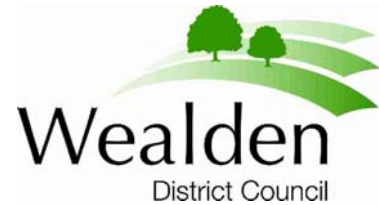


## Customer Services and Systems Service Plan 2009/10



### The role of the service

- We provide our customers with reception facilities at the council offices, and deal with their requirements as far as possible at the first point of contact whilst ensuring equality of access and service
- We help our customers who telephone the offices to reach the correct department or organisation to deal with their requirements.
- We provide online internet facilities for customers to find information, apply for services, make payments, report problems and deal with the Council in the way that best meets their needs.
- We provide council staff and elected members with the computer facilities and business systems they require wherever they log-in, telephone facilities, printing, photocopying, internal and external postal services, typing, email and internet access
- We provide national concessionary bus travel passes for older and disabled residents in our District
- We ensure complaints against the Council and freedom of information requests are dealt with in a timely manner

### The service is planning to achieve the following outcomes by March 2012:

- Maintain target of 95% of service users are seen within five minutes of arriving in our reception areas
- Service user satisfaction with Council services increases from a target of 77% to 82% by 2012
- Continue to improve the Customer Service Experience for customers, building on the achievement of Charter Mark.
- Continue with the development of our technology infrastructure, ensuring they are fit for purpose and support the ambitions of the Council
- Review our complaints process annually within 3 months of receiving our 'annual letter', ensuring that we meet the Local Government Ombudsman performance indicators.
- Resolve an increased number of helpdesk calls at first point of contact
- Benchmark our IT services performance annually, implementing improvements as identified/required, including the measurement and monitoring of 'uptime'
- Engage with the Transformation programme and develop services that meet with the core principles

## What have we achieved in 2008/09?

### Corporate Objective 1 : Putting People First

Providing Quality Services  
Health, Prosperity and Community Safety

- Increased service user satisfaction with Council services
- Assisted customers in our reception areas more rapidly
- Increased our focus on customer satisfaction
- Secured Charter Mark for the service
- Conducted an annual review of our complaints process, ensuring that we meet the Local Government Ombudsman performance indicators within 3 months of receiving our 'annual letter'

### Corporate Objective 2 : Pride Of Place

Sustainability  
Place Shaping

- Invested in new technology
- Investigated and researched options to improve services and reduce costs
- Developed energy saving programmes

### Corporate Objective 3 : Purpose Through Partnership

Improving Performance and Efficiency  
Strong Community Leadership

- Value for money efficiency savings year on year
- Improved value for money based on the opinions of our customers and when our performance is compared to other local authorities
- Working more efficiently, meeting agreed key priorities, and cutting 'red tape' wherever possible
- Independent assurance of the quality of our services ensuring that these are in line with the highest standards nationally
- Completed the upgrade of the Council's computer systems
- Benchmarked our IT services and established local performance indicators
- Resolve an increased number of helpdesk calls at first point of contact

## What we plan to improve

Head of Service to update and amend suggestions from Corporate Plans (green text and 2009/10 cell denotes new Key Action in new Corporate Plan)

Target for 2011/12	2008/09 Baseline	2009/10 Milestone	2010/11 Milestone
<b>Corporate Objective 1 : Putting People First</b>			
Providing Quality Services Health, Prosperity and Community Safety			
Assist 95 % of service users within five minutes of arrival in our reception areas	93%	94%	95%
Increase the % of enquiries dealt with by Reception staff at the first point of contact to 82%	79%	80%	81%
Increase service user satisfaction with Council services from 75% to 80%		79%	79%
<b>Corporate Objective 2 : Pride Of Place</b>			
Sustainability Place Shaping			
Investigate green technologies such as virtualisation	TBA		
<b>Corporate Objective 3 : Purpose Through Partnership</b>			
Improving Performance and Efficiency Strong Community Leadership			
Maintain Chartermark for all service areas and prepare for Move Towards Customer Service Excellence	12	12	12
Deliver 3% cashable efficiency savings year-on-year	83.5k	£83.5k	83.5k
Reduce the number of working days lost by Customer Service and Systems staff due to sickness absence		8.5 days	8.5 days
To support customer care training from 50% to 90% of staff attending by December 2009	66%?	90%	

## Risk

The main risk to the service plan will be financial. There are considerable financial pressures for the council as a whole in the current climate. There is considerable skill, knowledge and experience within the team and the staffing levels are lean, leaving little room for contingency, however, through the development of the Transformation Programme we will seek ways of delivering services at a high standard for minimal cost

## **Other Considerations**

### **Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is generally high across the teams. We continue to seek ways of providing an improved service to our customers and this will be supported by the team restructure.

