

East Devon District Council

Customer Service Policy

Reviewed

The Customer Charter, the Customer Access Strategy and the Customer First policy have been reviewed and this policy, subject to approval, now supersedes these documents.

Policy Approval

Executive Board: May 2006

Council: May 2006

Policy Statement

Customer focused improvement is one of the core values that drives East Devon District Council. Following feedback from customers and inspectors, it is apparent there are pockets of excellence within the Council but equally there are areas that require customer focused improvements.

The way we work at the moment means that we have:

- different reception points
- a confusing 48 published telephone contact numbers for our services
- phones that don't always get answered
- high satisfaction with individual services but overall satisfaction with the council is in the bottom 25% of councils in England.

Also, in a recent mystery shopper exercise:

- over 33% of calls were answered poorly
- 20% of voicemail messages were very poor

As a result, we want to deliver faster, better targeted services, how, when and where our customers want them. To help achieve this we will continue with our good practice of offering home visits where they are requested, and we will also process map all our services and identify new and improved ways of working which will make best use of technology.

One of the key milestones will be to set up a Customer Service Centre (CSC) during 2006. However, our commitment is wider than the CSC as we aim to drive an improved customer focused culture across the whole Council. Therefore, this document details customer service aspirations and targets across the Council as a whole as well as in the CSC itself.

The Council's Commitment

With the introduction of this policy, the Council aims to provide a set of standards and targets for the whole Authority to meet.

EDDC is totally committed to achieving service excellence over the coming years. This is the first structured attempt at achieving a consistent customer service led culture, which puts in place standards and targets for all services. They are demanding but reflect best

practices which have been agreed nationally. We want to be at the forefront of customer service excellence.

The CSC will have a pivotal role in achieving these targets and standards. It is the aim of the CSC to resolve 80% of all enquiries on a 'once and done' basis. The customer experience will be improved so that they only have to give their details once and they will be able to speak to one person about different services where they have several enquiries.

Furthermore the CSC will play a key role in the measurement and analysis of service delivery across the Council. By improving our customers access to services, through making processes more efficient and by delivering service excellence training to both front and back office employees, customer service will be incrementally improved to reach the targets set out in this document.

Terms Explained

Here is a brief explanation of some of the terms used in this report:

CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management and is a piece of computer software which helps an organisation track its customer contact and improve how it interacts with its customers.

Access channel is a term to describe all the different ways (channels) of accessing the Council. For example, the telephone is an access channel.

SLA stands for Service Level Agreement which is a document that details certain agreed levels of service.

Demand period is a period of time in which the demand for a certain service is measured. For example a high demand period might be between 9 – 11 every Monday morning.

Resource management is the way in which resources, people, money, time are managed.

Business process mapping and management is a method used to analyse processes and continuously improve them by making them more efficient and/or by making life easier for our customers.

Key issue is any decision which we would consult Towns and Parishes on or which would have a big impact on residents' lives or livelihoods.

How will we go about it?

Overall customer service improvements will be made by a number of significant changes:

1. Introduce customer service standards, targets and measures across the Council
2. Set up a multi-channel Customer Service Centre using Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to track customer contact and improve our management of access channels
3. Introduce business process mapping and management to all services
4. Have in place key Organisational Development strategies
5. Performance management using key competencies and the appraisal process
6. Explore the wider issues of customer access to services
7. Communicate the need for change and the enablers of change to all staff to ensure a truly customer driven culture is understood and implemented.

Each of these changes is explained in more detail in the next section.

Specific Policy Areas

1. Customer service standards, targets and measures

1a Current Customer Satisfaction

Overall customer satisfaction in the General User Survey 03/04 was 52% satisfied. Although it is likely that this low figure was due in part to external influences, the experience of other councils shows that the introduction of the CSC will help improve service delivery and in turn customer satisfaction. The targets set out in Tables 1 and 2 will be achieved over the coming years.

