

Project Initiation Document

Project Title: Customer Services Improvement Project

Date: September 2018



Document History

Revision	Date	Originator	Comments	Approved
1.0	2/5/18	David Allum		
2.0	16/5/18	David Allum		
3.0	18/6/18	David Allum	Incorporating Graeme Clark's comments	
4.0	22/6/18	David Allum	Incorporating Annie Righton's comments	
5.0	20/8/18	David Allum	Incorporating Tom Horwood's comments	
6.0	12/9/18	David Allum	Incorporating comments from the Customer Services Project Group	
7.0	19/9/18	David Allum	Incorporating additional comments from Graeme Clark	

About This Document

Project Sponsor: Graeme Clark

Project Lead: David Allum

Project Manager: Louise Norie

Project Board: Hugh Wagstaff/Richard Homewood/Robin Taylor/Kelvin Mills

Project Team: Linda Frame/Vanessa de Chazal/Louise Norie/Environmental Services/Housing/Revs & Bens/Planning plus a role for the Team Leaders Group

Approval Date:

Approval Status:

Start Date: September 2018

Finish Date: December 2020. The Project will be delivered in stages with the creation of the system infrastructure expected to complete in early 2019.

Project Definition

The strategic vision underpinning the project is for our service to reflect the aspirations and expectations of customers, offering the full range of access routes supported by a professional customer service team.

This project should deliver cashable savings to contribute to the Council's budget challenge, increased customer satisfaction and a more flexible approach to work which may well align with the separate initiative looking at workplace location and environment.

Research has shown that:

- Customer Satisfaction levels are not meeting organisational expectations

- The current delivery model is fragmented leading to inconsistency
- Investment is needed into the corporate infrastructure (e.g. single UPRN, a single customer contact record)
- There is latent demand for more web based services and that self service should be encouraged to reduce demand on more expensive contact options
- There is latent inefficiency in the system
- There is lack of data collection and demand management
- There is no visibility of the costs of customer service

At the conclusion of the process these issues will have been addressed. At that point we will have

- A delivery model tailored to a more 24/7 service where people can transact with us via automated systems: digital by default wherever possible, with personal support for those unable to access digital channels
- A consistent service offer and a consistent and embedded commitment to customer service
- A more efficient delivery model that has released significant cashable savings
- Solutions to suit future customer needs, including social media and new technology.

Project Background

Customer Services are currently delivered primarily by service based groups. These groups respond to telephone calls, e-mails sent to generic e-mail addresses and web submissions. Each group is managed, configured and populated differently according to circumstances in its service area, they are not closely defined and there are at least 12 such Groups across the Council.

There are also Reception Services at both The Burys and Farnham Locality Office. At The Burys the service mainly acts as an interface between the customer and the officer who can best assist them. At Farnham Locality Office more direct assistance is provided by the Receptionist, who currently sits alongside Farnham Town Council reception staff.

A detailed evaluation of the work inputs into each Call Group and the outputs and outcomes achieved reveals a fractured delivery model with an uneven experience from the customer's perspective. Although customer satisfaction is not collected and reported systematically, based on the data that is available it is reasonable to deduce that satisfaction ratings are around the 75% level.

Recent associated projects centred on channel shift and systems thinking have identified a demand for the review of operational processes to ensure services are configured to match present day customer demand patterns (e.g. e-contact). It is highly likely that these reviews will drive out inefficiencies and achieve cashable savings as has been the case to date both in this organisation and in other comparable councils.

Reforming the corporate approach to customer services responds to both the “People” and “Prosperity” elements of our Corporate Plan.

Public services beyond Waverley Borough Council are also fragmented. Surrey County Council has recently (summer 2018) indicated that it wishes to work more collaboratively with district and borough councils. It also wishes to review its customer and digital services. There may be opportunities for district, borough and county councils to collaborate on a more efficient and joined-up customer service offer.

The Case for Change

Cashable savings can be realised by increasing automated transactions (as already envisaged by the existing channel shift business plan), by improving our infrastructure and technological capabilities and by reviewing and simplifying operational processes. The savings will mainly come from reducing staff resource that is currently dedicated on customer processes. There might also be some IT budget reductions if we move to common systems in the medium term and a shift from postal to e-communication for outgoing contact is also expected to deliver a reduction in postal budgets.

