

Guildhall Gainsborough

Lincolnshire DN21 2NA

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**AGENDA**

**This meeting will be recorded and the video archive published on our website**

**Challenge and Improvement Committee****Tuesday, 19th February, 2019 at 6.30 pm****Council Chamber - The Guildhall****Members:**

Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)  
Councillor Lewis Strange (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Angela White (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Bruce Allison  
Councillor David Bond  
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers  
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings  
Councillor Thomas Smith  
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn

**1. Apologies for Absence****2. Minutes of the previous meeting.**

- i) Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee 4 - 8  
held on 8 January 2019

**3. Members' Declarations of Interest**

Members may make any declarations of interest at this point and may also make them at any point during the meeting.

**4. Matters Arising Schedule**

9

Matters arising schedule setting out current position of previously agreed actions as at 11 February 2019.

**5. Presentation Item - Gainsborough Foyer re Youth Housing Provision** TO FOLLOW

Presentation by Rachel Parkin, Home Choices Team Manager, and David Barratt from Gainsborough Foyer regarding youth housing provision.

**6. Public Reports**

- i) Garden Waste Review 10 - 24
- ii) Customer First 6 month update 25 - 41

**7. General Work Items**

- i) Forward Plan 42 - 50
- ii) Committee Workplan 51 - 52

**8. Exclusion of Public and Press**

To resolve that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 or Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**9. Preparation for Scrutiny of Partnership Working Arrangements**

- i) Scrutiny of partnership working arrangements with Thames Ambulance Services Ltd in regard to service delivery across the District. VERBAL REPORT

Mark Sturgess  
Head of Paid Service  
The Guildhall  
Gainsborough

Monday, 11 February 2019

## WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held in The Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 8 January 2019 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan (Chairman)  
Councillor Lewis Strange (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Angela White (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Bruce Allison  
Councillor David Bond  
Councillor Mrs Angela Lawrence  
Councillor Roger Patterson  
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers  
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings  
Councillor Thomas Smith  
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn

**In Attendance:** Councillor Michael Devine

**Also in Attendance:**

Mark Sturgess	Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service
Karen Whitfield	Communities & Commercial Programme Manager
Grant White	Enterprising Communities Manager
Ele Durrant	Democratic and Civic Officer

One member of the public

### 49 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and wished a Happy New Year to all.

### 50 MEETING OF THE CHALLENGE AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2018

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

### 51 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this point in the meeting.

## **52 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions, as at 28 December 2018.

The Democratic and Civic Officer advised Members that several items had been completed since the previous meeting and that, with regards to the letter of support for Lincolnshire Police, the Chairman had received a response from Sir Edward Leigh, MP, that morning. It was agreed the response would be shared with Members.

**RESOLVED** that the Matters Arising Schedule as at 28 December 2018 be received and noted.

## **53 LEISURE CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION**

Members gave consideration to a report detailing the implementation of the leisure contract to date, in advance of it being submitted to the Prosperous Communities Committee, having selected the item previously for pre-scrutiny purposes.

There was a positive response from Members to the details of what had been achieved since the implementation of the new contract. In particular, there was significant discussion regarding the outreach programmes and the importance of including those communities and groups who may otherwise not be engaged with any form of fitness or wellbeing service. It was questioned how the outreach service was planned, in terms of which areas would be approached, and it was explained that the Active Communities Manager was trying to initiate pilot schemes whilst also then supporting community groups to continue the schemes. A Member of Committee praised the cardio-rehab sessions and highlighted that prior to the service opening in Gainsborough, there had been a significant waiting list for people to attend sessions in Lincoln. The GP referral system to the sessions in Gainsborough had greatly reduced the waiting times and users of the sessions commended the positive impact on their lives and rehabilitation.

A Member of Committee questioned the figures provided within the report as a comparison for user numbers for current services against when the facility had been used as a bowls hall. It was confirmed that the numbers provided were a like for like comparison specifically for number of visits to the health hub area, not for the leisure centre as a whole. The increased visitor numbers were praised by the Committee and options for expanding the outreach services were suggested, for example linking with Call Connect to transport users and also for Members to help identify areas within their wards that may benefit from the outreach programme.

There was discussion regarding the details of the recommendations and it was requested whether a report could be brought to Committee at the end of year one of the contract, rather than waiting for the end of year two. The Community & Commercial Programme Manager agreed it would be feasible to bring a further report at the end of year one to update Members at that point, but also outlined the rationale for the current proposal which would allow time for performance targets to be set and reviewed.

With no further questions from Members it was

**RESOLVED** that it be recommended to the Prosperous Communities Committee that:

- a) the contents of the report, and the work undertaken since the award of the leisure contract, be supported by Members; and
- b) Members agree to receive an interim report at the end of Year One and a further report at the end of Year Two of the contract which monitors performance of the agreed targets.

#### **54 PUBLIC REALM TASK AND FINISH GROUP - FINAL REPORT**

The Enterprising Communities Manager introduced the final report from the Public Realm Working Group which summarised the work undertaken by the group and listed a selection of recommendations for possible action to the Prosperous Communities Committee.

A Member of Committee commended the work of the Working Group and the level of detail that had been gathered through the survey results. It was acknowledged that there were concerns about the limited number of responses however it was felt that those responses received accurately portrayed the issues faced by parish councils all over the district. There was significant discussion regarding traffic speed limits across the district and county as a whole and it was felt that there could be improvements across West Lindsey especially in comparison with other areas of the county.

It was also acknowledged that the maintenance of grass verges could be an issue for parish councils especially where the prohibition of parking on the verges was not enforced. A Member of Committee queried the legalities of large rubbish skips being situated on pavements and grass verges for long periods of time, for example in circumstances of house renovations, and it was later confirmed that the licences for such skips were controlled by Lincolnshire County Council.

**Note:** Councillor A. Lawrence left the room at 7:10pm and returned at 7:12pm.

The recommendations to the Prosperous Communities Committee were discussed in detail. The five recommendations were:

- 1) Undertake to review existing communication and reporting channels between WLDC and parish/town councils
- 2) Establish a scheme or clear suite of tools/support that WLDC can provide to parish/town councils to support local action on dog fouling, fly-tipping and littering
- 3) Undertake a review of legal responsibilities for grass verges and explore options for transfer of ownership/responsibility with LCC
- 4) Review current ability to provide community support and advice to parish/town councils on local issues and community projects

- 5) Consider the need to re-allocate funds within the Community Grants Programme to respond to and support local issues around public realm

These recommendations were supported as seeking to resolve the main issues highlighted by the survey responses. With unanimous agreement it was

**RESOLVED** that

- a) The Public Realm Report be acknowledged; and
- b) The recommendations detailed above and in Section 4 of the Public Realm report be submitted to the Prosperous Communities Committee for further exploration and decision as appropriate.

## **55     PROGRESS AND DELIVERY PERIOD 2 REPORT 2018/19**

The Head of Paid Service introduced a report regarding the Progress and Delivery Report for Period 2 of 2018/19. He highlighted that the purpose for the Committee was not to review the full report but to consider whether the policy committees had dealt with the original report in sufficient detail. There was discussion between Members that it appeared the Prosperous Communities Committee had thoroughly examined the details of the report however, it seemed that the Corporate Policy and Resource (CP&R) Committee had focussed on one aspect of the report, namely enforcement. It was acknowledged that enforcement was an important aspect of the report and that there was a further paper being taken to the Committee regarding the amount of time taken to resolve cases.

Members discussed how to ascertain the level of scrutiny given to the Progress and Delivery report by the CP&R Committee and it was agreed that, given that they had requested for further information to be provided, this would also be considered by the Challenge and Improvement Committee.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to the additional information requested by the Corporate Policy and Resource Committee, Members be assured that suitable challenge is being made to the information contained in the report.

**Note:**            Councillor A. Welburn left the room at 7:32pm

## **56     REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND DELIVERY MEASURES 2019/20**

**Note:**            Councillor A. Welburn returned to the room at 7:34pm

The Committee was asked to give consideration to a report regarding the review of Progress and Delivery measures for 2019/2020, which sought to create a time limited working group for the review. The Head of Paid Service explained there would be three meetings to take place towards the end of February and the beginning of March 2019 and that the working group was recommended be made up of no more than five Members. He asked for Members of the Challenge and Improvement Committee to be involved and with the

agreement of five Members, the working group was confirmed to be Councillors L. Rollings, T. Smith, L. Strange, A. Welburn and A. White.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The process set out in the report for involving Members in the review of the Progress and Delivery measures be agreed; and
- b) No more than five Members be nominated to serve on the Progress and Delivery measures 2019/20 review group; and
- c) The membership of the review group be agreed as Councillors L. Rollings, T. Smith, L. Strange, A. Welburn and A. White.

## **57 FORWARD PLAN**

The Democratic and Civic Officer introduced the forward plan for all committees and explained that the items selected by C&I were already highlighted.

There was discussion about a report due to be seen at Prosperous Communities Committee regarding the housing company. A Member of Committee enquired whether this could also be seen by Members of the Challenge and Improvement Committee and it was agreed for this to be shared as appropriate.

**RESOLVED** that the forward plan be noted.

## **58 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

Members of Committee gave consideration to the committee work plan for the coming months. With no comment from Members it was

**RESOLVED** that the work plan be noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.38 pm.

Chairman

## Challenge and Improvement Cttee Matters Arising Schedule

**Purpose:** To consider progress on the matters arising from previous Challenge and Improvement Committee meetings.

**Recommendation:** That members note progress on the matters arising and request corrective action if necessary.

Status	Title	Action Required	Comments	Due Date	Allocated To
<b>Black</b>					
	<b>Consideration of Customer Experience with P&amp;D</b>	To consider inclusion of Customer Experience data as part of the P&D reporting for the following year.	<b>Workshops with P&amp;D Working Group have been arranged for March 2019.</b>	29/03/19	Mark Sturgess
	<b>Response from Sir Edward Leigh re Lincs Police</b>	Response letter to be shared with Members of C&I	<b>shared with Committee 17 Jan</b>	31/01/19	Ele Durrant
<b>Green</b>					
	<b>Improvement to street scene across the district</b>	Work item requested by C&I cttee. Extract of mins 09/01/2018: "A Member of Committee enquired about whether there was any scope to look at aspects of towns and villages that incorporated such things as public artwork or fountains. It was suggested that these could be looked at as street furniture or as part of the overall street scene... [it was suggested that] ... it might be possible to undertake a separate piece of work to look specifically at grants available for improvement of area through public artwork or installations. It was requested that this be noted as a future work point."	<b>Date extended for consideration in 2018/19 committee work plan.</b>  <b>UPDATE: discussed in Chair's Briefing 19 Dec 2018. With the completion of the public realm work, pending recommendations to committee, it was suggested for the item to be considered for inclusion in the 19/20 cttee work plan as a follow on project.</b>	28/06/19	Mark Sturgess





Challenge and  
Improvement Committee

19<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**Subject: Review of the Garden Waste Subscription service roll-out**

Report by:	Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service
Contact Officer:	Adrian Selby Strategic Manager Services 01427 675154 Ady.selby@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	<i>To update Members on performance following the implementation of a subscription based garden waste collection service and highlight decision making process for year two subscription rate setting</i>

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** Members welcome the year one performance of the subscription based garden waste service and review decision making process of year two subscription level

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** Garden waste collections are chargeable under current legislation, however the Council is only allowed to recover its costs for providing the service.