Table 1 - Overall satisfaction and complaints targets

These are two separate indicators measured in the General User Survey which is carried out every three years.

	Current	2006/07	2009/10	2012/13
Percentage of customers satisfied	52% ¹	60%	65%	70%
Number of complaints	109 ²	75	55	55

However, in order to improve and manage service delivery on a more frequent basis, customer satisfaction will need to be continuously measured. Therefore the ongoing targets, which will measure overall satisfaction with the service we offer through the Customer Service Centre, are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 - Ongoing satisfaction and complaints targets

	Current	2006	2007	2008
Percentage of customers satisfied with CSC service	N/A	Set baseline	85%	90%
Number of complaints	N/A	Set baseline	Set target	Set target

1b Customer service standards and targets

There are two types of standards in this section. The first in Table 3 relates to overall service delivery within the Council. The second, in Tables 4 - 9 relate to particular standards that should be met when a customer contacts us. Together they make up our Customer Service Standards.

The targets in Table 3 represent a complete set of measures to ensure a balanced view of overall service delivery and are based on the National electronic Service Delivery Standards (NeSDS). For clarity when reading the tables, 'access channel' refers to the method by which a customer has accessed the Council, for example, telephone, letter, email or face to face at a reception point.

¹ This figure has been taken from the General User Survey 2003/04

² This figure is from the Audit Commission's review of Customer Access in 2005

Table 3 - Service Delivery Standards

Dealing with complaints	Description	Standard
Complaints	Customers can complain by a single point allowing centralised management and corporate shared learning	At least 4 changes in service delivery a year as a direct result of shared learning
Compliments and comments	All compliments and comments are captured in a single point allowing centralised management and corporate shared learning	At least 4 changes in service delivery as a direct result of shared learning
Equality	Description	Standard
Access to services	Customers are able to access services within the Council irrespective of languages, gender, work, lifestyle, sexuality, disability, age, affluence or literacy using appropriate channels	Set a baseline for the number of complaints about inaccessibility during 2007/08 and set improving target
Customer Service measurement	Description	Standard
Measuring satisfaction levels	Customer satisfaction levels will be measured and reported on across all access channels and enquiry types	85% of customers satisfied by 2007
Customer Service measurement	Description	Standard
Volume of customer contact	Volumes of customer contact will be measured and reported on. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel use • Enquiry type • Average wait time • Abandoned calls • Average length of time of enquiry • Number of processes not meeting agreed SLA standards • Cost of not meeting SLA standard 	Different contact methods will be compared against the targets set out in Figure 11 on page x. These measures will directly inform resource management and enable SLA monitoring
Processes	Description	Standard
Business process measurement	Each business processes delivers a business requirement and is measured against its targets	A full business processes management structure to be put in place by March 2008

Table 3 continued – Service Delivery Standards

Resources	Description	Standard
Resources	Resources should be managed effectively and by having a clear understanding of key demand periods, effective deployment of resources will take place.	Number of abandoned calls/enquiries should be no more than 5%
Staff	Description	Standard
Empowerment	Staff are empowered to deliver excellent customer service	Investors in People standards met and accreditation retained
Motivation and satisfaction	Staff motivation and satisfaction is regularly measured using staff surveys	Investors in People standards met and accreditation retained
	Members and senior management lead by example, encouraging staff to provide excellent services and inspire staff to demonstrate enthusiasm in delivering these services.	Investors in People standards met and accreditation retained
Members	Description	Standard
Involvement	Staff to keep Members informed at appropriate times	80% of Members feel they are kept informed about progress of their enquiries on key issues in their ward

In Tables 4 – 9, there are specific standards and measures relating to the type of channel the customer chooses to use. These apply across the Council in all services.

