

To: Customer and Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

By: Mike Hill – Cabinet Member for Communities Services and Amanda Honey Corporate Director – Customer & Communities

Date: 18th November 2011

Subject: Customer Service Strategy

Classification: Unrestricted

1.0 Introduction

The draft strategy is presented to Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the consultation process ahead of formal Member approval.

The Customer Service Strategy is the critical element of the Council's strategy map that will underpin the transition from organisation-centric to citizen-centric public services, crucial for delivery of the Bold Steps ambitions.

The success of the strategy is reliant upon positive engagement and adoption across the 'one council'.

2.0 The Approach

Investment will be required to deliver the desired outcomes. It is anticipated that in most instances the change in approach will deliver financial efficiencies as well as improved customer service. Business cases will expect to operate to an 'invest to save' profile. To support this approach:

- The work on consolidation of budgets currently being undertaken by Finance to align with structures implemented through 'Change to Keep Succeeding' needs to be in place by April 2012.
- Business process change identified by Customer Services needs to be adhered to and the resultant efficiencies released to meet implementation costs.

3.0 Development

The Customer Service strategy has been shared with a number of groups who have played a vital role in its development. These include;

Customer and Communities DMT

Access and Assessment Team – 9th September

Delivery Assurance Team (DAT) – 4th October

Gateway Programme Delivery Board (members include representatives from all of Kent district councils and Medway Council) – 20th October

Corporate Management Team – 8th November

As well as consulting with our Kent partners we have also shared the Customer Service Strategy with and have received positive feedback from both Northamptonshire and Surrey County Councils and from Experian, a private sector partner.

Feedback collated from these groups has informed this version of the strategy.

To help managers to deliver the priorities outlined in the strategy, a toolkit is being designed using expertise from across the council; this includes a delivery and communications plan, a cost to serve model and a comprehensive training programme.

The Director of Customer Services will be attending each Directorate's Management Team to share and consult staff on the strategy.

4.0 Recommendations

Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to **Comment** on the Customer Service Strategy

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