

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<i>Develop deeper understanding of community and customer need to inform service design and delivery by:</i>			
Conducting ward and district profiling	Purchase Mosaic to enable customer profiling and segmentation	By November 2007	Uttlesford Futures
Producing a rural strategy, in line with the sustainable community strategy	Include issues of rurality within the planned Sustainable Community Strategy	March 2008	Uttlesford Futures
Setting up regular mystery shopping of all services, user and access groups	User and access groups being pursued via Diversity Forum. Mystery shopping will be explored with Colchester and also neighbouring councils through EERA peer benchmarking scheme	By November 2007	Within existing budget
Developing means of capturing, analysing and reporting customer contact data	Work to progress underway in LGA Customer Performance project. Complaints data also being incorporated into CRM. Ipswich BC seeking to learn from us on the complaints module.	Ongoing	Within existing budget
Reviewing and improving leisure provider performance records and reports against service access objectives, and sharing learning with other services and partners	Review leisure performance records and reports with Leisure Connection. Share learning via internal workshops	By October 2007	Within existing budget
<i>Embed equality, diversity and cohesion into service planning, design and delivery by:</i>			
Raising awareness of equality, diversity and cohesion across the council and sharing best practice	Diversity Forum set up. Diversity materials being developed by Forum for sharing across council and partners. Council has Equalities Working Group in place	Main elements by December 2007, and ongoing thereafter	Within existing budget and additional externally funded activities as part of the BCE Migrant Worker project.

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Developing staff capability to use equality assessments, access audits and customer contact data to improve access to services	Equality and diversity training for all staff in progress. HoDs have been trained on equalities impact assessments. Training in customer contact data will be rolled out as part of Mosaic implementation. Advice on access audits will also be rolled out, possibly in conjunction with Customer Excellence work with Colchester BC	All elements unknown therefore no timescale – but preferred delivery date by June 2008	Within existing budget. Any additional spend identified for a customer excellence programme delivered by Colchester will have to be included as a growth item for 2008.
<i>Improve the customer experience of services by:</i>			
Developing strategies with partners to provide seamless, and value for money, public access to a wider range of public services	Discussions actively in progress with Essex CC to integrate front office services in Saffron Walden and Dunmow libraries. The BCE migrant worker project will deal with wider public service and advice issues for this hard to reach group. Service delivery options always actively discussed through LSP, CYPSP, LAA etc	Ongoing	Within existing budget. Any additional spend will have to be included as a growth item for 2008.
Reviewing with the public the fitness for purpose of customer care standards	Review to be undertaken using access and other groups, parish councils etc. Review to deal with issues thrown up by front office integration therefore a longer timescale necessary	By June 2008	Within existing budget.
Developing a system to track, review, report performance against the customer care standards internally and to the public	System will be developed where appropriate within the CRM system as part of review of, customer care standards (see above)	By June 2008	Within existing budget.

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Establishing a vision of excellence for every service, identify gaps in service delivery against the vision and put plans in place to close any gaps in delivery	Discussions underway with Colchester BC to roll out a programme of Customer Excellence training which could include these elements.	Unknown at present but expected by June 2008	Currently expected within existing budget.
<i>Other issues raised in the report not covered by the above recommendations:</i>			
Consultation outcomes are not robustly corporately monitored	Development of consultation function and resources currently being discussed with Essex County Council as part of developing two tier working	Unknown at present	Within existing budget
Area Panels have not significantly enabled locally-based decision making. Consequently not well supported by the public	Review of area governance to be launched, taking into account issues such as participatory budgeting and Community Call for Action	By June 2008	Within existing budget
Relatively few one-stop shop access points makes it difficult for some to reach council services	Potential additional one stop shop access points to be pursued with Essex County Council via two tier working project.	By May 2008	Would require significant investment by Essex County Council and/or other partners, plus capital bid.
Parking limited at service centres	Limited ability to address at some existing facilities but outreach work in benefits and museum and increasing access points through libraries etc will improve access generally	By December 2008	Existing budget at present.
Website has some good features, but has "room for improvement"	Major redesign project will address access, navigation and transactional issues	By November 2007	Within existing budget