Table 4 - Telephone Standards (where appropriate these apply to both inbound and outbound calls)

	For all telephone calls during core hours	Plus for Customer Service Centre during its opening hours
Public access to EDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● % of calls abandoned less than 5% ● If person not available, message taken to agreed standards. Call back time offered with a 4-hour slot, for example, Monday afternoon, Thursday morning. ● Voicemail checked at least every day ● Alternative contact details on every voicemail message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 80% of calls answered within 20 seconds ● Voicemail checked at least every hour during working hours.

Table 4 continued – Telephone Standards

	For all telephone calls during core hours	Plus for Customer Service Centre during its opening hours
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Calls either resolved at first point of contact, or ● Customer advised of next steps and a timeframe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 80% of calls resolved by Customer Service Officers (CSOs) during first call, from the customer's point of view
Outbound Calls Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standard greeting ● Open call with 'good morning/afternoon, this is East Devon District Council, service and name' ● Positive words and tone, no jargon, acronyms ● Describe other departments as our XYZ team or my XYZ colleague 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standard call close, confirming customer understanding and asking if there is anything else we can help them with
Inbound Calls Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standard greeting ● Open call with 'good morning/afternoon, service and name' ● Positive words and tone, no jargon, acronyms ● Describe other departments as our XYZ team or my XYZ colleague 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open call with 'good morning/afternoon welcome to East Devon District Council customer services' ● Standard call close, confirming customer understanding and asking if there is anything else we can help them with
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide full contact details for future contact ● All written communications sent out to be on a standard template showing correct name and phone number. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSOs to make a follow-up call to the appropriate team to ensure that what was promised has been done
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If transferring to voicemail, check with customer that they want to be transferred and give the destination direct dial number for future use ● Offer to call back if the call is likely to be a long one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manage customer to appropriate channel and offer other channels (not necessarily same channel for inbound and outbound contact) ● Go at right speed for customer, checking understanding if necessary

Table 4 continued – Telephone Standards

	For all telephone calls during core hours	Plus for Customer Service Centre during its opening hours
Efficiency and accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If transferring call, explain to customer what will happen during transfer and give the destination direct dial number for future use ● Announce all transfers, giving caller's name, the purpose of the call and any references ● Only transfer a call if you're certain it's to the correct destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accuracy of handoffs to service areas – when and where to hand off, full and accurate data capture
Message taking	<p>Before taking a message, the person receiving the call should check whether they are able to help the caller. If not, record the following on the standard template set up in email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The name and telephone number of the caller ● The name of their organisation if relevant ● A summary of the reason for their call and a note of previous contact about this issue ● The date and time they called ● The action the message taker has agreed with the caller ● The name and extension of the message taker 	

Table 5 - Face to face Standards

Public access to EDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Customers should expect to wait no more than 5 minutes to see an Officer ● Should a customer request a visit by an Officer this will be made within 14 days ● Check for special needs if the appointment is pre-arranged (difficulty hearing, reading, understanding or with mobility)
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enquiry either resolved at first point of contact, or ● Customer advised of next steps and a timeframe

Table 5 continued - Face to face Standards

Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greet customer with ‘good morning/afternoon, welcome to EDDC, how can I help you’ ● Positive words and tone, no jargon, acronyms ● Describe other departments as our XYZ team or my XYZ colleague
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that Officers from the back office attend to a customer within 5 minutes. If the Officer is out of the building then the CSO must take ownership of the enquiry.
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide full contact details for future contact ● All written communications sent out on a standard template to show correct name and phone number.
Efficiency and accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accuracy of handoffs to back office areas – when and where to hand off, full and accurate data capture
What to do in a violent situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow the process you have been trained in and remove yourself from any danger as soon as possible
Appropriate to the circumstance	<p>When visiting a customer’s home or business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-arrange a suitable time where appropriate and check any special help that might be needed, for example, translation ● Respect other people’s property and customs at all times, for example you should wait to be offered a seat rather than just sitting down and you should check if you need to remove shoes ● Be aware of needs such as speaking quietly if a baby is sleeping