Whilst some savings could be achieved if these proposals are actioned within the existing delivery model these will be more significant if existing service boundaries are removed and a corporate approach is adopted. If a non-corporate approach is adopted the review process/actions agreed are less likely to account for impacts on other areas of the business and more likely to result in the development of bespoke systems appropriate particularly for the area under review. In addition by following a piecemeal review process there will inevitably be duplication of effort as the same actions are repeated for each of the 12 call groups. Customers will also have to make multiple contacts with us rather than receive a seamless service.

Other benefits from moving to a single customer services team will be derived from a single management and operational culture the team will be working towards and this will help to reduce the variable customer experience evident at present. Costs are though the primary driver of the project business case with quality as a secondary factor.

If agreed in principle there are still questions to consider about the sequencing of action and the timescales required to facilitate a transition. There is a strong argument to build the system infrastructure immediately before incrementally migrating teams into the new environment. This will allow time for services to identify which posts and tasks should migrate into the Customer Services Team. Whilst this is the case there is an argument to recruit the Customer Services Manager at the start of the project to own it going forward

Any new model will not be operating at maximum efficiency unless the IT infrastructure and systems are in place to support it. The infrastructure will require a gazetteer providing a single UPRN, an appropriate customer management system and call centre technology complementing the Lync system. Once this is in place it will be easier to migrate individual call groups to the new system and review and adapt their operational processes in the context of the new platform.

It will take time to move to this position, the exact length of time being dependent on how the project is resourced. This would allow for an assessment across the Council as to

which posts are primarily the agents for the delivering of customer service and what services they would in practice deliver.

Alternatively it would also be possible to operate a virtual customer services team prior to the new infrastructure being in place to allow the development of a consistent culture and to start to map out the landscape of operational processes which will need to be accounted for and potentially reviewed.

The cashable savings the project is predicated on cannot be realised to any significant degree until customer demand is shifted or abated by changing practices to eradicate “waste” or by providing customers with alternative automated access routes (e.g. a single booking solution so customer service staff could arrange bulky waste collections, Borough Hall cinema tickets etc).

The parallel channel shift work stream already active is reviewing the automation of service and facilitating self service wherever possible, Going forward customer services officers would then interact with the same system but would concentrate on those unable or unwilling to access the web based service themselves.

As well as improving customer satisfaction levels it is important that the Council is able to transformationally adapt its delivery model, so it is more efficient and allows revenue budgets to be reduced. The fragmented and inconsistent nature of the customer services offer allows this.

Investing in the infrastructure so we have a single source of customer data which also allows workflow storage will cost a minimum of £150k. A capital funding bid will be required to secure this. Training budgets may also need to be increased so to introduce expertise on channel shift and process redesign.

Project Objectives

Increased customer satisfaction

Increased customer self service (i.e. channel shift)

Significant cashable savings

Cultural change

Improved organisational infrastructure

Consistency in approach and service standard

Better management of resources and customer demand

Project Scope and Exclusions

This project will include services currently delivered by the Call Groups embedded in service areas. The focus is firmly on customer access and interaction and not the systemic

issues impeding service quality which will remain within individual service areas. The sequence of activity has yet to be determined but may start in those areas of highest demand.

The project will need to take account of the emerging customer and digital strategies of Surrey County Council to ascertain early in the project if there is appetite in deeper collaboration.

Project Deliverables and / or Desired Outcomes

As set out in the Project Objectives sub-section

Constraints and Assumptions

There will be a financial limit in terms of investment infrastructure and project management as dictated by the business plan.

As a key change project, it is possible that there will be concern or resistance internally. The project will therefore require excellent communication and engagement.

Users and Interested Parties

Members

Staff

Customers

Surrey County Council

Farnham Town Council

Interfaces

Any associated project focusing on service based customer service teams, channel shift, locality offices, customer databases and the telephone systems will impact and link to this project.

Project Approach

This is very much a corporate project affecting and impacting on all service areas and all call groups. It will therefore require a corporate and collaborative approach. Key themes will include:

Overhaul of the policy and procedural infrastructure - this will require a systematic review and refresh of all existing documentation

Implementation of channel shift across the business - continuing the existing project but dependent on the decisions made around customer contact databases

Customer Services Technology - Options have been identified but again these are dependent on the tools employed to resolve the single URPN challenge and customer contact

Delivery Model - The existing model of upward of 12 call groups needs to be contracted so it allows consistency and maximises efficiencies

Post - The Council is currently sending out 1300 items of mail per day. We need to review and reduce this number by seeking electronic alternatives. A project stream within this programme will cover the systematic collection of e-mail addresses to inform the single customer record with appropriate controls around data protection etc.