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Hard to reach groups recently surveyed had low awareness of leaflets produced by council	Use feedback from hard to reach groups to improve council communication with these groups. Ensure gaps in communication are plugged	By December 2007	Within existing budget
Opening hours inconsistent across service centres and limited to working hours, with no late night or Saturday opening	Opening hours unlikely to be standardized across facilities due to different footfall and limited resources. Alternative and extended hours will be investigated as opportunities arise.	Ongoing.	Within existing budget. New facilities may require growth item.
Responsiveness to emergency out of hours service not corporately tracked	Establish monitoring system. Information is already received from Cambridge Out of Hours service. Reporting structure needs to be established.	By September 2007	Within existing budget
No recognized corporate brand standards for its publications	Branding and corporate design project underway. Will create templates and design standards for all printed materials	By December 2007	Within existing budget
Contract performance, such as with leisure services, is not robustly analysed for adherence to equalities and customer care practices	Review will be undertaken of all contract performance. Contract register to be created and contract administrators will carry out assessments	By March 2008	Within existing budget.
Signage at Saffron Walden CSC does not make it easy for customers to find planning services or information area	Interior signage being ordered to direct customers to relevant areas of Customer Service Centre	By September 2007	Within existing budget

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CSC staff members have not been trained to identify and support people with learning disabilities	Identify appropriate training and put in place.	Complete by December 2007	Within existing budget
Scope to improve in terms of timely communication over housing repairs and progress with planning applications	These functions have yet to be included in the Customer Services Centre when responsiveness will be closely monitored.	As services transfer	Within existing budget
Customer feedback not used formally by UConnect staff to improve services	Customer feedback to be properly captured in CRM and monitored closely. To inform service delivery	By October 2007	Within existing budget
Satisfaction with planning services has improved but remains low compared to 2003/04 figures	Trends are being identified to improve satisfaction. However, nature of planning means there will always be applicants or objectors dissatisfied with outcome. Will be managed through council's performance management framework	Ongoing	Within existing budget
Overall satisfaction with the benefits service has decreased by four per cent, although satisfaction with telephone service improved	Will be managed through council's performance management framework	Ongoing	Within existing budget
Leaflets advertised in walls of CSCs not always available	Complete audit of published material, availability and format	By November 2007	Within existing budget
Partial opening hours at Thaxted CSC puts pressure on other agencies' voluntary staff	Review of arrangements at Thaxted in absence of UDC staff, although unlikely to have resources or demand to open for longer	By November 2007	Within existing budget

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Lack of training makes it difficult for UConnect staff to make full use of CRM	CRM modules and scripting developed as services transfer. Training needs to take place as further elements rolled out. Training of all staff on existing CRM functions will be complete by mid-August	Ongoing	Within existing budget
Full set of access PIs are not in place. Current mix of PIs tracked and reported by the council and its services does not provide a robust picture of how accessible its services are	Develop range of access PIs in conjunction with LGA project and other best practice	By June 2008	Within existing budget
Several services are high cost and not delivering the “pre-eminent” performance the council seeks. These include waste collection, sports and recreation, environmental health and development control	Processes in place through OR and the new VfM scrutiny process to review these areas	By June 2008	Within existing budget
Some areas where performance is falling behind that of other councils, such as the number of private sector homes left vacant for six months or more	UDC one of five authorities involved in PLACE (Private Lease Agreements Converting Empties) project, through which the owners of long-term empty properties are offered help with significant repairs/renovations, in return for the owners handing the property over to housing associations for three years to be leased out.	Due to start August	Government-funded scheme
Although E-benefits package was tried out successfully, the council has not implemented it yet	Capacity issue has prevented implementation. However, expected to be rolled out at end of year	By December 2007	Within existing budget

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CAB kiosks have been delayed because of technical issues and are not yet in place	Kiosk at Dunmow will be up and running within three to four weeks	By September 2007	CAB Budget
Not all service plans contain focused action to improve access. While museum has an access policy, other services do not have one to help draw together a rounded view of access barriers to build into their improvement planning	Museum to demonstrate good practice at a workshop for staff. Access issues to be looked at on a divisional level and possibility of an access strategy discussed	By December 2007	Within existing budget
Services are not systematically sharing good practice or ideas on access among themselves	Establish Uttlesford Excellence group which pulls together customer service and performance issues.	By October 2007	Within existing budget
OR team is small and faces a challenging programme – two dedicated re-engineers but there is a degree of risk for the council with such a limited resource	Organisational reengineering team being reviewed and relaunched with expected additional expertise.	Appointments to OR team decided by October 2007. Start dates depend on notice periods	Within existing budget

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<p>Procurement strategy is not improving access to services. Although progress is being made in delivering the procurement strategy, the contribution in furthering diversity and access remains unclear. The strategy makes clear reference to diversity and accessibility, but the links between the goals of the strategy and procurement practice are not strong</p>	<p>Procurement strategy to be reviewed and guidance offered to staff on procurement practice.</p>	<p>By December 2007</p>	<p>Within existing budget.</p>