Table 6 - Web Standards

Public access to EDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Download times for homepage no greater than 27 seconds (currently 26.92) ● Website and online services are available 99.9% ● Website visitors no less than 13500 per month (current average is 14000)
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Customers advised of service-specific standards when they have completed an online transaction
Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adhere to Local Authority Website Standards (LAWS) usability guidelines ● Plain English principles
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transaction failure rate no more than 1%
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide full contact details for each EDDC service ● Provide a service-based mailbox for each service ● Provide appropriate links to all Council Services

Table 6 - Web Standards continued

Efficiency and accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of contacts through web channel. Refer to Figure 11 - Targets for channels
Customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Customer satisfaction to be in line with Table 1 and 2

Table 7 - Email Standards

Public access to EDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initial response within 1 working day to either resolve query or, if this is not possible, to acknowledge it and give target for substantive response ● In-boxes that are published externally to be checked at least half-daily
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 80% of e-mails resolved within 1 working day ● 100% of e-mails resolved within 5 working days unless we are investigating a complaint in which case an estimated date for a response should be given
Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open e-mail with “Thank you for...” ● Positive words and tone, no jargon, acronyms ● Plain English principles
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where possible address the customer with Dear Mr, Ms or Mrs otherwise use the customer’s name as they have. ● For external e-mails, delete any internal redirections of the e-mail so only relevant information is included
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use e-mail signatures standards which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name • Job title • East Devon District Council • Switchboard number, your extension • Email address • Website address ● Only invite customer to reply to your personal address if this is appropriate, as the normal route should be the group inbox for your service.
Clear signposting	
Efficiency and accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use templates where appropriate ● Do not send personal information externally ● Where appropriate, include a link to EDDC or partner website
Customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 90% by 2008

Table 8 - Fax Standards

Public access to EDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initial response within 1 working day to either resolve query or, if this is not possible, to acknowledge it and give target for substantive response ● Fax machines to be checked at least half-daily
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 80% of faxes resolved within 1 working day ● 100% of faxes resolved within 5 working days
Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive words and tone, no jargon, acronyms ● Plain English principles
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where possible address the customer with Dear Mr, Ms or Mrs otherwise use the customer's name as they have. ● Reply to a fax with a fax, unless customer asks you to respond by another channel
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use a cover sheet with sender's and recipient's name, phone and fax number ● Offer options for future contact – fax, e-mail, phone number
Efficiency and accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not send personal information externally, unless by exception (see Directorate guidelines)
Customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 90% by 2008

Table 9 - Letter Standards

Public access to EDDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initial response within 5 working days to either resolve query or, if this is not possible, to acknowledge it and give target for substantive response ● Letters to be read and prioritised every working day
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 100% of letters resolved within 15 working days unless it is a complaint when an estimated date of response should be given
Clear, positive, consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open letter with "Thank you for your letter..." ● Positive words and tone, no jargon, acronyms ● Plain English principles
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where possible address the customer with Dear Mrs, Ms or Mr otherwise use the customer's name as they have ● Use words and phrases suitable for customer – mirror the ones they have used if appropriate
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give your full name and direct dial telephone number ● Offer alternative sources of information for example the website
Efficiency and accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use templates, standard letters and paragraphs where appropriate
Customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 90% by 2008

Supporting these standards are the Plain English standards:

Table 10 - Plain English Standards

Description	Standard
Sentence length	Keep <u>average</u> sentence length short –15-20 words (about a line and a half of normal A4 page)
Active language	Choose active verbs “we offer a free bus pass” rather than “a free bus pass is offered by us”
You and We	Use “you” and “we”
Appropriate words for recipient	Choose words appropriate for the recipient – you can judge this by how they write and the words they use
Instructions	Don’t be afraid to give instructions – “please send the form...” rather than “it would be helpful if you could send the form...”
Avoid nominalisations	Avoid nominalisations – use complete rather than completion – ‘We will complete the repair by...’ rather than ‘Completion of the repair will be...’.
Positive language	“Please call us so that we can arrange a payment” rather than “If you don’t call us, your parking fine will increase”
Bullet points	Use bullet points where appropriate – normally for 3 or more items
Capital letters	Avoid capital letters for whole words – use lower case and bold for emphasis
Use of Latin	Avoid Latin, for example i.e. or e.g.
Jargon	Never use jargon or acronyms

