

Action Plan – Customer First

Recommendation	Proposed Actions/Progress	Success Measures	Responsibility	Date
<p>1. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council adopts the Cabinet Office's new Customer Service Excellence Standard corporately, replacing and building on the Customer First Stage 2 programme post-March 2009, following corporate completion of Customer First Stage 2.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness raising at Setting the Standard meetings 12th & 19th Nov. 2. Revisit services that have already reached Stage 2 Standard to confirm ongoing compliance and develop actions plans for CSE. 3. Appoint Assessment Body, firm up costs and agree project plan. 4. Enter into contract with selected Assessment Body (once funding secured) 5. Setting the Standard Workshops during 2009/2010. 6. Awareness raising through KYIT and team meetings. 7. Support for services as they prepare for assessment. 8. Corporate Infrastructure assessment. 9. Service assessments. 10. Achieve CSE council-wide 	<p>Council-wide achievement of Customer Service Excellence Standard by August 2010.</p>	<p>D Hurwood</p> <p>K Hornsey/ J Robinson</p> <p>D Hurwood</p> <p>D Hurwood</p> <p>D Hurwood</p> <p>J Robinson</p> <p>K Hornsey/ J Robinson</p> <p>K Hornsey J Robinson & service reps</p>	<p>Nov08</p> <p>Dec08 – Mar09</p> <p>Jan09</p> <p>Mar09</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Mar09 – Aug10*</p> <p>May09*</p> <p>Jun09 – Aug10*</p> <p>Aug10*</p> <p>* Indicative dates subject to discussion and agreement with appointed assessment body)</p>

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2. Section 5 of Customer First Stage 2 programme relating to Service Equality be reviewed and developed where necessary and included as an additional section above and beyond the Customer Service Excellence Standard or any other customer service programme implemented following Customer First Stage 2.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include requirement for assessments against Section 5 in negotiations with assessment bodies (see (3) above) 2. Review and re-write Section 5 (following feedback from local Gov't Equality Standards Peer Review) 	Continued Compliance with Local Government Equality Standard.	<p>D Hurwood</p> <p>J Robinson / S Lee</p>	<p>Jan09</p> <p>Jan09</p>
3. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Councillors to have the opportunity for increased involvement, for example by supporting Council staff involved in mystery shopping exercises or as customer service champions, under the Customer Service Excellence Standard or any other customer service programme implemented following Customer First Stage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design on-line survey form for Members to feedback their experiences 2. Send survey to Members as part of next mystery shopping exercise 3. Continue to issue 6-monthly Members Customer Services newsletter 	Feedback from Members incorporated (anonymously) into mystery shopping reports that are sent to Heads of Service for action.	<p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson</p> <p>K Hornsey</p>	<p>Apr09</p> <p>May09</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
4. Specific overarching targets for improvement in customer service satisfaction ratings be developed as part of the introduction of the Customer Service Excellence Standard (which requires the introduction of such targets) or any other customer service programme implemented following Customer First Stage 2.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting of corporate target referred to POG for consideration – POG currently reviewing options 2. The need for services to set their own targets for customer satisfaction (where appropriate) and monitor performance will be addressed through CSE preparation work. 	Satisfaction of customer Service Excellence criterion 1.3.4.	<p>K Hornsey</p> <p>J Robinson</p>	<p>Jan09</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>5. To assist customers presented with a voicemail message when contacting Council officers by telephone the existing service standards and guidance for the use of voicemail be enhanced and promoted, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All voicemail messages include the officer's name, team or service details and extension number. ▪ The alternative voicemail message facility is used if the officer being contacted is out of the office on business for the day or away on holiday. ▪ Voicemail messages give an indication when the caller can expect to receive a response, or otherwise provide the caller with an alternative telephone contact officer and number. ▪ Targets for responding to voicemail messages are established. <p>Furthermore, taking into account the above recommendation, the use of voicemail be included in future mystery shopping exercises.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Voicemail service standards and staff guidance to include liaison with ICT in order to gain understanding of voicemail/telephony functionality. 2. Communicate outcome of review to Members 3. Publish updated guidance and publicise through KYIT, team meetings, message of the day etc. 4. Include guidance in corporate customer service training course. 5. Monitor use of voicemail as part of Customer First compliance visits and make recommendations. 6. Include use of voicemail in all future mystery shopping exercises. 	<p>Use of telephony/voicemail to its full potential in a way that satisfies customers. Increased compliance with corporate guidelines (measured through mystery shopping).</p>	<p>K Hornsey</p> <p>D Hurwood</p> <p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson / S Stoker K Hornsey/ J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson</p>	<p>Dec08 - Jan09</p> <p>Feb09</p> <p>Start Feb09</p> <p>Jan09</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 09 and six-monthly thereafter</p>