### **Financial : FIN/200/19**

The costs of providing the Garden Waste service have been reviewed and updated within the MTFP and below in this report.

The revised costs stand at £919k based on the expected volumes 25,910 (volumes achieved in 18-19). Applying the rate of £35.00 will generate an income of £907k.

The Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 includes for the amounts quoted above with the service reflecting a small deficit for the year of £12k.

Analysis of volumes (+5% / -5%) and of price (£33 / £35 / £37) included below within the report highlighted that the current rate of £35.00 is deemed the most appropriate charging rate for 2019/20, as approved by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in December 2018.

NB: The Medium Term Financial Plan and Fees is subject to the approval of Council on 4 March 2019

**Staffing :** None

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out before the policy was introduced. As no changes to the service are planned or anticipated this assessment has not been refreshed.

**Risk Assessment :** Governments new Waste and Resource Strategy states a likely consultation on collection methodologies including free garden waste services/ *Input to consultation*

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :** No new risks

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

## Call in and Urgency:

### Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

☐

No

x

### Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

x

No

☐

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report will reflect on the implementation of a subscription based kerbside garden waste service and performance of that service in year one (2018/19).
- 1.2 It reports on key metrics which Members considered important as part of their original deliberations.
- 1.3 The report identifies current charges implemented by neighbouring authorities.
- 1.4 It will go on to considered financial implications and recommended the level of charge for year two which were agreed by Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (see Appendix 1, minute extract for this item at CP+R committee, December 2018)
- 1.5 All data is correct to January 13<sup>th</sup> 2019

## 2. Background

- 2.1 In December 2017, Prosperous Communities Committee resolved to introduce a subscription based garden waste service from 1 April 2018, the service had previously been free for residents who could receive it.
- 2.2 Corporate Policy and Resources Committee resolved to set the annual subscription at £35 per year per bin and tasked officers with delivering a report back to that Committee in December 2018.
- 2.3 In December 2018, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee considered evidence of year one performance and the future cost of providing the service. The Committee resolved to keep the year two subscription price at £35 per bin.

## 3. Year One Delivery

- 3.1 A Project Team comprising of officers from key service areas led on implementation of the service in year one.

- 3.2 A number of key performance indicators were developed with the aim of ensuring full cost recovery, achieving high levels of satisfaction, monitoring take up method and understanding levels of fly-tipping.
- 3.3 The commentary and graphics below demonstrate performance of the service in year one.

#### 4. Take up

- 4.1 The original Business Case predicted that 50% of householders would take up the service. In addition, it was anticipated that most residents who had previously paid for second garden waste bins would choose to keep them.
- 4.2 In total, the Business Case predicted there would be 21,651 subscriptions. In reality, to the end of October 2018 there had been a total of 25,911 subscriptions (58.3%).
- 4.3 These subscriptions were spread across 23,710 customers.
- 4.4 Table 1 below shows the total number of subscriptions and profiles when the service requests were received throughout the initial months. As the service approaches closedown for the year it is not anticipated that any further requests will be received.
- 4.5 The service has out-performed initial predictions.

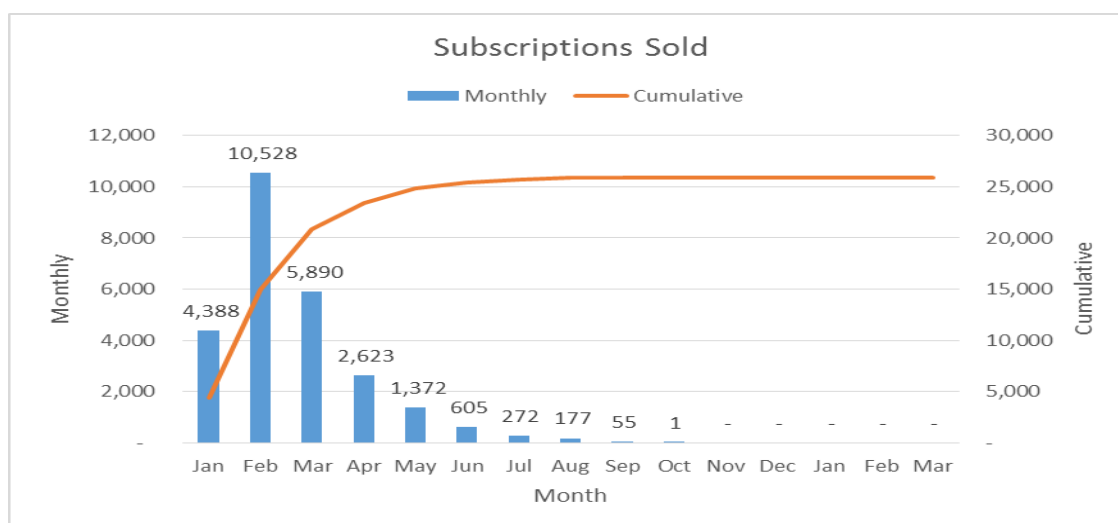


Table 1

#### 5. Income generated

- 5.1 Table 2 below shows the cumulative income for the service in year one, and compares it with the prediction in the original Business Case.
- 5.2 To the end of the year one season, a total of £885k had been generated through the subscription scheme.
- 5.3 Some discounts were offered to residents who had already subscribed to second bins in the 2017/18 season, this action ensures the payment process

will be simpler in the coming year as the anniversary for every subscription is 1<sup>st</sup> April.

- 5.4 The service has out-performed initial predictions, and the graph below shows the cumulative income generated;

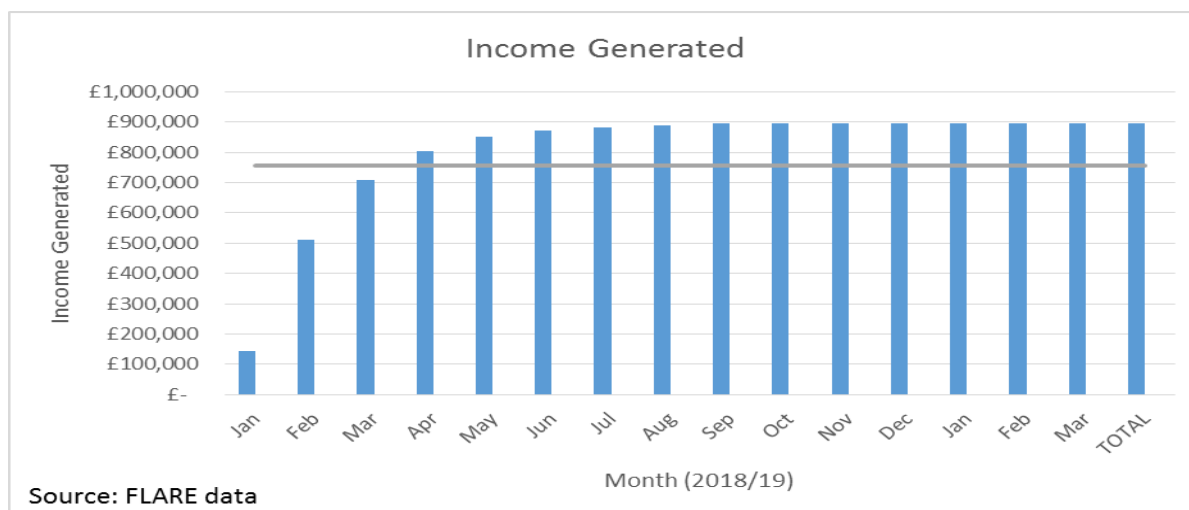


Table 2

## 6. Sign up method

- 6.1 The introduction of this service was an opportunity for the Council to engage with a large proportion of householders and encourage channel shift.
- 6.2 A challenging target of 60% of subscriptions to be completed online was imposed. New online forms were designed and tested.
- 6.3 Table 3 below summarises take up method.
- 6.4 At the end of the year one season, a total of 59% (14,030) of subscriptions were received online and despite some technical issues with the website in early January, householder's fed back that they found the process reasonably simple and straightforward.
- 6.5 Additional staff were taken on in the Customer Services Centre and a total of 8,448 telephone payments have been taken along with 1,236 face to face transactions.
- 6.6 The original 60% target was not quite achieved, measures are being implemented in year two to improve this.

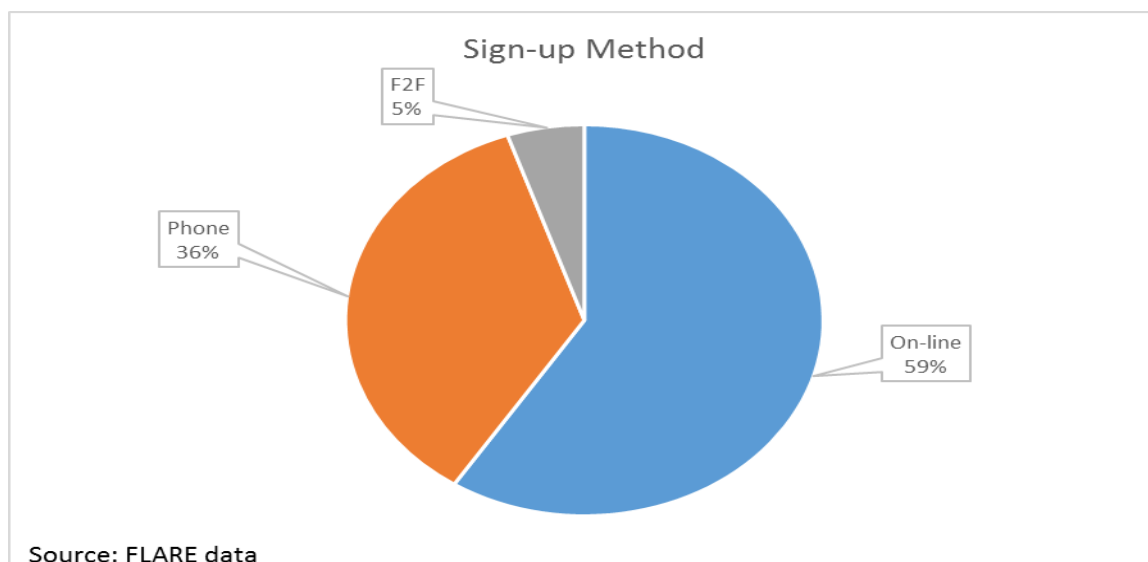


Table 3

## 7. Analysis by ward

- 7.1 Some work has been undertaken to understand the location of subscribers in order to inform future marketing campaigns and to undertake round re-routing.
- 7.2 Table 4 below shows the percentage of subscriptions in each ward compared with the total number of households in that ward.
- 7.3 Unsurprisingly, the lowest rates of uptake are in Gainsborough due to the proliferation of smaller gardens.
- 7.4 Nettleham has the highest rate at 76.2%.