Table 11 – Text Messaging Standard

	For all text messages during core hours	Plus for Customer Service Centre during its opening hours
General use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For customers who have agreed to this method of communication (or between officers) – no premium rate or other numbers. 	
Clear signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide details for future contact, for example, ‘see our website for more information’ (give address) 	.

Table 11 continued – Text Messaging Standard

	For all text messages during core hours	Plus for Customer Service Centre during its opening hours
Appropriate to customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use only where customer has agreed to this method of communication ● Not to be used for urgent communications – do not assume customer will receive message ● Not to be used where immediate queries would arise and therefore a telephone call would be more appropriate ● Not to be used for imparting lots of information where a letter or email would be more appropriate 	
Speed of resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reply to a text message within 1 working day, giving timescale for action 	
Incoming texts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSC to receive general incoming texts ● Immediate auto response text giving acknowledgement and reference number ● When query complete, text customer to let them know

Guiding principles to Customer Service Standards

Here are some principles that apply to all of the targets and should be taken into account when using the standards and targets:

- EDDC service standards use the ODPM definition of resolution at the first point of contact, that is: ‘service interactions concluded at the initial point of contact, without the need for further action or mediation on the part of the person instigating the interaction’.
- The first and last name of individual staff will be used in all personal contacts unless the member of staff judges their personal safety is at risk in a specific situation. Any such cases should be reported to the individual’s line manager.
- Access to services for customers who do not read/speak English will be by translation services.

- Contacts are excluded from the customer service standards if they are known to be unsolicited approaches from external suppliers offering products or services to the Authority.
- A contact is owned by the person that initially receives the contact, until it is resolved or someone else agrees to own the contact.
- Customers will not be solely dependent on one person's availability to access the Council's services.

2. Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) will help us deliver a completely new approach to dealing with customer interactions which:

- tracks all customer enquiries
- provides a complete suite of management information to help service delivery to be continuously improved around customer needs
- monitors which access channels are being used.

Tracking customer service and resolution of enquiries will be key to understanding where we can improve and increase customer satisfaction. In addition, we will become more sophisticated at customer profiling to help us target services more efficiently.

Monitoring and managing access channels will help us provide the most efficient services. Tameside, a leading council in the e-government field, has calculated the cost difference per 'visit' in 2004/05 between the three main access channels to be:

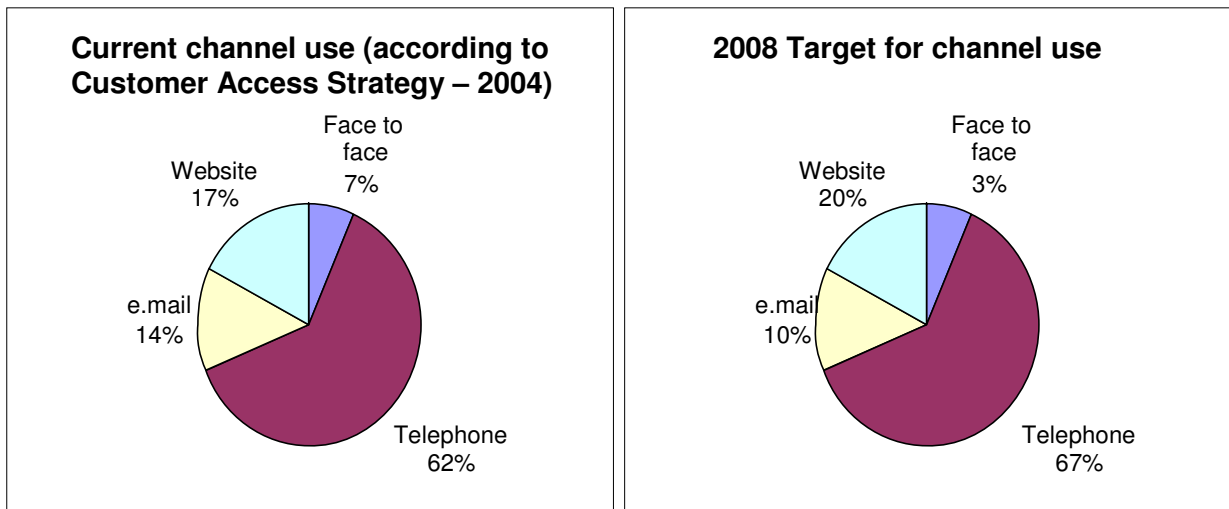
Face to face visits:	£14.65
Customer Service Centre:	£1.39
Website:	£0.25