Business Case

Cashable savings will largely be delivered by a combination of reduced customer demand by transactional automation and my reviewing processes and re-designing to drive out waste. This will allow staff numbers to reduce and result in a cashable saving.

By reducing postage this will also make a contribution to the savings offer as we currently spend £250k per annum on printing and postage.

The investment required will be £190k for IT systems and possibly up to £100k on project management if external input is sought across the board plus a supplement to the training programme. Savings from more efficient staff resource and postal costs could potentially be £200k pa if the project is fully implemented (based on conservative estimates of resource reductions reported by peer authorities, systems thinking) .

Options

Do nothing

Not recommended.

If no action was taken customer service will continue to be delivered as is. Meaning satisfaction levels are unlikely to alter and costs are unlikely to reduce.

Alternative option 1

Not recommended.

It would be possible to make improvements by making the envisaged infrastructure investments but then applying them within the existing delivery model. Whilst this would make some improvements to customer experience and deliver some savings it would not achieve consistency of service or a consistent corporate cultural change.

Alternative option 2

Not recommended.

It would also be possible to make improvements within a contracted number of Service Centres (e.g. four). Whilst this would achieve greater consistency and allow greater efficiency than the current delivery model this would still dilute the improvements that could be achieved by a single customer services team.

Costs and dis-benefits

Depending on the external project management supported that is secured expenditure is expected to be in excess of £300k over a 2/3 year period. There may be a small ongoing revenue cost for management of any new systems acquired but these will be outweighed by the cashable savings expected to be achieved by this project and the related channel shift business case currently being implemented.

There are no anticipated financial dis-benefits.

Project Governance

The Project Initiation Document and Project Plan will be agreed by the Project Sponsor (and Project Board). The project in effect is a Programme with a number of project streams within it e.g. Identify reasons for call, Identify if we are able to automate, Re-engineering and automation, Single Customer Record etc

The Project Budget will be agreed by the Project Sponsor and Project Board and updates will be reported monthly.

The Project Board will meet bi-monthly to discuss progress and exception reporting.

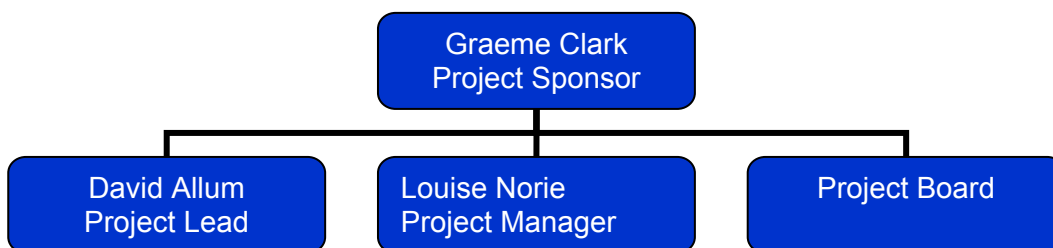
The Project Team will meet monthly and will provide project updates to Project Board after each Project Team meeting

Team

Role	Name	Position in the organisation
Project Sponsor	Graeme Clark	Strategic Director
Project Lead	David Allum	Head of Service
Project Manager	Possibly Louise Norie/Nora Copping although we will need to develop leads who gain expertise	Policy Team

Project Board Members	Hugh Wagstaff Robin Taylor Richard Homewood Kelvin Mills	Heads of Service
Project Team Members	Linda Frame Vanessa de Chazal Nominations from customer facing services	IT Manager Web Site Manager

Team structure



Project Sponsor

Portfolio Holder
Champion at strategic level
Chair of Project Board

Project Lead

Operational responsibility for ensuring the project is delivered
Produce reports for decision makers
Lead Project Team

Project Manager

Carry out administrative and organisational tasks associated with the project
Maintain records and populate Project Management reporting requirements

Project Board

Maintain oversight at a strategic and operational management level
Support project activity by championing activity within their service and releasing resources as necessary

Project Teams

Carry out and co-ordinate the work required by the Project Plan

Team Leaders Customer Service Group

Scrutinise and challenge project decisions
Assist in implementation process.

Project Plan

Effectively the Project Plan is as envisaged in the report to Executive in November 2017 (extract below refers). This is now supplemented by detailed plans for channel shift work-streams and the partnership elements involving Surrey County Council and Farnham Town Council.

