

19th October 2006

County Council Customer Service initiative

Report of Leicestershire County Council

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the group of the County Council's new customer service initiative, Customer First, and the decision to review the current joint approach to providing access to information on partner services.

Customer First

2. The County Council Cabinet approved the new approach to customer service on the 3rd October. This approach is based on a detailed business case developed over the previous 4 months.
3. Customer First will provide customers with improved web, telephone and in-person access to obtain information and request County Council services. The aim is to improve the County Council's provision and accessibility of customer services, through:
 - improving customer service skills to meet expectations;
 - creating a council-wide systems infrastructure to support customer services staff;
 - providing extended telephone operating hours to customers;
 - improving the usability and functionality of the County Council's website;
 - making better use of the County Council Library network in providing a Face to Face access facility in communities.
4. The Customer First solution is based on the establishment of individual departmental customer service centres linked by a single technology solution. This solution is distinct from a single generalist contact centre originally proposed as part of the BABS scheme.

Review of Joint Approach to Service Provision

5. At a meeting on the 13th September 2006, at which Districts, Boroughs and other partners were represented, it was agreed that 'Connect', the current joint approach to customer service provision be reviewed. This review will look at the current arrangements as well as whether alternative arrangements exist. The review will include consultation with partner organisations that are not currently signed up to 'Connect'.
6. Draft terms of reference for the review are currently being considered by partners.
7. It is anticipated that the review will be completed by the end of December 2006.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the Group notes this report and agrees to receive a further report following the completion of the review .

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