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6. To avoid unnecessary calls back to the Council's automated messaging service, callers presented with an answering machine when contacting a member of the public or a Councillor leave an appropriate message and contact details including name and telephone number.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update service standards to include this requirement. 2. Publish and publicise guidance through KYIT, message of the day etc 3. Include guidance in corporate customer service training course 	Reduction of number of calls being made to the Council's automated messaging service (currently approx 6,400 per month).	<p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson / S Stoker</p>	<p>Jan09</p> <p>Jan09</p> <p>Jan09</p>
7. A corporate staff suggestion scheme be implemented under the Customer Service Excellence scheme with awards presented for the best suggestions.	Head of HR developing an action plan to address this recommendation.		TBC	TBC
8. Existing information relating to the responsibilities of different organisations working within the Borough for particular services be expanded and made available via the SBC staff intranet or other suitable way in order for customers contacting Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council with queries regarding services provided by organisations other than the Council to be re-directed accordingly.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pull together information for key organisations from existing data sources. 2. Place on intranet and promote 	Improved customer ratings for staff helpfulness.	<p>K Hornsey</p> <p>K Hornsey</p>	<p>Dec08</p> <p>Jan09</p>

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<p>9. A review of the provision of children's toys in Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council reception areas and other appropriate buildings/ areas of buildings be undertaken. In carrying out the review, consideration should be given towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessing the potential customer demand for the provision of children's toys by conducting public consultation in reception areas. ▪ Recognising that children's toys cannot be provided in every reception area and are best suited to reception areas suitable for families rather than where customers do not have to queue for very long. ▪ The financial implications to the Council. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design feedback questionnaire for selected viewpoint panel members and appropriate reception areas 2. Conduct survey and analyse results 3. Depending on outcome of research, liaise with Trading Standards and Health & Safety to identify suitable toys and cost implications. 	<p>A greater understanding of customers' views will enable an informed decision about the provision of children's toys in reception areas.</p>	<p>K Hornsey/ K Dumain</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“</p> <p>K Hornsey</p>	<p>Nov08</p> <p>Jan09 – Feb09</p> <p>Mar09</p>
<p>10. The Customer Service Excellence Awards be continued under the Customer Service Excellence Standard or any other customer service programme implemented following Customer First Stage</p>	<p>The next awards ceremony is scheduled to take place on 27th February 2009. There will be a further ceremony in June 2009 which will conclude awards for Customer First Stage 2. Thereafter ceremonies will be held annually to celebrate and reward individual and team achievements, best reception and contributors to staff suggestion scheme.</p>	<p>Promotes interest and involvement in the Council's determination to deliver excellent customer services through recognition and celebration of individual and team achievements</p>	<p>J Robinson</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>11. Officers hold further discussions with the Customer Service Excellence bodies to finalise the one-off costs associated with a corporate application for Customer Service Excellence and that a bid be made as part of the 2009/10 budget-setting process to fund these costs. The North East Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership could, potentially, provide additional funding.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost implications to be identified as part of negotiations with the four assessment bodies (as per actions against recommendation 1). 2. Prepare and submit BID for MTFP funding to cover one-off costs. 3. Engage with NE RIEP to explore funding opportunities (an initial meeting has been arranged with a view to submitting a project brief to the next meeting of the RIEP 21st Century working Board in December 2008) 	<p>Achievement of Customer Service Excellence Standard in a way that makes best use of available resources.</p>	<p>D Hurwood D Hurwood D Hurwood</p>	<p>Jan09 Jan09 Nov08 – Dec08</p>