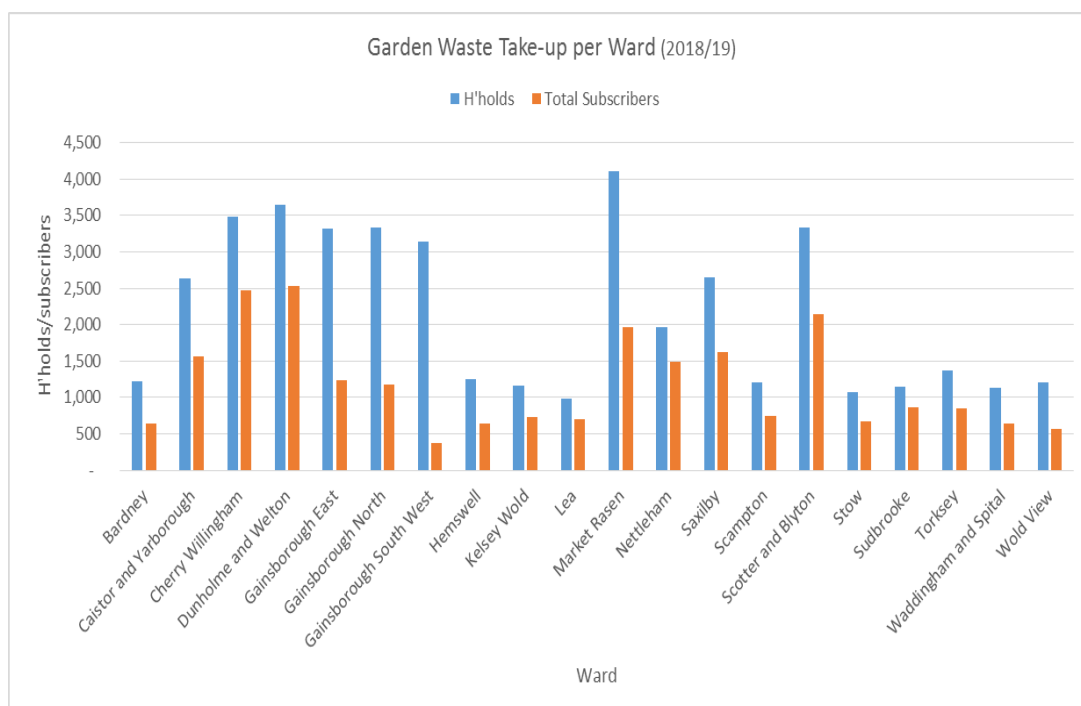


Table 4

## 8. Tonnage collected

8.1 Table 5 below shows the tonnage of garden waste collected compared to last year.

8.2 To the end of August in 2017/18, 7,594 tonnes of material was collected. In the same period in 2018/19 5,655 tonnes was collected.

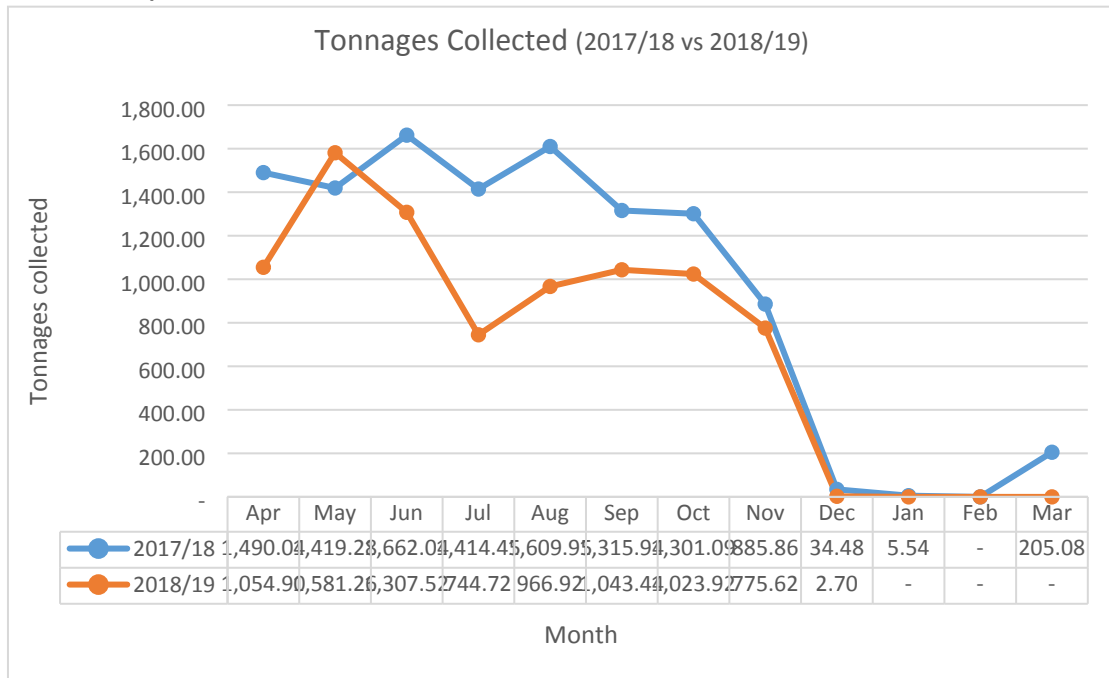


Table 5

8.3 Members raised some concerns around residents putting garden waste in residual waste bins rather than subscribing to the garden waste service.

8.4 There has been a rise in residual waste to the period to the end of August, however it's very small - less than 1kg per household over the five month period.

8.5 Data from Household Waste Recycling Centre's shows that waste overall, and especially garden waste, reduced in year.

8.6 The reduction in presented garden waste is likely to be the result of a lower growth rate due to the long, hot summer.

8.7 There has been an increase in residents composting at home following the announcement of a consultation into charging for the service. 121 composters were sold through official channels between September 2017 and September 2018, this compares to 33 sales the previous year.

8.8 The recycling rate is difficult to predict as it is dependent on a number of factors. However, officers are predicting the end of year rate will be between 43 and 46% which is in line with the prediction in the original Business Case.

8.9 It should be noted that trends in rates of presented waste are traditionally dynamic and it is recommended that a minimum of three years data would be required before making business decisions based on this data.

## 9. Missed bins

- 9.1 Table 6 below shows the rate of missed bins compared to last year. Unsurprisingly, there was a spike in missed collections as the new service was introduced.
- 9.2 This was due to new staff learning a new service, residents reporting missed bins when they had not subscribed to the service, and an increase in assisted collections being missed as more residents wanted this service as they were now paying.
- 9.3 Supervisors worked hard with crews and residents to resolve issues as quickly as possible, and the table demonstrates how performance improved to better than that of last year by July 2018.

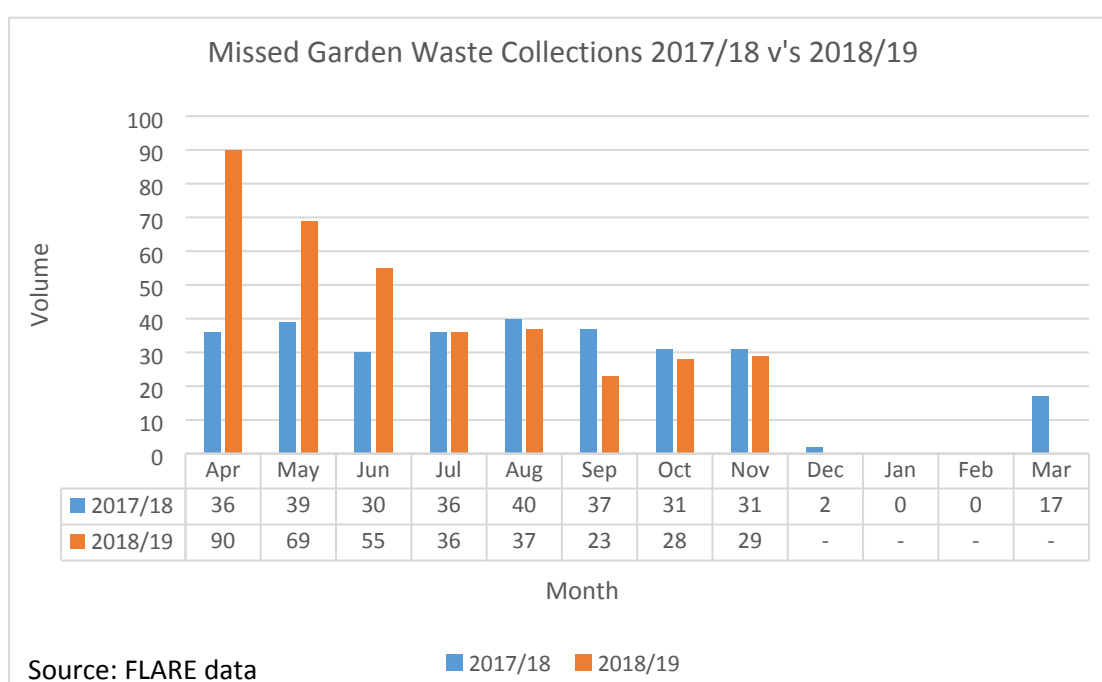


Table 6

## 10. Fly-Tipping

- 10.1 Members were concerned about the potential for an increase in fly-tipped garden waste following the introduction of a charge and tasked officers with monitoring the situation closely.
- 10.2 Table 7 below shows the percentage of fly-tips which were due to garden waste compared to last year. It shows that there is no evidence to suggest an increase in these incidents, in fact the rate has reduced.
- 10.3 Nationally, fly tipping has increased in recent years. West Lindsey suffered a spike in occurrences in 2014/15, up to high of 1477 incidents. Since then the rate has reduced to below a thousand and this year has seen 390 instances in the first six months.