Our strategy, therefore, is to make further developments to the website to encourage customers to access the service they want electronically. These will include:

- Paying parking fines
- Reporting an abandoned vehicle
- Paying council tax and checking the balance of your account
- Reporting fly tipping and missed bins.

Once our customers realise that we are able to resolve their enquiries quickly and easily, we are likely to increase the number of enquiries we get through all the access channels we offer. This has been the case for most other councils who have improved services in the way we are proposing. However, our strategy should still be that future targets increase the percentage of customers using the cheaper access channels, namely telephone and website. Our targets for 2008, shown in Figure 11 on the next page, are not just a reflection of more efficient ways of managing customer enquiries, but also reflect the government priority of encouraging citizens to increase their take up of electronic communication channels.

Figure 11 - Targets for access channels



3. Business process management

A key element of the Customer Service Centre programme is the process mapping exercise which will identify those customer enquiries that can be moved into the CSC. The process of mapping enquiries and dealing with them through the CRM system leads to faster, more efficient processes.

Once the CSC programme is completed however, it is important that the activity of process mapping and redesign is continued so that:

- we are constantly improving the way we deliver services
- we have easy access to understanding how particular processes work
- there is greater control and understanding of process performance and how to improve it

We will therefore put into place a process management structure, with process owners in every service, through the service planning days over the next 12 months so that mapping and improving processes is an integral part of each Service.

Table 12 – Business process management

Start up	Q1 2006	Q2 2006	Q3 2006	
Identify all major processes			✓	
Assign 'owners'			✓	
Ongoing activity				Annually
Document processes				✓
Analyse and improve				✓
Report improvements to CMT				✓

4. Organisational Development

To support this Strategy, a mandatory training programme will be put in place during 2006 to help all staff deliver service excellence on a day to day basis. The training programme will be for both front and back office staff and will cover:

- Increased self awareness
- Knowledge and understanding of the factors that are essential to customer service
- Skills and confidence to create the best possible customer experience for all customers, whatever their background or abilities

Over the next 12 months, we will also evaluate the value in getting customer service skills accredited through a recognised accreditation process.

In addition, there are a whole suite of strategies in place, or in development, to support this change process. We have:

- our Flexible Working Policy and Homeworking Policy, which will help implement new working methods
- comprehensive access to learning and development for our staff through our own Corporate Training Programme and through the Devon Learning Portal
- a Recruitment process for the Customer Service Centre based around key customer competencies, which will be rolled out across the organisation by 2007
- a robust Employee Suggestion Scheme and a commitment at Corporate Management Team and the Middle Managers' Forum to share best practice and learn from mistakes and complaints
- a Communication Strategy which enables an inclusive approach to change with regular input from Unison, and next year we will develop a Marketing Strategy for the take up of e-services.
- a Consultation Strategy to guide all consultation we undertake
- an Information Security Policy in place and a plan to develop an Information Management Strategy
- plans to update our ICT Strategy
- an Equality and Diversity Policy in place and our 'Social Inclusion Proofing Tool' used to promote consideration of the needs of all societal groupings in our service planning
- Prince 2 project management principles and the Programme Board to oversee the change process.