Workstream	Timescale/Lead Officer	Progress/Methodology
Review/refresh the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management Framework • Customer Services Strategy • Policy/Procedures • Service Standards • Operational Processes 	Timescale - It is anticipated that draft proposals can be made by June 2018 Lead Officers - David Allum/Robin Taylor	First stage is the review of Service Standards with drafts currently under discussion
Channel Shift - A business case has been submitted and agreed and implementation is underway.	Timescale - Implementation is expected to have been completed, or in a minority of cases scheduled, by March 2019. Lead Officers - David Allum/Linda Frame/Heads of Service	The purpose of the Channel Shift project is to automate transactions as far as is possible so those residents who wish to access services and conduct business via a web portal are able to do so. The project will roll out gradually across the organisation as each department will be different in terms of the services that will benefit from this approach. We will also be looking to replace the 130 plus generic e-mail addresses with web forms. The business case is predicated on reduced telephone and personal contact from those customers who have chosen to interact on-line. This will translate to a reduced staff complement required to deal with such enquiries.

		<p>Channel Shift will be rolled out first in the Housing Department and the project is currently being scoped out in that area. We are now looking at options for the next area to be scoped out e.g. Revenues. We have also begun the process of appointing a contractor to deliver the software to facilitate our requirement.</p> <p>We are anticipating a capital requirement of between £40-50k (for which we have in year budget), ongoing revenue costs of £15-20k and a minimum project duration of 18 months.</p>
<p>Customer Services Technology - Whilst in time we expect the numbers of calls made to the Council to diminish (as has been the trend for some time with the increasing use of e-mail), at present 50% of all customer contact is made by 'phone and so traffic is still significant.</p> <p>We are seeking to procure appropriate software and technology to enable our customer call groups to be more effectively managed. This includes the display of real time data in terms of caller numbers, waiting times etc as well as offering the ability for supervisory staff to connect to live calls.</p>	<p>Timescale - The procurement of this technology is dependent on decisions made on the Channel Shift work-stream, in particular which customer management system is acquired.</p> <p>It is expected acquisition and implementation will be complete by March 2019.</p> <p>Lead Officers - David Allum/Linda Frame</p>	<p>We are exploring the market options and once we have identified a potential solution we will produce the commensurate business case.</p> <p>As part of this solution we will be looking to include a voice recognition facility as an alternative to the current options facing customers of having to find the right phone number or go through the switchboard.</p>
<p>Establish metrics to inform future delivery model decisions - The Foresight Customer Service Group made a number of recommendations about customer access arrangements and customer service structures that</p>	<p>Timescale - The collection of metrics will run alongside the Channel Shift work with timescales reflecting that.</p> <p>Lead Officer - David Allum</p>	<p>To test out the hypotheses put forward metrics will be gathered as part of the channel shift work.</p> <p>A key element of the hypotheses is that as call numbers reduce some existing Call Groups will</p>

generated high levels of debate and interest in the officer community.		lose critical mass and may need to coalesce. This applies both to call answering and associated administration.
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Project Reporting

Monthly updates to the Project Board

Monthly updates to the Customer Services Team Leaders Group

Quarterly updates to Value for Money and Customer Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Quarterly updates to Executive Briefing

Updates to Partnering Organisation in accordance with agreed timescales.

Quality Management Strategy

This will be determined by a series of baseline metrics that will be established as the project is initiated. Supported by the scrutiny applied in the project reporting sub-section outlined above.

Configuration Management Strategy

Configuration Management

The information custodians will be the Project Lead and the Project Manager. A sharepoint area will be created to act as a repository.

Risk Management strategy

Risk Approach

The primary risk to the success of this project will be staff resistance to the change in model.

Effective acquisition and implementation of the systems to support the new model are a secondary risk.

There are also risks in terms of the cost projections in terms of the data cleansing exercise that will be required. These will be better understood once the project is scoped and a technical evaluation of the data cleansing requirement is carried out.

It is possible that performance levels in some areas will dip temporarily as the change process is rolled out.

The Project Board will assess these risks and any other additional factors to be accounted for and present the analysis in the standard corporate format.

Communication Management strategy

Approach

Formal reporting mechanisms will be as set out in Project Reporting sub-section above.

Cascade and Backstage will be used for messages to staff. The Communications Team will be represented on the Project Team and act as lead in this area.

PID Authorisation

Authorised by	
Date	
Signature	