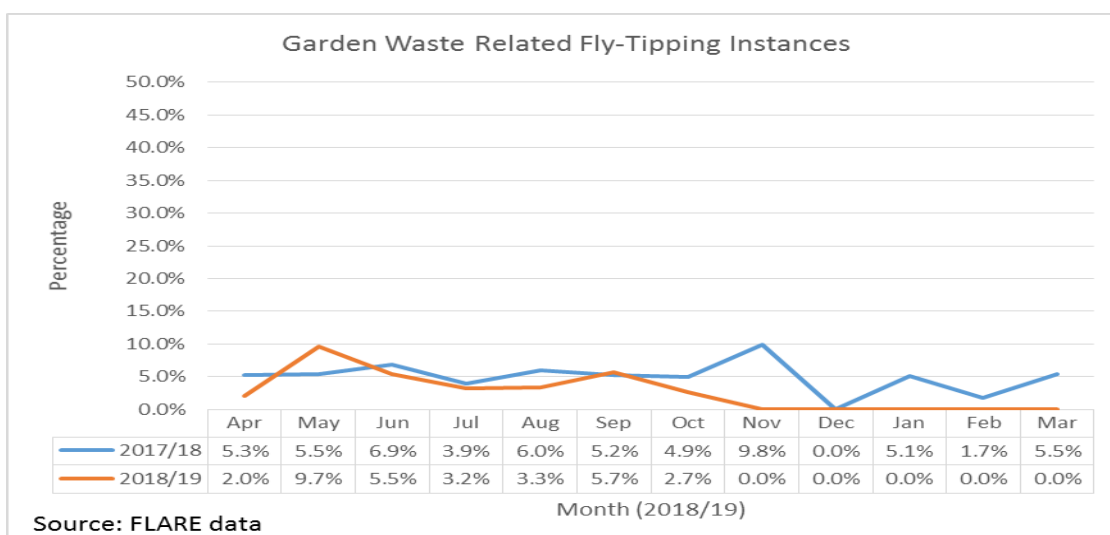


Table 7

## 11. Satisfaction

- 11.1 A satisfaction survey was carried out in June to understand residents' views of the subscription process.
- 11.2 Table 8 below shows that the vast majority of residents were satisfied with the process, and those that encountered issues cited the website failing and calls going unanswered or even dropped.
- 11.3 An Improvement Plan is in place for year two, which considers these issues.

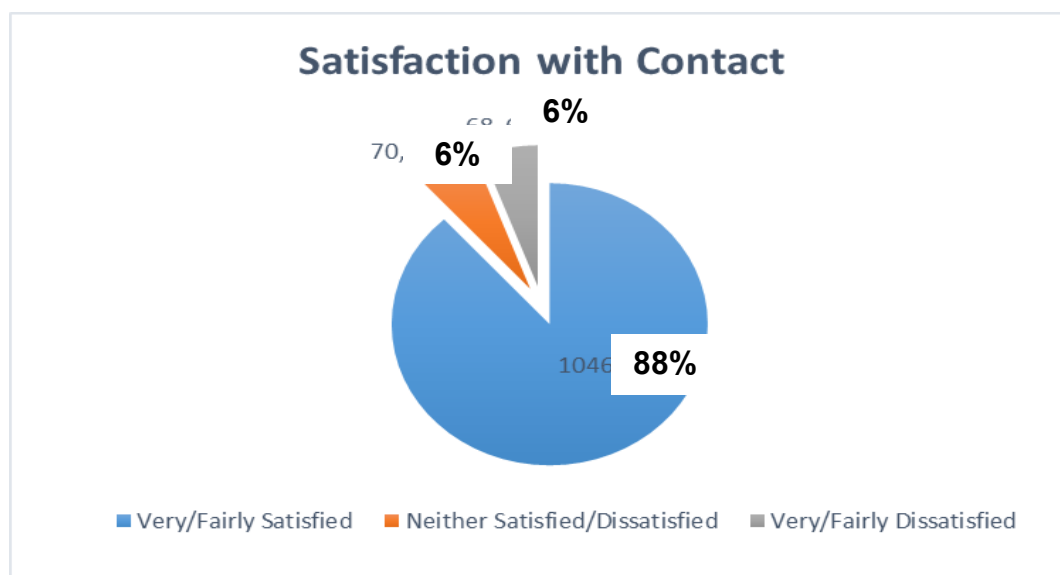


Table 8

- 11.4 Regarding service delivery, a total of eleven formal complaints and eleven comments were received.
- 11.5 These were mainly either about the introduction of a charge, payment difficulties and non-collection of bins. All have been resolved

## **12. Returned bins**

- 12.1 Members asked questions at Committee regarding the fate of the bins for residents who did not subscribe to the service.
- 12.2 There were comparatively few requests for bins to be returned, in general residents found other uses for the bins or just stored them. In total, 157 requests for bins to be collected were received and two collection weeks were organised, one in May and one in September.

## **13. Year Two**

- 13.1 Overall the project to implement a subscription based service was a real success, with performance levels much higher than predicted.
- 13.2 The requirements of the service for year two are quite different from year one as it is a renewal process rather than first contact. A smaller project team is overseeing the year two process based on the following principles;

- Systems and processes are being reviewed to enhance the customer journey.
- More residents will be encouraged to channel shift as subscribers will only be able to subscribe online in January, the Customer Centre will open for telephone subscriptions in February
- There are no plans to amend collection dates although collection rounds will be reviewed and days of collection could change, consideration will also be given to collecting garden waste on different days to residual and recycling bins.
- Welcome Packs printing and postage will be outsourced in order to gain better value
- Stickers will have residents addresses printed on to reduce the opportunity for fraud
- There are no plans to introduce direct debits at least until a new financial system is procured
- In-cab technology has been assessed and there are no plans to implement it at this time
- Welcome Packs will be posted nearer to the date of the start of the service to reduce incidents of lost packs.

## **14. What our near neighbours do**

- 14.1 Table 9 below summarises our near neighbour's position with regard to subscriptions for their kerbside garden waste services.

	Annual charge	Number of collections pa
North Kesteven	£30	24
Boston BC	£30 (under review)	20
CoLC	£36 (under review)	26

South Kesteven	£35	21
South Holland	£49	24
East Lindsey	£40	21
NE Lincs	£35	20
N Lincs	Free	N/A
Bassetlaw	£30	March-mid December
West Lindsey	£35	18

Table 9

## 15. Financial Overview

- 15.1 The principle established at Committees' was that those residents who use the service should pay for it and it should no longer be a burden to the wider Council Tax payer, in essence a total cost recovery model.
- 15.2 Table 10 below shows cost of service for year one and predicted cost for year two.

<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Report - Est</b>	<b>Budget 19-20</b>
Operational Costs	£318,890	£511,100
Vehicles	£200,850	£190,900
Management	£80,470	£0
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>£600,210</b>	<b>£702,000</b>
<b>Indirect Costs</b>		
Depots	£14,350	£12,600
Support Services	£62,740	£57,000
Depreciation	£99,100	£126,600
<b>Total Indirect Costs</b>	<b>£176,190</b>	<b>£196,200</b>
<b>Full cost of service</b>	<b>£776,400</b>	<b>£898,200</b>
<b>Additional costs of providing new service</b>	£76,770	£20,800
<b>Total cost of service</b>	<b>£853,170</b>	<b>£919,000</b>

Table 10

- 15.3 Regarding the increase in operational costs;
- Management costs are now being included in the same cost centre
  - Pension contribution identified for the Lump sum Deficit across WLDC.
  - Popularity of service-more customers = more costs
  - Higher than anticipated pay award for staff
- 15.4 Indirect costs have remained fairly constant, a slight reduction has been achieved for the accommodation and support costs. These have been offset

by increased costs for depreciation which reflects the current value and the economic life of the fleet.

## 16. Future considerations

- 16.1 Current budgeted costs do not make any provision for renovation or relocation of depot facilities. Any capital costs for these works will directly impact the garden waste service.

## 17. Future Income

- 17.1 A level of discount was applied for some customers who already subscribed to additional waste bin. However, all subscriptions are now aligned and therefore the potential income for a static customer base for next year is shown in Table 11 below.

Actual volumes of customers (bins) 2018/19	25,910
Rate applied in 2018/19	£35.00
<b>Full year income (ignoring discounts)</b>	<b>£906,850</b>

Table 11

- 17.2 Taking this into account the effect of different charges has been modelled based on the same number of customers as this year and is demonstrated in Table 12 below.

	Cost of Service	Income
£33 charge	£919,000	£855,030
£35 charge	£919,000	£906,850
£37 charge	£919,000	£958,670

Table 12

- 17.3 Based on this information, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee resolved to retain a £35 subscription per bin for all customers for the 2019/20 season. Appendix 1 is the minute extract from the meeting of that committee in December 2018.

## 18. Update

- 18.1 Subscriptions for the 2019/20 season opened on 2<sup>nd</sup> January. In order to encourage channel shift only online subscriptions are being accepted in January. Telephone applications will be accepted from February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 18.2 Processes have been improved and most customers should find that it is easier to subscribe in year two.

- 18.3 To 13<sup>th</sup> January 2019, almost 6,000 residents had renewed their subscription.
- 18.4 Officers are currently undertaking a route review in order to identify further potential efficiencies.

## **Minute Extract: Corporate Policy and Resources Committee – 13 December 2018**

### **75 REVIEW OF THE GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE ROLL-OUT**

**Note:** Councillor Matt Boles returned to the Council Chamber, but Councillor Mick Devine briefly left.

Members considered a report on the performance of the garden waste subscription roll-out.

The following points were highlighted:

- A total of 58.3% of householders subscribed to the service by the end of October 2018, and almost 10000 transactions had been dealt with by Customer Services. In Nettleham and Sudbrooke wards, an uptake rate of 75% was achieved;
- The tonnage of waste collected in 2018/19 was currently down on that collected in 2017/18. There had been a slight rise in residual waste. Officers concluded that the variances in the tonnage collected was due to the long hot summer of 2018; however officers also recommended a minimum of three years' data for a clearer picture;
- There had been a slight increase in the amount of compost bins sold;
- Garden waste fly-tipping had decreased in year, along with fly-tipping as a whole;
- There had been 11 formal complaints, and 11 comments about the service, which had been dealt with acceptably;
- A smaller project team was planned for year 2 of the scheme. The team had knowledge of when residents subscribed, and through which channels. There would be a focus in dealing with the subscriptions online; however, the phone lines would be opened up in February to deal with anyone who couldn't, or didn't want to register over the internet;
- In the next year, addresses would be printed on bin stickers rather than leaving them blank for residents to fill in. There were other options here, such as in-cab technology, but these options would be more costly;
- There were no immediate plans to change collection rounds;
- Financial costs had increased due to a higher than expected take-up of the service, and also due to the pay award for staff;

**Note:** Councillor Mick Devine rejoined the Chamber at 1940, prior to Members discussing the item.

Following comments from Members, further information was provided:

- The Council must make sure they were contactable by those residents who have no access to IT;
- Officers hope to be able to include a wait time on the telephone when residents call to sign up, or renew their garden waste subscription;
- 121 composters were sold through the Council scheme in the previous year, compared to 33 in the year before that. Unfortunately there was no accurate overall figure for the District as residents can buy compost bins from a number of outlets;
- One Member praised Customer Services when he registered to use the service on the telephone.

**RESOLVED** to approve a charge of £35 per subscription for the 2019/20 garden waste season.

# Agenda Item 6b



**Challenge & Improvement  
Committee**

**19 February 2019**

**Subject: Customer First 6 month update**

Report by:

Executive Director of Operations

Contact Officer:

Michelle Carrington  
Strategic Lead Customer First

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Purpose / Summary:

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Members are asked to comment on the progress made so far; and confirm whether they are satisfied with the direction of travel; and the outcomes achieved.



