

Integrated Customer Management

IT Working Group

Committee: IT WORKING GROUP
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Title: INTEGRATED CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT
PROGRESS REPORT
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Agenda Item

6

Item for note

Summary

This report provides details of the progress of the Integrated Customer Management (ICM) project. It focuses on developments on key aspects of the project.

Recommendations

Members comment on and note the progress of the project.

Background Papers

ICM project file.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Please refer to paragraph 1e of this report
Community Safety	There are no specific community safety implications contained in this report
Equalities	There are no specific equalities implications contained in this report
Finance	All progress is within budget
Human Rights	There are no specific human rights implications contained in this report
Legal implications	There are no specific legal implications contained in this report
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

1. ICM progress on key areas is as follows: -

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a. Customer Service Centre Telephony

Please see separate report at item 7.

b. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System

Integration enabling updating from the CRM system to the Ocella Environmental Services system is progressing well with final testing taking place. It is planned to pilot the CRM in the CICs in mid September 2006.

Integration with the Northgate Council Tax system has been achieved with a wide a range of information available through the CRM system. Once this stage of the integration is live, the next stage is to enable the CRM system to update the Council Tax system. Integration with the Northgate Benefits system has still to be achieved. Northgate are aware of the importance of delivering this stage of the integration.

c. New Ways To Pay

The plastic payment cards were due to be issued on 22 August 2006. The revised issue date is 1 September 2006. The new arrangements have been publicised by posters and leaflets in Post Offices and in the Council offices. Press releases have also appeared in local papers.

Automated telephone payments will be available for customers to use shortly.

d. Premises

Saffron Walden offices

Phase I of the alterations have been completed and phase II has started. Furniture has been ordered. All building and associated work for the customer service centre is due to be completed by early November 2006.

Dunmow offices

Building work commences on 7 October 2006 and is scheduled to be completed by early November 2006.

Negotiations are taking place with the Citizen's Advice Bureau to jointly procure public access kiosks for the above offices.

e. Communication, consultation and community/user involvement

It was mentioned in (c) above about the communication to customers regarding the new ways to pay initiative.

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The Executive Manager (Strategy and Performance) has engaged interim support to help with the communications and publicity around ICM. A media strategy is being developed and an audit of information sources, leaflets and forms has commenced. A corporate identity for the customer service centre and community information centres is to be established. Marketing materials will shortly be decided.

f. Business process re-engineering

Phase I of the programme in revenues, benefits, anti-fraud and cashiering will be completed by mid September 2006. A report with recommendations will be considered and a transition plan produced to implement the changes. Phase II of the OR programme will start in housing services in mid September 2006.

g. Human resources

Staff briefings took place in July 2006 and further meetings have taken place with smaller groups of staff and individuals to talk through the proposed changes.

The job descriptions for the staff in the customer service centre have been written and job evaluated. Staff affected by phase I of the OR programme, plus community information centre staff, will attend a development centre. Following this, staff will undergo an extensive programme of training during October and November 2006 on customer service skills, use of the new telephone and CRM systems.

Briefing sessions for staff affected in phase II of the OR programme in housing services will take place in October 2006.

h. Risk

The JMT Risk Group meets regularly to re-evaluate the risks, append the revised register and draw attention to the most recent amendments.

Targets

2. The council needs to move towards a system of Integrated Customer Management (ICM). This means that customers dealing with the council should have a common experience and level of service regardless of which service they are seeking or which access channel they choose to use. Achieving this requires the development of common processes, systems and standards across the whole organisation.
3. ICM will mean integrated access, integrated services and integrated service delivery.

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4. Customer service standards are detailed in the council's customer service strategy.

Options

5. This report recommends that members comment and note on progress of the project.

Pay-Offs/Penalties

6. As previously reported at the last meeting of this committee, it is envisaged that the customer will have one single point of (real or virtual) contact for access to all services. This is likely to be through as many access channels as possible including telephone, letter, e-mail, internet and face-to-face. Notwithstanding the growth of the web, for the foreseeable future phone access will be the major contact medium. Along with face-to-face contact, this is also vital to ensure social inclusion for those who are unable or unwilling to make use of new means of communication.
7. Dealing with the majority of customer enquiries through a customer service centre would enable specialist officers within the council to focus on more complex work.