

Number	Recommendation	Responsibility	Proposed actions
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>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 K Hornsey</p> <p>J Robinson & service reps</p>	<p>1. Awareness raising at Setting the Standard meetings 12th & 19th Nov.</p> <p>2. Revisit services that have already reached Stage 2 Standard to confirm ongoing compliance and develop actions plans for CSE.</p> <p>3. Appoint Assessment Body, firm up costs and agree project plan.</p> <p>4. Enter into contract with selected Assessment Body (once funding secured)</p> <p>5. Setting the Standard Workshops during 2009/2010.</p> <p>6. Awareness raising through KYIT and team meetings.</p> <p>7. Support for services as they prepare for assessment.</p> <p>8. Corporate Infrastructure assessment.</p> <p>9. Service assessments.</p> <p>10. Achieve CSE council-wide</p>

2	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.	D Hurwood J Robinson / S Lee	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)
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	J Robinson J Robinson K Hornsey	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
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.	K Hornsey J Robinson	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.

<p>5</p>	<p>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>	<p>K Hornsey</p> <p>D Hurwood</p> <p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson / S Stoker</p> <p>K Hornsey/ J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson</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>6</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson</p> <p>J Robinson / S Stoker</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update service standards to include this requirement. 2. Publicise guidance through KYIT. 3. Include guidance in corporate customer service training course.

7	A corporate staff suggestion scheme be implemented under the Customer Service Excellence scheme with awards presented for the best suggestions.	J Spittle	1. Develop an Employee suggestion scheme including employee awards. 2. Develop clear and simple procedures for implementation. 3. Develop a communication and marketing strategy for the scheme. 4. Put in place review and monitoring arrangements.
8	1. Pull together information for key organisations from existing data sources. 2. Place on intranet and promote	K Hornsey K Hornsey	1. Pull together information for key organisations from existing data sources. 2. Place on intranet and promote
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: <input type="checkbox"/> Assessing the potential customer demand for the provision of children's toys by conducting public consultation in reception areas. <input type="checkbox"/> 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. <input type="checkbox"/> The financial implications to the Council.	K Hornsey/ K Dumain " K Hornsey	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.

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	J Robinson	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
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.	D Hurwood D Hurwood D Hurwood	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)

Anticipated Completion Date/ Completion Date	Evidence of progress 01/06/09	Assessment of progress (Categories 1-4) 01/06/09
<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>	<p>Awareness raising ongoing - attended</p> <p>Setting the Standard meetings in November 2008 and producing a series of articles for KYIT, the first of which was published in the March 2009 edition. Up to the end of April 2009, Customer First Manager had attended 19 team meetings to start services off on Customer Service Excellence.</p> <p>Following a procurement exercise, "Centre for Assessment" appointed as external assessor - contract started 1st April 2009.</p> <p>Corporate Infrastructure assessment scheduled for June 2009. Currently pulling together a timetable for "chunks" of individual service assessments which will be conducted by Centre for Assessment between August 2009 and July 2010.</p>	<p>2</p>

Jan09	<p>Complete. Centre for Assessment will assess these criteria at the same time as they assess services for Customer Service Excellence and will provide specific feedback in their reports.</p> <p>There are four additional criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have identified our diversity and equality priorities and integrated them into service planning 2. We undertake equality impact assessments to avoid discrimination and promote equality 3. We ensure that employees are trained in equality and diversity to the appropriate level 4. We make every effort to help customers who have difficulty communicating with us and help to ensure that equal access is available to all 	1
Jan09		
Apr09	<p>On-line survey designed and distributed to Members on 5th May. Feedback will be reported to Members by the end of June. Members Newsletter was issued December 2008</p>	2
May09		
Ongoing		
Jan09	<p>Complete. Two targets have been set in services' 2009/2010 SIPs and the Council Plan. These link with questions put to residents as part of the MORI surveys:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The percentage of residents who found staff "helpful" to be maintained above 75% (net) by 2010; 2. The percentage of residents who found staff were "able to deal with their enquiry" maintained above 75% (net) by 2010. 	1
Ongoing		

<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>	<p>Consultation with Members and Access to Services (Officer) Steering Group and Nextira One has taken place and new guidance has been drawn up. The proposed arrangements are to be piloted within HR and Xentrall prior to corporate roll-out to check that they lead to the anticipated improvements and do not create any new problems. Further work to be undertaken to evaluate cost implications prior to final decision as the proposals will require some re-programming of the telephone system. Revised completion date October 2009.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Jan09</p> <p>Jan09</p> <p>Jan09</p>	<p>Service standards have been updated and communicated to staff through KYIT article in December 2008 and built into induction and customer care training courses. Reminder issued in Message of the Day May 2009. Requirement is not appropriate for all services, particularly those where confidentiality could be an issue. In line with a Council Plan target, all service standards are to be reviewed by August 2009, at which time a new brochure and further publicity will be issued. Recent monitoring shows the number of calls being made to the Council's automated messaging service has reduced from 6,400 per month in November 2008, to 5,639 in April 2008.</p>	<p>1</p>

Dec09	Initial research on alternative suggestion schemes has been undertaken. The evidence is supportive of these schemes provided they have been well planned to fit with the organisations culture and are supported by top management. In addition staff suggestion schemes work best when they are part of a package of measures designed to encourage dialogue between employees and management. Consequently this work will be incorporated into the new Employee Engagement Strategy.	2
Dec08 Jan09	Complete. The information is available on the Intranet via the "Telephone numbers" link on the first page. The launch was promoted as a message of the day.	1
Nov08 Jan09 – Feb09 Mar09	Advice from Research and Consultation Team was that face-to-face questioning would be more appropriate than a questionnaire. A series of focus groups was arranged and promoted but attendance was disappointing and did not provide a representative sample. A new approach is now being taken involving staff consulting with customers at reception points at the same time as they conduct mystery shopping exercises, together with asking questions as part of standard exit surveys at our main Reception points. New completion date for this recommendation set as September 2009.	3

Ongoing	Customer First awards ceremony held on 27th February 2009. The next ceremony will now take place in September 2009 by which time all the services that submitted their Customer First evidence at the end of March 2009 will have been through their final assessments.	3
Jan09 Jan09 Nov08 – Dec08	Successful tender was lower than estimated. Costs were met from existing budgets without the need for a bid for resources. The RIEP is supporting a number of projects that are relevant to Customer Service Excellence. These are based around developing best-practice frameworks and supporting training and staff development and SBC is participating in these work streams. There is no funding available in relation to the direct costs of Customer Service Excellence assessments.	1