## IMPLICATIONS

### Legal:

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report **MUST** be seen by the MO

None

### Financial :

No financial implications

(N.B.) All committee reports **MUST** have a Fin Ref

### Staffing :

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report **MUST** have a HR Ref

No direct Staffing Implications as a result of this report, but resource plans are discussed in the Report

### Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Customer First Strategy designed to support equality and diversity through a variety of access options, and digital support capabilities

### Risk Assessment :

None

### Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

None

### Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Customer First Strategy. Customer First Programme Library

### Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

☐

No

**x**

### Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

☐

No

**x**

## 1. Executive Summary

1.1 In July 2018, the Council approved a three year Customer First Strategy.

1.2 The vision of that strategy is

*Putting the Customer at the centre of everything we do....  
through excellent customer service, a great experience, and a value-for-money, effective service delivery which is designed around our Customer's needs.*

1.3 The Strategy document had three main components that defined Our Ethos, Our Strategy and Our Transformational Journey, and which set out the Council's approach to implementing our Vision.

1.4 Our Strategy (The Customer First Strategy) sets out what changes the Council is going to make, and describes the 'world' that we want to create for our customers and ourselves in the future, to enable us to meet our overall Customer First Vision.

1.5 The aim of Our (Customer First) Strategy is to:-

*"Create an environment that allows us to deliver positive Customer experiences and efficient cost effective services, through facilitated channels, utilising enhanced skills, knowledge and processes; and digitally enabled technologies where possible".*

1.6 As the scope of The Our Strategy section is so far reaching, the changes were categorised into six elements of development, known as the Six Pillars of Customer First. These are:

- Insight
- Access
- Process
- People
- Culture
- Service Delivery

1.7 This strategy also dovetails with the Council's ICT & Digital Strategy; commissioning the delivery of enabling technology that better supports our Customers in receiving excellent customer-centric services.

1.8 The Council is now six months in to its journey of delivering the strategy; and the following sections of this report provide an update on the progress made, against each of the Six Pillars listed above.

1.9 Members are asked to comment on the progress made so far; and confirm whether they are satisfied with the direction of travel; and the outcomes achieved.

## 2. Insight

- 2.1 This section of the strategy is focussed on developing Customer Insight, which allows the Council to better understand their Customers, their needs, desires and preferences in relation to interacting and receiving services from the Council.
- 2.2 This Insight then allows the Council to tailor our services to make it easier and simpler for Customers to get access to, and receive services, as well as to make improvements for areas that may be causing confusion, bottlenecks or not meeting the customers need. Long term, Customer Insight can help the Council predict changes to services required as a result of changes in demand, customers base, or other implications which affect the service for the future.
- 2.3 The Council has undertaken a project to establish a baseline of data for Customers across the Council, understanding where Customer data is held, in what format, and to what quality. This will help define the a key concept of Customer Insight – the Single View of Customer (SVOC), which is a comprehensive view of that Customer; and an enabler for many of the concepts within the Strategy.
- 2.4 An outcome from that project is that that Team Managers are now provided monthly with a dashboard of information about their Customers, contact and service demand information, as well as customer feedback on their service (good and bad). This helps them and their teams better understand what is expected from their Customers; and to plan both their resources and improvements.
- 2.5 The majority of Insight projects are planned to happen much later in the Programme, as we start gather Customer-focussed quality data within the SVOC. This will then enable us to start to evaluate and profile our customers, and establish trends and improvement opportunities.

## 3. Access

- 3.1 This section of the Strategy is focussed on ‘making it easy for our Customers to access our Products, Services, Information and Support’.
- 3.2 How a Customer can access our services is often the first factor in the Customer deciding whether they have a good experience with the Council.
- 3.3 We also have to recognise that changes are happening rapidly, around new and innovative ways in which the Customers can access and receive services outside of the Council; and their expectation is that the Council will also provide these facilities.
- 3.4 The following details progress in delivering the Access elements of the Strategy.

### CRM (Corporate Enterprise System)

- 3.5 One of the key enablers for Customer First is the provision of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system; and is discussed in detail in both the Access and the Process part of the Strategy.
- 3.6 As part of the ICT & Digital Strategy, a proposal was made to assess whether the use of a Corporate Enterprise System, encompassing a CRM system, and an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System; would fulfil the needs of the Council in relation to the desired corporate outcomes.

- 3.7 In June, the Council undertook a soft market test with a number of industry systems suppliers to evaluate what was out in the market; and how those products may help the Council in its endeavours. The outcome of that soft market test was a decision that Corporate Enterprise Systems do provide the necessary support required; and that a large majority of systems within the Council including the CRM requirements, would have the potential to transfer into such a system.
- 3.8 However, it was agreed that that a phased approach to implementation over a number of years would be required, given the scale of the change. The CRM element of any Corporate Enterprise System, will be one of the first delivery phases, as this is paramount to delivering Customer First objectives.
- 3.9 In November, the Council undertake a further Pre-Market Engagement event with a wider range of Suppliers to discuss the aspirations for a Corporate Enterprise Solution; and the route to procurement. This provided good feedback on how to achieve our aspirations but did mean that the Council need to revise some work undertaken in terms of specifications.
- 3.10 The Council are continuing to develop the final procurement strategy and specification for the wider Corporate Enterprise System and are expected to go out to market in March 2019, with a view of commencing implementation from Sept 2019 onwards.
- 3.11 The implementation of this system will be co-ordinated with the three year Service Redesign programme (discussed further in the Section 4 Process).

#### Telephony Contact Centre

- 3.12 The Council have had its Cisco Telephony solution for a number of years, and have used it to support both the Contact Centre and the Back Office functions.
- 3.13 In light of our Customer First aspirations, and in particular in how the Council will start to 'join-up' access channels, and extend the type of channels that will be made available to our Customers, the Council decided to review its Telephony solution.
- 3.14 The outcome of that review was that the Cisco system is a market leader, but that at this time, the Council did not have the latest offerings from the product, and were not using the product as effectively as they could, so was not therefore getting best value from the technology it had in place.
- 3.15 The decision was made to upgrade and enhance the existing telephony rather than replace it. As part of this scope of this project, it was agreed to implement improvements in Contact Centre functionality. This confirms the Councils commitment to continuing to provide a range of access channels, both traditional and digital.
- 3.16 The first phase of the project was to upgrade the Contact Centre product, including revising the way that we deal with telephone calls and other contacts.
- 3.17 This has resulted in a number of benefits for Customers which include
- Improvements and simplification to the menu options that Customers experience when first calling the Council.
  - Introducing a call back option, which allows customers to request a call back rather than continuing to wait in the queue.

- Reducing the number of calls to Advisors which are not for the Council, thereby increasing capacity for council business, and reducing call waiting times.
- 3.18 Benefits to the Council have also been achieved, helping to moving to an Omni-channel approach. This has included:
- Introducing automated facilities and better management of emails coming into the Contact Centre
  - Introducing the use of soft-phones, with enhanced functions, above the use of a desktop telephony device, which is part of an evolving journey for Omni-channel management.
- 3.19 During this phase of the Project, the Council has also taken the opportunity to extend the use of the Contact Centre system to the Revenues and Benefits teams, which has resulted in reduced call abandonment rates and improved resource management processes within those teams.
- 3.20 The Council is currently working on the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the project to implement call recording for Contact Centre calls. Longer-term there is an aspiration to extend this to back-office calls.
- 3.21 A further phase of Contact Centre development will take place later over the next year to add additional contact channels, including SMS, Webchat and Social Media into the Contact Centre Solution, delivering that Omni-channel management approach.

#### Customer Hub Refurbishment

- 3.22 The Council created its Customer Hub, when first moving to the Marshalls Yard Building. Since that time, multiple partners including DWP, Citizens Advice, Volunteer Service and LCC have joined the Customer Hub; and the centre has become increasingly busy. This increase in partners and Customers has meant that the design and facilities of the Customer Hub is now starting to constrain service delivery for both the Council and its partners.
- 3.23 In addition, the nature of service delivery is changing, with all partners wanting to use more digital technology to support face to face access to services; and the ability to deliver more technological advances into that space is extremely restricted.
- 3.24 As a result of this situation, a project has been initiated to look at refurbishing the Ground Floor Customer Hub. Significant consultation has been undertaken with both Employees of the Council and Partners to identify what requirements need to be incorporated into the future Hub.
- 3.25 An architect was employed to help design the facility, coming up with a number of outline designs and options to make best use of the space available. This has concluded in the selection of a final outline design.
- 3.26 The Council are now in the process of costing out the design and identifying different cost profiles on the basis of a Gold, Silver and Bronze refurbishment standards. Once the costing profile has been approved, the Council will then seek to tender for a build contract.

### Digital Kiosks

- 3.27 In conjunction with the Customer Hub Refurbishment, the Council are looking at the use of Digital Kiosks to provide digitally enabled support for accessing services in our Customer Hub.
- 3.28 A project has been initiated to review what types of digital kiosks exist; and what their capabilities may be, with the view of creating a Digital Area in the Customer Hub. This digital area will be available to both Council and our Partners Customers.
- 3.29 This Digital Area will be supported by Meet and Greet staff who will either assist the Customer in using the digital technology, or undertake the required activity on behalf of the Customer.

### Realigning Opening Hours

- 3.30 For some time, the Council has had a disparate arrangement for opening hours, with the Face-to-Face Customer Hub and Telephone Contact Centre opening and closing at different times.
- 3.31 This caused confusion for our Customers, difficulty in staff management in various teams across the Council; difficulty in greeting office visitors or accepting deliveries to the Council; and bottlenecks and excess demand periods, particularly on a Wednesday due to the late opening arrangements.
- 3.32 A change was made to align the opening hours to a consistent 9-5 across all channels Monday to Friday.
- 3.33 The benefit of this change have been better utilisation of staff resources; reduction in over demand on a Wednesday - meaning quicker response times and reduced waiting times for Face-to-Face customers; and a more consistent experience for the Customer.

### Trinity Arts Centre

- 3.34 The Trinity Arts Centre is open for restricted hours in the week; and for some Customers this may reduce their ability to engage with the Centre to enquire about or book events.
- 3.35 A decision was made to pilot Enquiry and Event Booking through the Councils Customer Contact Centre for both Face-to-Face and Telephone contacts in relation to the Arts Centre. This meant the Customer would be able to access the services from 9-5 Monday to Friday during the pilot period. Customer Service Advisors were trained on the processes, and given access to the Trinity Arts Business System to book and issue tickets.
- 3.36 The pilot was very successful and the decision was made to continue with this on a permanent basis. During the time of the pilot, and beyond, there was an increase in the number of bookings taken, supporting the financial viability of the Arts Centre, and increasing access to the service for our Customers.

### Website

- 3.37 The current website is due for replacement by March 2020, when the existing contract expires.