### **Customer Involvement**

We routinely undertake Customer Satisfaction surveys on a quarterly basis. Members of the public are asked to complete a questionnaire about their experience contacting the council in person or on the telephone. Staff and members are asked to comment on their ICT experiences. With responsibility for NI 14 - Avoidable Contact, Customer Service and Systems analyses the results of our annual count.

### **Access to Services**

The Customer Service and Systems team offers distinct services. We provide reception services to members of the public at Hailsham and Crowborough. We provide switchboard and telephony services to the public, staff and members. Our ICT team provide an internal service to staff and members and operate a helpdesk environment to ensure any issues can be speedily resolved. We offer print and design services for all departments as well as web site design and maintenance for the council.

### **Value for Money**

Through the Transformation Programme we will review all services to determine how we could improve the value for money over the next three years. The following options will be explored:

- Service cessation (where the service is discretionary)
- Reduce the service
- Improve the service by doing it differently
- Shared service with partner / other local authority
- Service provided by others

### **Workforce Priorities**

The Service has been reviewed and will undergo a restructure during summer 2009. This will result in cost saving across the service area. Several areas have been identified and will be investigated as part of the Service Transformation programme during 2009/10.

- Contact Centre approach/One Stop Shop
- Server virtualisation and IT hardware rationalisation
- Print Services
- ICT Restructure
- ICT services

### **Learning & Development**

Customer Service and Systems is committed to continuing professional development for all staff and the pursuit of relevant qualifications by individuals, subject to available resources. We ensure that staff remain up-to-date with technology and have the right skill set to perform their role. The Head of Customer Service and Systems has been selected to taking part in an innovative training programme 'Leaders in Partnership' and the service has taken the lead on

the Council's investment membership of the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) and will support the training and development programme associated with the membership.

## **Equalities and Diversity**

We will improve the accessibility of our services to all and will challenge and eliminate any unlawful discrimination or harassment. We review and update our Equalities Impact Assessments annually

## **Sustainability**

Through undertaking a review of our current IT Strategy, we will seek new and innovative ways to contribute to the reduction of the council's carbon footprint

## **Rural impact**

We will publicise the availability of community help points and information kiosks to increase usage and provide local services for residents

## **Communication**

We will undertake a review of how our customers are able to feedback to us and ensure that our written correspondence is clear and available in formats that meets our customers' needs. Internally, we will ensure that points of customer contact (i.e. reception and switchboard) are kept informed of any issues likely to result in increased customer contact