5. Performance management using appraisals and key competencies

Performance management will continue through the Council's performance management framework. This includes appraisals, one to ones and, for next year (2007), a set of organisational competencies, one of which is customer focus. During 2006 we will raise awareness of the competencies to be introduced next year so that they gradually become accepted as part of the culture at the Council.

6. Customer Access to Services

Last year, our Customer Access was inspected by the Audit Commission. The service was described as 'good with promising prospects for improvement'. The improvements we still need to address are:

- Community websites (which are being developed by our partner organisation, the 'Devonline' Portal)
- Consistency of consultation across all our services to inform improvement
- Sharing learning and consultation results with the Local Strategic Partnership
- Councillor understanding of the customer agenda, and Scrutiny's particular role in it

- Proving we offer value for money services
- Promoting frontline staff as ‘ambassadors’ of the Council who can provide contact details and respond to simple enquiries from the general public about the Council’s services
- Local Performance Indicators and baseline data relating to access to services which we will use to inform our understanding of progress

Progress on these will be owned and monitored by the Corporate Director - Central Services.

In addition, we have committed to reviewing our decision to set up a Customer Service Centre for this Council’s services only, and will do so in 2008/09. This will be part of a comprehensive ‘Access to All’ project which will review:

- The location of our offices and reception points
- The availability and accessibility of ours and our partners’ services
- The potential for enhancing service provision in existing community buildings, such as libraries and town councils, including the possibility of introducing information ‘kiosks’ in the District
- Our asset management process and programme for assessing physical access to our buildings
- The development of a ‘single customer view’ which enables us to develop and use customer data to manage performance, respond to customer needs and prioritise our use of resources
- The development of key customer group definitions and an understanding of their needs and behaviours which will help us tailor communications and services, rather than provide a one size fits all.

7. Communication

Communication will play a key role in the delivery of the Customer Service Strategy. Internal communication will ensure we win the hearts and minds of our staff so that they understand and implement the policy. External communication will be used to inform the public of the changes we are making and invite feedback. During 2007/08, we will develop a marketing strategy to help maximise the take up of e-enabled services.

Outcomes

The outcomes will be:

- 80% of enquiries in the Customer Service Centre resolved at the first point of contact by the end of 2006
- 90% customer satisfaction with the Customer Service Centre by 2008
- Business processes management implemented across the Council by the end of 2007
- Retention of Investors in People in 2009
- Customer Access analysed and decisions taken about the most appropriate future service delivery arrangements by 2010.

Who is responsible for delivery?

Mark Williams is the Sponsor of this programme who is supported by Denise Lyon as Programme Executive and Customer Champion.

In terms of day to day responsibility for the CSC programme, Chris Powell is responsible.

In addition there is an overall Programme Board, which meets every week, to provide strategic direction to the programme.

Councillor Stuart Hughes - Communications Portfolio Holder on the Executive Board is lead member in the area of customer service and access.

Performance Monitoring

We will monitor the customer service standards through the Lagan CRM system, where possible, and the information will form part of the monthly reporting to the Executive Board. Other standards, such as using correct greetings, will be done through mystery shopping and or random checks.

Policy Consultation

Programme Board
Customer sounding board
Staff Joint Forum
Overview Committee

Policy Review

The Corporate Director - Central Services will review this policy in 2008/09

Related Policies and Strategies

Customer Access Strategy (now superseded by this policy)
Customer Charter (now superseded by this policy)
Customer First Policy (now superseded by this policy)
EDDC competency models
Consultation Strategy and Consultation Guide
Communications Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Flexible Working Policy
Freedom of Information Policy
Handling Information Handbook (covering Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Environmental Information)
Homeworking Policy
ICT Strategy
Information Security Policy