- 3.38 The Council are keen to redesign any future website with the Customer Journey in mind, and have initiated a project to look for a future website partner now; in order to give plenty of time to design and create a fit for purpose modern website which meets our Customer First aspirations.
- 3.39 The Council already has a responsive website, for use on tablets and mobiles. As this is becoming increasingly popular (55% of Customers now access our website through mobile or tablet devices), the Council will ensure a mobile first design is incorporated into the replacement.
- 3.40 A Requirements Specification is being produced, and it is anticipated that Procurement will complete in the first quarter of 2019/20.
- 3.41 Online transactions is a key part of the website capabilities, and the Council has continued to develop online forms with a total of 78 forms available for customers to self-serve.

#### Online Customer Portal

- 3.42 One of the areas of development under the Access Pillar is the production of an Online Customer Portal, which enables the Customer to manage their 'Account' with the Council online. This will mean that they are able to request transactions in one place; gain access to progress information of services requested; amend and maintain their personal information; and provide documentation as required.
- 3.43 With the introduction of Green Garden Waste, the Council took the opportunity to develop the first phase of this strategy, by introducing registration to the portal for online garden waste subscriptions. 60% of Customers subscribed online in the first year, demonstrating that there is a demand for this type of solution.
- 3.44 By registering in this way, the Council have been able to use the portal; email addresses and mobile number to notify customers of the need to renew their subscription for the second year.
- 3.45 The development of further elements of the Portal will be part of the Wider CRM project. However, in the next few months, the Council will undertake some prototyping work with Customers to identify how to develop the Portal for the future.

#### Virtual Assistants (AI)

- 3.46 Discussions have taken place with a number of Artificial Intelligence companies; to evaluate the use of Artificial Intelligence in the form of a Virtual Assistant (or ChatBot), which could be used for both Telephony and Online enquires.
- 3.47 The purpose of this will be to use AI technology to answer basic simple enquires rather than using human resource which can be better directed towards more complex cases.
- 3.48 Initial feedback as to options has been presented to both the Customer First Board and the ICT Programme Board.
- 3.49 The next stage is to proceed to a pilot project to test out the use of AI, initially through the website.

#### SMS Texting

- 3.50 In order to improve communications with the Customer (initially) to the mobile phone and access to Services through text in the future, the Council has procured and contracted with an SMS Text Provider. This contract will allow us to send 'texts' to Customers either manually or automatically from our systems.
- 3.51 Initially this will be piloted on the Green Garden Waste project (further details in Section 4), but will then be utilised on other Services as the opportunity arises; and will be rolled out fully as part of the Service Redesign initiatives.

#### Channel Demand Analysis

- 3.52 The Council have an ambition to provide a range of Access channels to their Customers that support modern-day expectations of both traditional and digital channels. Part of the Customer First and the ICT/Digital Strategy is an aspiration to move access to either digital channels, or to use digital technology in the management of more traditional channels.
- 3.53 At the start of the Customer First Programme, the Council did not have a clear view of the level of demand across different channels and embarked on a data collection exercise to establish that demand across both the Council and for individual Service Areas.
- 3.54 Whilst that exercise provided some useful information, it did identify some notable gaps in establishing comprehensive channel data. These gaps will be evaluated (and closed) as part of both the Service Redesign Projects and the CRM Implementation.

## 4. Process

- 4.1 The way we process requests from our customers, and the way we deal with that customer during that period, can also have a big influence on our customers experience and ultimate satisfaction.
- 4.2 This section of the Strategy is focussed on improving the experience of service delivery for our Customers. Its emphasis is on how we can design our processes around the Customer, their needs, desires and preferences.
- 4.3 However, at the same time, the Council also need to achieve efficiency savings, and ensuring that the processes are as efficient and effective as possible for both the Council and the Customer. So the Process work will look at all aspects of service delivery, and the use of digital and automation technology to support improved service delivery. We have called this Service Redesign.
- 4.4 Also included within this Pillar is the Councils Service Business Systems which support the delivery of Service processes. The Process work will identify any changes, upgrades, developments or replacements to those systems as required.
- 4.5 The progress to date in this pillar is as follows:



## Customer Experience

- 4.6 The Council has had a Complaints Process for many years. However, the opportunity was taken to review the way the Council deals not only with Complaints but also Comments/Feedback and Compliments from our Customers, which cover the full breadth of a Customer Experience viewpoint.
- 4.7 A Customer Experience Policy has been approved, which clearly sets out what the Customer needs to do, and what they can expect in relation to their Customer Experience feedback.
- 4.8 As part of the development of this Experience Policy, the Council changed the way that they dealt with Complaints, introducing an independent reviewer at the Formal stage - the Customer Experience Officer. This has significantly improved the timeliness and quality of Complaint responses; and has shown an improvement in Customer Satisfaction with the complaints outcome.
- 4.9 The Council formalised the role of Customer Experience Officer in September 2018, making it a permanent role in the establishment. This demonstrates the importance of the Customers experience; and the success that the role had achieved up-to this point.
- 4.10 The Council also introduce a new reporting format for Customer Experience Information to both Senior Management and Councillors. This was known as the Voice of the Customer report (VOC), and the first version was presented at various Committees over the summer.

## Green Garden Waste Year 2

- 4.11 After a successful implementation of the Green Garden Waste Service last year, the Council have been looking at opportunities for further improvement, digitalisation and automation of the processes, to enhance the experience for our Customers.
- 4.12 The decision to collect customer information through the subscription process in Year 1 has shown significant benefits in the way the Council has been able to design the Year 2 renewal process.
- 4.13 As part of the renewal process, the Council are now sending out SMS texts and emails to over 80% of customers, to advise them that they need to renew their subscription. Research has shown that Customers are more likely to respond more quickly to these methods of communication, than to letters. This has been possible as a result of the decision to start to build the 'Single View of the Customer' for all transactions, and means that both the Customer and the Council can benefit for improved digitally-enabled ways of working, simplifying and speeding up the process of renewal.
- 4.14 In addition to the experience benefits, this also gives us significant cost savings over the first year, where communication to customers was by letter only, and cost in the region of £21,000. A further advantage of these methods are that they can be re-issued a number of times, to target customers who have not yet renewed their subscription, at very little cost to the Council.
- 4.15 Recognising that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the Customer is effectively renewing the service, the Council has created a new renewals e-form. This form will display details of the previous subscription information to the Customer, allowing them to re-confirm their

subscription very quickly and easily, rather than having to re-enter the information again. This should improve the customers overall experience, and means that the Council are effectively making use of data they have available for that Customer, supporting the Single View of the Customer concept.

- 4.16 The Council has utilised a print house to print and dispatch the renewal pack. This will significantly reduce the manual effort of the Council to provide these, which caused bottlenecks in the process last year.
- 4.17 The Council has also decided to send out the renewal packs close to the start of collection, due to the number of 'mislaidd' stickers in the first year. This should reduce the number of replacement stickers required, making savings for the Council and ensuring the Customer is ready for the collection period. This is a perfect example of where customer insight and feedback information can drive beneficial improvements in the process.
- 4.18 During the first year of service, the Waste department encountered some problems around administrating Assisted Bin Collections for GGW, and dealing with Customers moving house. Revised processes have been developed to deal with these aspects, including the activity around Green Bins being included within a Moving House Process. These have been implemented as part of the new arrangements.
- 4.19 The Green Garden Waste Renewals opened on the 2nd January 2019.

#### Corporate Standard Processes

- 4.20 In order to simply the Customers Experience, the Council are developing a range of the standard processes, which will govern the way that the Council can 'Apply for a service', 'Report a Problem', 'Pay for Goods or Services', Subscribe to a Paid Service etc.
- 4.21 The wider benefits of the Green Garden Waste Projects for Customer First has been to develop and test a 'Standard' for Subscription and Renewal type processes, and these will be reused in the delivery of further processes as part of the CRM rollout; and service redesign projects.

#### Service Redesign

- 4.22 An important part of the Process Pillar within Our Strategy was the 'Service Redesign', which would look at every Customer Facing Service. This is planned to start in Year 2 (19/20). However, in preparation for this, the Council have agreed a three year rollout plan, defining which services will be redesigned in which year.

#### Markets

- 4.23 The Markets has historically been run on the basis of a post event invoicing system. This system incurred additional administration for the Council; and unfortunately for some Market Traders, allowed for the situation where the Account went into Debt, when payments were not made against the invoices, or the invoices disputed. At time of inception of the project; a debt of circa £11,000 was owed to the Council by various Market Traders.
- 4.24 A decision was made to look into an on-the-day payment process to reduce the level of administration and the chance of further debt.

- 4.25 As part of this decision, the Council undertook to review the whole of the administration process around the Markets; and introduce an internally built system to manage the administration, and the attendance and payment records of Market Traders.
- 4.26 The revised Markets process, including the ability to take card payments on the day through a card payment machine went live in December 2018. The process has been well received, with most Traders opting to make on-the-day payments; and has even prompted some Traders to pay for a number of events in advance.
- 4.27 The Markets administrator has reported a reduction in administration time, which has meant they have more capacity for alternative work within their role. The number of Sundry Debtor invoices which have to be raised for Market payments has also been dramatically reduced (to 1), decreasing demand on the Sundry Debtor team.

#### Income Management and Payments

- 4.28 The Councils contract for Income and Payment Management services is coming up to renewal at the end of March 2018.
- 4.29 Given our aspirations for adopting digital technologies; and with the emergence of new digital payments methods in the last two years, the Council has decided to take the opportunity to explore wider technological options for the future.
- 4.30 The Council has negotiated a new Contract, which will commence in April 2019. As part of the new contract, a number of new payment facilities will be made available to the Customer.
- 4.31 The first is an e-shop capability which will be part of the online transactions, and the Online Customer Portal. This will provide a 'Store' and Basket type functionality, similar to the Amazon concept, for the purchase of products, and payment of services.
- 4.32 The Council will be introducing new card payment machines, which will cater for contactless payments, and be able to handle new payment options such as ApplePay, GooglePay and MobilePay for example.
- 4.33 Currently, the Council offers Direct Debits for a limited range of Services; and set up and call off of the DD arrangements is a very manual and laborious process. As part of the new payment arrangements, the Council will be introducing self-service DD set-up to Customers both online and over the phone.
- 4.34 The Council will also be able to offer Recurring Card Payments, which is a similar concept to Direct Debits, utilising repeated payments taken from a Credit or Debit Card, rather than from the Councils Bank Account. Customers often use this type of payment for ongoing Subscription based services.

#### Home Choices System

- 4.35 The Council are always looking to improve its offering to its Customers, and providing fit for purpose technology for its employees.
- 4.36 This is very true in the case of Home Choices, where the system in place was very limited in its use, and unreliable, with impacts to both Customer and Officers.

