

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

Customer Services Task Group

Thursday 5th June 2014

Present: Cllrs: L Broadley (Chair), F Broadley, J Boyce, B Dave, D Gamble, H Loydall, J Kaufman

A Court, J Griffith, M Hall

Apologies: Cllrs: M Chamberlain, J Gore, S Morris

1. Terms of Reference

The draft Terms of Reference for the Task Group were discussed and agreed and will be recommended to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Development (PFD) Committee on 22nd July.

2. Presentation on the Potential Way Forward

JG made a presentation to the Group based on the report and information previously circulated.

The presentation identified the key things that need to be done to drastically improve customer services in order to deliver the Government's Welfare Reform and Digital agenda and meet the aspirations of members.

In summary the key things set out in the presentation included:

2.1 "Digital by Default" - Introduce on line forms for residents to be able to complete and submit themselves (mainly revenues & benefits)

2.2 Set up self service IT terminals in customer services with residents being given individual support and training by Council staff so they can then do their revs & bens/council/public sector business on line themselves

2.3 Moving back office staff (mainly revs and bens but also others) into the front office to focus on and provide additional support to those residents who can't do it on line themselves

2.4 Redesign and improve the website to make it more compatible with mobile devices and easier to access and navigate

2.5 Improve telephony

2.6 Develop customer service staff using NVQ qualifications

2.7 Improve the customer services centre to make residents' experiences more positive and more efficient for them and the Council. There are a number of costed options as to where the transformed customer services centre could be located. Four are on the existing Bushloe House site with the final one advocating moving it primarily into Wigston Town Centre with satellite operations in Oadby and South Wigston.

The main points that came out of the discussion were:

a. JG to make changes to the Consultation Questionnaire that the Group suggested. (The new version was circulated to the Group the following day for any further comments). The Questionnaire is to be used with all the residents/customers who come into Bushloe House to fill it out over the next 4 week period.

b. The results of this will then form part of the report that is presented to PFD on 22nd July. The Task Group supported all the proposals in the presentation.

c. The PFD report should also contain all of the content of the presentation that was considered, discussed and agreed by the Task Group but in a report format rather than as a presentation. This will also pick up all the key points that the Group highlighted.

d. It was agreed that more detailed work on Options C, D and E, the future location of the customer service centre, needs to be included in the report to PFD which will include a fuller explanation of what each could/would involve together with a more detailed cost breakdown for each option.

e. It was agreed that the report should also try and set out what any future cost savings could look like however as discussed this would be difficult as the primary purpose of the project is to improve Customer Services. It was agreed that as a consequence of stopping duplication and encouraging residents to self serve etc that the operation would be more efficient and costs would reduce over the next two years however it was agreed that this is not the main driver but a consequence.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 8th October 2014