## **Health and safety**

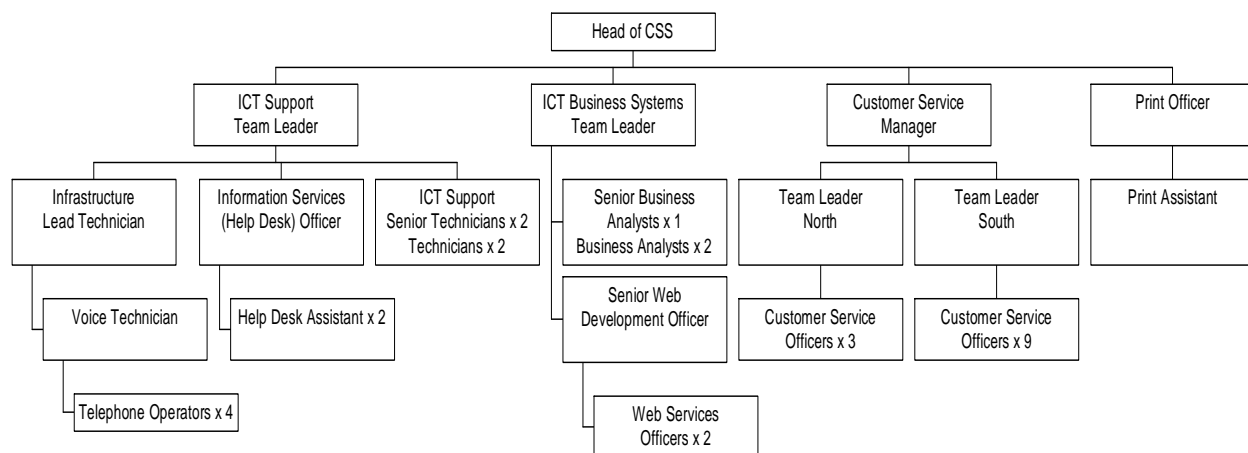
We will ensure that risk assessments in our area have been performed and actioned as appropriate and that there is appropriate notification to the Council's external Health & Safety Consultants, Human Resources Department or other enforcement authority when necessary

## **Standards**

We use ITIL ® (the IT infrastructure library) which is, internationally, the most widely accepted approach to IT service management. We will undertake benchmarking of our service to obtain baselines and use this to inform and improve our customer experience..

## Resources and budget

### Staff Organisation Chart (36.81 FTE)



### Budget

2008/09 £(000)		2009/10 £(000)	2010/11 £(000)	2011/12 £(000)
72,480	E government	91,850	91,850	91,850
422,440	Customer Services	406,780	406,780	406,780
44,900	Customer Services Strategy	42,700	38,000	38,000
29,390	Chartermark	11,450	11,450	31,450
707,600	Central IT	691,560	691,560	691,560
559,170	Rechargeable IT	597,850	597,850	597,850
(43,490)	Printing	(43,490)	(43,490)	(43,490)
195,560	Telephones	205,210	205,210	205,210
<b>1,988,050</b>		<b>2,003,910</b>	<b>1,999,210</b>	<b>2,019,210</b>

### Performance indicator targets

The National Indicator Set was introduced from 1 April 2008. In 2008/09 we gathered baseline data which has been used to set targets for 2009/10 and beyond.

PI No.	Description	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
NI 14	Avoidable contact: the proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer	17%		
WLI 0301	Percentage of telephone calls operator answered in 15 seconds	84%	85%	86%
	Respond to Local Government Ombudsman requests for information	22days	28 days	28 days
	IT indicators, based on those recommended by SOCITM, such as the measurement and monitoring of 'uptime	TBA		
	Percentage of calls to Helpdesk cleared at the first point of contact	TBA		

## How this Service Plan will be monitored

The Council's performance management framework is critical to monitoring and reporting the achievements of the Service and as a catalyst for improvement when targets are not achieved.

In the same way that targets cascade down to individual appraisals, the achievement of those targets is managed at individual, team or service level. Day to day management is used to identify good performance and also those areas where delivery is slower or below the standard expected. There is an underlying principle of "no surprises".

At the end of each quarter, performance against key targets is collated and reported to a directorate management meeting. Based on the above system, management should already be aware and have taken appropriate action to improve a situation subject to the availability of appropriate resources. This quarterly meeting and information review should allow the Corporate Director to balance the outcomes from each of the service areas for which they are responsible and take appropriate action within their directorate.

A quarterly report is prepared by each directorate which is then collated by the Policy Officer with responsibility for Performance Management. This report then forms an appendix to a Cabinet report, with Portfolio Holders commenting on performance for their respective portfolios and recommending any improvement to Cabinet. The Cabinet report is circulated to all Members. Cabinet recommendations are then implemented by officers.

In the Scrutiny cycle following Cabinet's consideration of performance, the three Scrutiny Committees review the decisions of Cabinet and scrutinise the actions taken to improve performance and whether these have been effective.

At the year end, provisional outturn figures are prepared and considered by Cabinet. These must then undergo a process of data quality checks internally and external validation by the Audit Commission prior to final publication around June 2010.

## **Other key reference documents for the service**

ICT Strategy  
ICT Capital Strategy

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