- 4.37 The Council procured a new Home Choices system – Home Connections, which provided significant improvements for Customers to be able to self-serve, and keep up-to-date with their progress; as well as improved ways of working for staff, which encompassed the new regulatory requirements in this area.
- 4.38 Whilst the procurement of this system was commenced prior to the strategy being agreed, the specification of the system was designed to encompass the aspirations of both Customer First and ICT and Digital strategies.
- 4.39 The system has been well received by Customers, who have reported that they find it easier to apply for properties; and to keep up-to-date on properties available; and progress on any applications.

#### Events Booking

- 4.40 The Council when running events such as Employer and Skills Events for example, produced bespoke booking forms for each separate event.
- 4.41 The impact of this, was that effort was required to develop each form, which then became redundant once the event had been completed, and regular attendees had to provide their personal and contact information over and over again for each event.
- 4.42 Communication of the event, confirming attendance and managing the attendee list then had to be undertaken manually, resulting in further administrative effort.
- 4.43 The decision was made to pilot the use of the Eventbrite product, which is an events management system and is free for the Council to use on any 'non-paid -for events' (which is the case with Council run events).
- 4.44 The Eventbrite product proved to more than fulfil the requirements of the Council; providing a communication method, free booking for both the Council and the Customer, information saved in an Account for the Customer; and automatic attendance list management.
- 4.45 The pilot was deemed a success; and the product has now been formally adopted as the Event Management capability across the Council for the future.
- 4.46 This adoption has resulted in a reduction in staff time in building forms and managing events; increased ease of access to events, and improved customer experience in registering for that event.

#### Digi-Mail Pilot

- 4.47 The Council currently receive and send letters through the Councils post room. Whilst the Council is increasingly moving to sending communications by email, the volume of letters and paper communications posted each month is still considerable.
- 4.48 The Council have undertaken a pilot to assess whether the use of an external print house would be a cheaper way of printing, or printing, dispatching and sending letters, paper-based communications and other paper-based publications.
- 4.49 The pilot tested the ease and security of 'sending' documents to the print-house, the cost of dispatch compared to in-house facilities; and the ability to benefit from 'bulk' discounts.

- 4.50 It has identified that there will be cost benefits in using a print house, as well as reduction in staff effort in printing letters, stuffing envelopes and manning the post room.
- 4.51 The decision has been made to initiate a further project to look at implementing a print-house project across the Council, including the development of a business case. This project will commence in March 19.

#### Service Demand Analysis

- 4.52 As with the Channel demand, at the start of the Customer First Programme there is no comprehensive understanding on the number of enquiries and service requests that the Council receives; and a project was undertaken to establish that demand level.
- 4.53 For Service Requests, employees record new requests in their Business Applications, and it was generally possible to obtain information on request from most systems, although there was not true of all systems. However, there is no easy way of establishing demand for enquires, changes and other such interactions, as these are either not recorded, or recorded in way that is not reportable.
- 4.54 As with the gaps from the Channel Demand, the gaps from the Service Demand will be evaluated (and closed) as part of both the Service Redesign Projects and the CRM Implementation.

## 5. People

- 5.1 The People Pillar is about how the Council delivers the vision for Customer-centric service providers, aka our Employees and our Partners. This vision is 'Skilled Employees and Partners, empowered and supported to deliver excellent, resolution-based, customer focussed services.
- 5.2 The early delivery in the Customer First programme is more around the technology and enabling aspects, and there is limited development planned around People in the first year. The main activities will be more closely linked to the Service Redesign Phase in Year 2 and 3.
- 5.3 However, the following documents some initial activities undertaken.
- 5.4 The Council has a Competency Framework which is used as part of an Employees Appraisal and Performance Assessment. A review of this Framework has been undertaken, which has factored in some of the Principles set out in the Our Ethos section of the Customer First Strategy.
- 5.5 Work has commenced to define Skills and Knowledge Matrix which will form the basis of skills and capabilities for Frontline Staff. This matrix will be used to define frontline roles; and grading/pay structures in the future.
- 5.6 In November, the Council commenced the second Institute of Customer Service (ICS) staff survey, which helps to self-assess our current position in relation to the delivery of customer-centric service excellence. The results of that survey has yet to be received from ICS, but will help define further People and Culture improvement activities.

- 5.7 In order to engage Employees in the Programme, presentations have been made to the Councils Senior Management and Team Managers to advise on the technological advancements planned, as these constitute the main body of work in Year 1 of the programme.

## 6. Culture

- 6.1 The Culture Pillar is about how the Council develops a culture of Customer-centricity; and is the delivery mechanism for embedding the Our Ethos part of the Strategy across the Council.
- 6.2 During the last few months, the Council has undertaken a review of its Vision, Mission and Values; and has taken the opportunity to include the principles of Customer First into that review. A new Council Vision, Mission and Values have been approved by the Council.

## 7. Service Delivery

- 7.1 The Service Delivery Pillar looks at how we embed the concepts of a 'responsive customer-centric services' and how we measure the quality and effectiveness of that service delivery.
- 7.2 The following documents progress made against this pillar.

### Customer Feedback Technology

- 7.3 Over the last year, the Council has piloted the use of email survey technology to assess the satisfaction of Customers with their interactions with the Council and the services they received.
- 7.4 This pilot has provided a wealth of information for the Council, around the questions to ask, the timing in which feedback is requested, and nature of the feedback received, as well as baselining customer satisfaction levels.
- 7.5 The Council then agreed to pilot a further customer feedback system, which will trial sending of surveys through a range of other contact channels (Omni-channel surveys). This product is based on conversational chat, rather than specific questions and answers, and therefore is deemed to be more 'engaging' to the Customer. The intention is to use this to trial surveys through the website, e-forms and SMS text messages over the next few months.
- 7.6 The first use of this product has been as part of the Green Garden Waste Renewals. In the early block of surveys sent out, the Council has received a 37% response rate, which is significantly greater than the industry standard of around 18-20%, and better than the previous email survey product. It has also provided good feedback on the development of conversational surveys, and will be used for further projects in the next few months.
- 7.7 The final intention is that a customer feedback product will either be incorporated in or integrated with the CRM product within the Corporate Enterprise System. The pilots will allow us to finalise the way in which we want to undertake capturing customer feedback and build this into the new system from the start.

### Customer Service Standards

- 7.8 In order to ensure some consistency in service provision across the breadth of the Council, a range of Customer Service Standards have been developed to focus on responding to interactions in a timely and effective manner.
- 7.9 The Customer Service Standards have been formalised and communication on the standards has taken place, one standard at a time, to our staff.
- 7.10 The final Standards Document has been approved by the Customer First Board.
- 7.11 The next phase of work is to look to develop mechanisms to monitor and assess performance of services against these standards. Some of these will be through manual assessment, mystery shopping and other such evaluations. The second will be to build automatic performance capture mechanisms into the CRM system, as services are transferred.

## 8. Governance Progress

- 8.1 This section reports on particular Governance related developments and progress since the agreement of the Strategy.

### Customer First Board

- 8.2 The Council created a Customer First Board to oversee the production of the Strategy; and delivery of the Customer First Programme, which commenced in January 2018.
- 8.3 It is Sponsored and Chaired by the Executive Director of Operations; and has representatives from the Programme, the two Strategic Leads, HR, IT, Performance/Projects, Communications and Customer Services on the Board.
- 8.4 This Board is responsible commissioning projects and activities, agreeing change requests, assessing project progress; and delivery against the programme outcomes.

### Customer First Programme

- 8.5 The Programme Lead has defined the Customer First Delivery Programme, identifying a range of projects and work packages, to deliver the Vision and Our Strategy deliverables. These projects and work packages have been grouped into a set of Themes matching the six Pillars.
- 8.6 The projects have then be incorporated into Delivery Tranches which identify the timeline for delivery of the programme.
- Tranche 1 (first 18 months) is primarily around technological enablement, piloting potential solutions and baselining data.
  - Tranche 2 is the delivery of the Service Redesign projects across the Customer Facing Services, and will take place in Year 2 and 3, with some smaller elements potentially taking place in Year 4.
  - Tranche 3 is Customer Excellence related, and looks to improve on delivery, bring forward Customer Insight, and deliver any revised organisation structure requirements if required.

## Audit

- 8.7 The Programme has recently been audited by our Internal Auditors, to assess how well the Programme is governed. The Programme received a Substantial audit rating.

## Risks to the Programme

- 8.8 The Customer First Board undertook a Risk Assessment Workshop for the Programme, identifying key risks to the delivery of the Programme; or the Outcomes and Benefits expected. The Programme and Theme Leads then defined mitigating actions to minimise the chance of the risks materialising. The risks are reviewed by the Board on a periodic basis.

## Resource Planning

- 8.9 Given the size and complexity of the Programme, a Resourcing Plan has been produced identify the nature of programme specific resources required during the programme, and any back fill requirements for Service staff to be involved in Projects, particularly the Service Redesign projects.
- 8.10 In order to move the enabling technology projects and service redesign projects forward, the Council employed two (temporary) Enabling Technology Projects Officers in August 2018. One has been focussed on Customer First Projects, with the other taking a lead on Project Management and IT related projects. However, this resource will be redirected to Service Redesign and SVOC related projects in the future.
- 8.11 There will be further temporary resources required during the life of the project; and these have been included with the Programme Resourcing Budget Plans.

## Communications

- 8.12 The Programme has produced a Communications Strategy which sets out the stakeholders to be communicated with, and the type, nature and format of Communications for the Programme.
- 8.13 Supporting this is a Communications Plan, which sets out what Communications will be made, at what time and to whom. This Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, and added to as the Programme proceeds.
- 8.14 The success of Communications will be assessed over the life of the Programme.

## 9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The Council has adopted an ambitious Customer First strategy; and has been active over the last six months in delivering against the strategy.
- 9.2 This report demonstrates the progress made; and highlights some of the actions to take place over the next few months.
- 9.3 Members are asked to comment on the progress made so far; and confirm whether they are satisfied with the direction of travel; and the outcomes achieved.



## FORWARD PLAN FOR ALL COMMITTEES

Title	Lead Officer	Purpose of the report	Other C'tee	Decision Maker
<b>CHALLENGE AND IMPROVEMENT</b>				
<b>19 FEBRUARY 2019</b>				
Garden Waste Review	Ady Selby	Review of garden waste process in year one and decision on pricing for year two		Challenge and Improvement Committee 19/02/19
Customer First 6 month update	Michelle Carrington	To provide an update on the progress of the Customer First Programme		Challenge and Improvement Committee 19/02/19
Gainsborough Foyer re Youth Housing Provision	Ele Durrant	Invitation extended for an update regarding youth housing provision at Gainsborough Foyer		Challenge and Improvement Committee 19/02/19
<b>2 APRIL 2019</b>				
Presentation Item - Invite to TASL by C&I	Ele Durrant	To invite representatives from TASL to provide committee with an overview of the services provided within West Lindsey including performance figures and challenges / obstacles encountered across the district.		Challenge and Improvement Committee 02/04/19
<b>25 JUNE 2019</b>				
Voice of the Customer Annual Report	Natalie Kostiuik	Customer Experience Annual Report. To provide Members with the annual update from the Customer Experience Officer		Challenge and Improvement Committee 25/06/19

		regarding comments, complaints and compliments.	
Challenge & Improvement Operating Methodology	Mark Sturgess	To review, amend and approve the committee operating methodology	Challenge and Improvement Committee 25/06/19
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2018/19	Mark Sturgess	To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.	Challenge and Improvement Committee 25/06/19
<b>3 SEPTEMBER 2019</b>			
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 1 2019/20	Mark Sturgess	To present performance of the Council's key services through agreed performance measures and indicating areas where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.	Challenge and Improvement Committee 03/09/19
<b>12 NOVEMBER 2019</b>			
Selective Licensing Annual Update C & I	Andy Gray		Challenge and Improvement Committee 12/11/19
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 2 2019/20	Mark Sturgess	To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.	Challenge and Improvement Committee 12/11/19

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**31 MARCH 2020**

Progress and Delivery Report -  
Period 3 2019/20

Mark Sturgess

To present performance of the Council's key service against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.

