

Progress Update – EIT Task and Finish Review of Customer Services & Taxation

No.	Recommendation	Lead Responsibility	Finance Manager	Anticipated Completion Date/ Completion Date	Quarter 2 Evidence of progress Presented to Committee on 01/11/11 (Please state current position on recommendation or alternative action taken)	Q2 Savings/Costs to Date (please state whether actual or estimated)	Q2 Assessment of progress (Categories 1-4)
3	That a further review of Customer Services and Cashiers be undertaken in 2012/2013 by which time new technologies will be embedded and the new Stockton multi-service centre will be fully operational, thus enabling a more accurate assessment of the staffing resources required to run the service.	Debbie Hurwood	Paul Bale	December 2012	<p>Continuing to work on implementing new technologies (such as kiosks, self-service and SMS texting) which will improve efficiency.</p> <p>Continuing to cross train staff that will be working in the new Stockton Customer Service Centre so that they are able to deal with a range of enquiries.</p> <p>Continuing to monitor performance and benchmark with other local authority customer service teams in the area.</p> <p>Reviewing workloads and staff working patterns to ensure that the appropriate resources are employed during peak periods whilst maximising the potential of part-time working arrangements.</p>	N/A	2 – On track
5	The introduction of a trial scheme to “re-cycle” cases that have been returned by the Council’s main bailiff to an alternative bailiff.	Esme Hall	Paul Bale	March 2012	The trial is progressing well. 610 cases (value of £268,000) have been referred to Bristow & Sutor, the alternative bailiff, and £6,700 has been collected to date. Two further alternative bailiff firms have been identified and we are currently liaising with them, with a view to using their services later in the year.	N/A	2 – On track

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6	That work continue to exploit the potential of new technology to improve customer service in particular, further work be undertaken to develop a business case with regard to the introduction of SMS texting for inward and outbound interactions between Customer Services and residents.	Kath Hornsey	Paul Bale	Sept 2011	<p>As reported last quarter, the text messaging scheme has been successful and is now embedded in procedures.</p> <p>Procured kiosk self-service technology which has been installed in the new Stockton Customer Services Centre.</p> <p>Self-service forms are available on the website and kiosk to enable customers to log requests for service directly into the back-office system without any manual intervention by staff. Self service is available for refuse collection; street cleaning, highway, horticultural services and agricultural services and will continue to be developed as new opportunities emerge.</p> <p>The above automated systems for basic tasks are freeing up staff time to allow resources to focus on more complex queries (such as Housing Benefit) that cannot be delivered by self-service, speed up response times in the contact centre, and to help with the launch of the Stockton multi-service centre. The efficiencies achieved through improved use of new technology will be taken into account in the organisation review described in (3) above.</p>	N/A	1 - Complete

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9	That opportunities for partnering with other Councils continue to be explored and evaluated as the impact of changes to the Benefits Service on any possible future partnering arrangement become clearer.	Debbie Hurwood	Paul Bale	Ongoing	<p>During Q2, the Government issued consultation on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, which is intended to replace the national Council Tax Benefit system in 2013. The consultation period ends on 14th October 2011.</p> <p>The proposed changes have big implications for Council Tax and Council Tax Benefit administration, which will need to be assessed and taken into account in any decisions about future partnering.</p> <p>During the quarter, work has focussed on drafting a response to the consultation paper and considering the impact of the proposals for the Council and residents. The outcome of the consultation will not be known until the end of the year, at which time delivery options can be considered in more detail.</p>		2 – On track
Predicted savings of Review				£157k per annum	Actual Savings of Review to Date (including all recommendations)	£91,500 in 2011/2012, then on target for £157,000 per annum thereafter.	
Human Resources Implications				An organisation restructure that was recommended as part of the review and has been fully implemented resulted in a reduction of 4.5 FTE posts (1.5 voluntary redundancy, 0.5 voluntary reduction in hours, 2.5 deletion of vacant posts)			

Progress Update – Older People Strategy

Number	Recommendation	Responsibility	Anticipated Completion Date/ Completion Date	Q1 Evidence of Progress Presented on 13/09/11	Q1 Assessment of progress (Categories 1-4)	Q2 Evidence of Progress Presented on 01/11/11	Q2 Assessment of progress (Categories 1-4)
2	That the Council continue to develop its partnership approach to providing support for older people in the Borough through future service planning.	Liz Hanley	Annual update (Dec/ Jan)	<i>20/07/10 Strategy reviewed February 2010. Reviewed document to be considered at over 50s assembly.</i> No change to previous update.	2- On track.	Awaiting endorsement of/ launch of the North East Charter for Changing Age.	2- On track
14	That the feedback from the Northern Housing Consortium consultation on the Age Friendly Community in the North be fed into the review stage of the Older People Strategy.	Beccy Brown	Annual update Dec/ Jan	<i>20/07/10 To be reviewed as part of the communication plan.</i> No change to previous update.	2- On track.	No change to previous update.	2- On track
16	That the Stockton on Tees Public Transport Forum be promoted and that representations be made at this forum with a view to persuading bus companies to take appropriate action to improve their services in order to address the decline in bus patronage.	Chris Renahan	Ongoing	Public Transport Forum meeting is arranged for 23.7.11.	Ongoing.	Public Transport Forum took place on 23.7.11. Next meeting is yet to be arranged.	2- On track

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19	That opportunities for the Council to participate in joint working on older people issues be further explored with Catalyst, Help the Aged, Age Concern and the U3A and other similar organisations.	Liz Hanley	Ongoing	Update 14/06/11 <i>Prevention and re-ablement work streams are in progress.</i> No change to previous update.	2- On track.	No change to previous update.	2- On track
21	That a dedicated Older Persons' information section be created on the Council's website, containing all relevant information highlighted in this review regarding Older Peoples services, activities and benefits and this area include links to the websites of other organisations working to support the needs of older people in the Borough.	Beccy Brown	Oct 2011	Update 14/06/11 <i>The web-based Adult Service Directory has been delayed from the planned April launch due to the provider, Opportunity Links, going into Administration. They have now been bought out by Open Objects. SBC has agreed to purchase the Open Objects solution and in the next 6-8 weeks are planning to transfer the data into the new directory for a launch in the summer of 2011.</i> No change to previous update.	2- On track.	Revised launch date due to change of service provider.	2- On track
25	That the availability of grant funding for outdoor exercise/ recreational equipment for older people be considered within	Graham Clingan/Keith Mathews/ Neil Russell	Ongoing	Update 14/06/11 consultation with older people is currently in progress, including the Over 50s Assembly. No change to previous update.	2- On track.	No change to previous update.	2- On track.

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	future service planning; with reference to the possible options identified such as use either in dedicated apparatus sites (with possible location next to children's play areas) or integrated within 'healthy walks/leisure trails' . .						

Progress Update – Voluntary and Community Sector

No	Recommendation	Responsibility	Anticipated Completion Date/ Completion Date	Q1 Evidence of Progress Presented on 13/09/11	Q1 Assessment of Progress (Categories 1 – 4)	Q2 Evidence of Progress Presented on 01/11/11	Q Assessment of Progress (Categories 1 – 4)
4	That the Corporate Directors of DNS and CESC should take forward a response to the Audit Report on Youth and Community Centres, including reference to the status of Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre and that a report should be prepared for CMT and reported back through the scrutiny monitoring process within six months	Joint Working Group	01/01/2009 Review scheduled to complete Dec 09	Asset review progress report presented to Cabinet in July. Further report scheduled for November.	2 – On Track	Report on the Asset Review is due to go through Cabinet in November.	2 – On Track