Strategy 2014 -2016 agreed by City Executive Board - Following analysis and evaluation of customer and stakeholder feedback. The Strategy will contain a high level implementation/action plan for. (February 14)

Risk

7. A risk assessment is attached at Appendix 2.

Climate Change/Environmental Impact

8. There will be no impact on climate change or the environment.

Equalities Impact

9. An equalities impact assessment has been is attached at Appendix 3.

Financial Implications

10. The costs of consulting on the strategy are contained within the Customer Services budget for 13/14.

Legal Implications

11. There are no legal implications.

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List of background papers: Customer Consultation Report Jan-Apr '13

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