Challenge and  
Improvement  
Committee  
31/03/20

**CONCURRENT MEETING OF THE PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES AND CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEES****28 FEBRUARY 2019**

Development Partner, Project  
and Funding Strategy Update

Jo Walker

To provide a progress report on the work undertaken to date with Muse and other strategic partners in order to advance proposals for the redevelopment of identified sites which will support the overall growth and regeneration of Gainsborough.

To outline the strategy for the delivery of the proposed leisure scheme and complementary retail development within Gainsborough town centre.

To outline emerging proposals to support and accelerate the delivery of new housing in the town.

Concurrent  
Meeting of the  
Prosperous  
Communities  
and Corporate  
Policy and  
Resources  
Committees  
28/02/19

**CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES****14 FEBRUARY 2019**

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Corporate Policy and Resources draft Budget 2019/20 and estimates to 2023/24	Tracey Bircumshaw	The report sets out details of the draft revenue budget for the period of 2019/20 nd estimates to 2023/24		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 14/02/19
Budget and Treasury Monitoring 3	Sue Leversedge	quarter 3 budget and treasury monitoring update report		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 14/02/19
Refresh of Members' ICT Devices	James Welbourn	The provision of West Lindsey owned tablet devices		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 14/02/19
Draft Revenue Base Budget 2019/20 and estimates to 2023/24	Sue Leversedge	The report sets out details of the Committee's draft revenue budget for 2019/20 and estimates to 2023/24		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 14/02/19
To present Members with the Council's Value for Money Strategy and outline action plan.	James O'Shaughnessy	To present Members with the Council's Value for Money Strategy and outline action plan.		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 14/02/19
<b>11 APRIL 2019</b>				
Recording of telephone calls	Lyn Marlow	Policy for the recording of telephone calls made by customers to the Council	Joint Staff Consultative Committee 28/03/19	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 11/04/19
<b>13 JUNE 2019</b>				
Caistor Southdale Development	Karen Whitfield	To approve plans for GP and residential development		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 13/06/19
Gainsborough Green Corridor & Riverside Walk Acquisition	Jo Walker	To seek approval to pursue the acquisition of land adjacent to the River Trent for the purposes of		Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

		extending and completing the Riverside Walkway in Gainsborough.		13/06/19
		To seek approval to make a final funding bid to support the works to extend the walkway and to carry out related ecological improvements to the river corridor and nearby green spaces.		
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2018/19	Mark Sturgess	To present performance for the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate areas where improvements should be made, having regard to remedial measures set out in the report.	Prosperous Communities Committee 04/06/19	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 13/06/19
<b>25 JULY 2019</b>				
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 1 2019/20	Mark Sturgess	This report presents performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicates areas where improvements could be made, having regard to the remedial measures set out in the report.	Prosperous Communities Committee 16/07/19	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 25/07/19
<b>7 NOVEMBER 2019</b>				
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 2 2019/20	Mark Sturgess	To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the	Prosperous Communities Committee 22/10/19	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 07/11/19

report.

## 6 FEBRUARY 2020

Progress and Delivery Report - Period 3 2019/20	Mark Sturgess	To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.	Prosperous Communities Committee 17/03/20	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee 06/02/20
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## COUNCIL

## 7 MARCH 2019

Constitution Amendments - to remove the need for Mini Meets following Annual Council	Katie Coughlan, Alan Robinson	to make minor amends to the constitution in order the mini meets to elect chairman don't have to be held after annual council and can be done as part of the full council meeting		Council 04/03/19
Corporate Plan 2019-23	James O'Shaughnessy	To present the 2019-23 Corporate Plan		Council 04/03/19
Adoption of the Cherry Willingham Neighbourhood Plan	Nev Brown	To make the Cherry Willingham Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.		Council 04/03/19
Scrutiny Review	James Welbourn	To consider options for the future of Challenge and Improvement Committee moving forward.	Governance and Audit Committee 15/01/19	Council 04/03/19
Executive Business Plan and MTFP 2019/20 to 2023/24	Tracey Bircumshaw	To approve the Executive Business Plan and Budget, Council	Corporate Policy and Resources	Council 04/03/19

Committee  
14/02/19

## 20 MAY 2019 (ANNUAL COUNCIL)

C&I Annual Report	Ele Durrant	To provide an overview of the work undertaken by the C&I Committee as constitutionally required.	Challenge and Improvement Committee 02/04/19	Council 20/05/19
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## GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT

### 12 MARCH 2019

Accounts Closedown 2018/19- Accounting Matters	Tracey Bircumshaw	To provide the with assurance that the Closedown 2018/19 will be delivered within the statutory timetable and that they are aware of any accounting issues which will need to be addressed		Governance and Audit Committee 12/03/19
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### 16 APRIL 2019

Internal Audit Quarter 4 Monitoring 18/19	James Welbourn	To feedback on Quarter 4 to committee.		Governance and Audit Committee 16/04/19
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### 18 JUNE 2019

Internal Audit Annual Report 18/19	James Welbourn	To present the yearly internal audit report to G and A committee		Governance and Audit Committee 18/06/19
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### 23 JULY 2019

Internal Audit Q1 19/20	James Welbourn	To present the update for quarter 1 to G and A committee		Governance and Audit Committee 23/07/19
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### 15 OCTOBER 2019

Internal Audit Q2 19/20	James Welbourn	To present the update for quarter 2 to G and A committee		Governance and Audit Committee 15/10/19
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**14 JANUARY 2020**

Internal Audit Q3 19/20	James Welbourn	To present the update for quarter 3 to G and A committee	Governance and Audit Committee 14/01/20
Internal Audit Draft Annual Plan Report 2020/21	James Welbourn	To present to members the draft annual internal audit plan based on assurance mapping and risk assessments across the Council's critical services.	Governance and Audit Committee 14/01/20

**14 APRIL 2020**

Internal Audit Q4 19/20	James Welbourn	To present the update for quarter 4 to G and A committee	Governance and Audit Committee 14/04/20
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**PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES****19 MARCH 2019**

Customer First 6 Month Update	Michelle Carrington	To provide an update on the progress of the Customer First Programme.	Prosperous Communities Committee 19/03/19
Integrated Lifestyle Service	Rachel Parkin	To set out proposals for WLDC to become part of a county wide consortium of District Councils to tendered for the public health contract - integrated Lifestyles	Prosperous Communities Committee 19/03/19

**4 JUNE 2019**

Parish Charter & Public Realm Proposals	Grant White	To present a new Parish Charter and proposals on public realm related actions as requested by PC Committee.	Prosperous Communities Committee 04/06/19
Housing Assistance Policy	Andy Gray	To update the Housing Assistance	Prosperous



Review		Policy	Communities Committee 04/06/19
Housing Assistance Policy Review	Andy Gray	To update the Housing Assistance Policy and amend certain criteria relating to specific grants.	Prosperous Communities Committee 04/06/19
<b>16 JULY 2019</b>			
Place Based Strategy	Grant White	Update on place based strategy including work in South West Ward and Hemswell Cliff.	Prosperous Communities Committee 16/07/19
<b>3 DECEMBER 2019</b>			
Selective Licensing - annual review	Andy Gray	To provide Committee with its annual review of the selective licensing scheme in Gainsborough South West Ward	Prosperous Communities Committee 03/12/19
<b>6 JUNE 2019</b>			
Food and Health and Safety Work Plan 2019/2020	Andy Gray	to set out how the Council delivers official controls and fulfils its duties under food safety, health and safety, public health and drinking water legislation.	Regulatory Committee 06/06/19

## Challenge and Improvement Work Plan (as off 11 February 2019)

**Purpose:** The table below provides a summary of reports that are due on the Forward Plan over coming months.

**Recommendation:** That members note the contents of this document.

Title	Lead Officer	Purpose of the report
<b>19 FEBRUARY 2019</b>		
Gainsborough Foyer re Youth Housing Provision	Ele Durrant, Democratic and Civic Officer	Invitation extended for an update regarding youth housing provision at Gainsborough Foyer
Garden Waste Review	Ady Selby, Strategic Manager Services	Review of garden waste process in year one and decision on pricing for year two
Customer First 6 month update	Michelle Carrington, Strategic Lead Customer First	To provide an update on the progress of the Customer First Programme
<b>APRIL 2019</b>		
Presentation Item - Invite to TASL by C&I	Ele Durrant, Democratic and Civic Officer	To invite representatives from TASL to provide committee with an overview of the services provided within West Lindsey including performance figures and challenges / obstacles encountered across the district.
C&I Annual Report	Ele Durrant, Democratic and Civic Officer	To provide and overview of the work undertaken by the C&I Committee as constitutionally required.
<b>25 JUNE 2019</b>		
Voice of the Customer Annual Report	Natalie Kostiuk, Customer Experience Officer	Customer Experience Annual Report. To provide Members with the annual update from the Customer Experience Officer regarding comments, complaints and compliments.
Challenge & Improvement Operating Methodology	Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service	To review, amend and approve the committee operating methodology
Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2018/19	Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations and	To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate

Head of Paid Service

where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.

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**3 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Progress and Delivery Report - Period 1 2019/20

Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service

To present performance of the Council's key services through agreed performance measures and indicating areas where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.

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**8 OCTOBER 2019**

**12 NOVEMBER 2019**

Selective Licensing Annual Update C & I

Andy Gray, Housing and Enforcement Manager

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Progress and Delivery Report - Period 2 2019/20

Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service

To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.

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**18 JANUARY 2020**

**18 FEBRUARY 2020**

**31 MARCH 2020**

Progress and Delivery Report - Period 3 2019/20

Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service

To present performance of the Council's key service against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.

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**28 APRIL 2020**

**19 MAY 2020**

**23 JUNE 2020**

Progress and Delivery Report - Period 4 2019/20

Mark Sturgess, Executive Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service

To present performance of the Council's key services against agreed performance measures and indicate where improvements should be made, having regard to the remedial action set out in the report.

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