



**Challenge and Improvement  
Committee**

**26 June 2018**

**Subject: The Customer First Programme**

Report by:	Executive Director Operations/Head of Paid Service
Contact Officer:	Michelle Carrington – Strategic Lead for Customer First.
Purpose / Summary:	To present the Customer First Programme – Strategy, Ethos and Transformational Journey - for scrutiny prior to being presented to the Prosperous Communities Committee for endorsement.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1) That members review and analyse the Customer First Programme and make recommendations to the Prosperous Communities Community on how it could be made more effective in the delivery of its outcomes.**

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:**

None at this stage

**Financial:**

None at this stage – the Prosperous Communities Committee is charged with endorsing the programme and the request for resources to be released will be made to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee based on that endorsement.

**Staffing:**

None arising directly from this report:

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:**

N/A

**Risk Assessment:**

N/A

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:**

N/A

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

Agendas and Minutes arising from the meetings of the Challenge and Improvement Committee held during 2015/16 located on the website

**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

**Key Decision:**

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

Yes

No

## **1. Introduction and Context**

- 1.1 The Council is under significant pressure to continually improve the services it offers to residents, businesses and visitors. At the same time it is trying to reduce its costs as its budgets become tighter.
- 1.2 In order to address these twin pressures the Council needs to ensure that it is delivering its services as efficiently as possible, and more importantly that its services continue to meet the needs of its customers.
- 1.3 In order to do this it is proposed that two principal methods are adopted:
  1. It transforms the services which deal directly with customers so that they put the customer at the heart of everything the Council does (the “customer centric organisation”)
  2. Where appropriate it utilises technology to improve the overall speed and accuracy of the service the customer receives at a cost that is sustainable and affordable in the long term.
- 1.4 This will be a major transformation programme as significant internally to the Council as the growth programme is externally. It also has the potential to deliver significant savings over the long term as well as greatly increase the levels of customer satisfaction with the Council.

## **2.0 The Principal Elements of the Programme**

- 2.1 As Councillors would expect with a major programme such as this it is supported by significant documentation which set out the theory behind the programme (the ethos), the strategy to be adopted to implement the programme and the programme of implementation (the transformation journey). These elements are summarised in the attached document “Putting Our Customers First” which members are recommended to read along with this report.
- 2.2 Whilst much of programme can be achieved by the introduction and integration of technology its ultimate success relies on the delivery of a culture change within the organisation so that all staff put the Customer First in everything they do. This is as much about attitude and approach as it is about systems and hardware. This will be achieved through:
  - Improved leadership within the organisation
  - Engagement with and investment in staff to empower them to deliver for the customer
  - A clear understanding of what the customers want from the Council through customer insight work.

- Redesign its processes from the customer's perspective – not the services
- Ensuring a consistency of service provision irrespective of how customers engage with us, the channel they use or who they approach.
- Using comments, compliments and complaints as a learning tool and to focus on quickly resolving complaints to the customers satisfaction
- To measure how well we are serving the needs of our customers and to use this information to constantly improve our services.
- To develop long term relationships with those customers that use our services regularly to ensure that we adapt to meet their changing needs.

2.3 These plans have been categorised into six key areas which are known as the “six pillars of Customer First” and are: insight, access, process, people, culture and delivery.

### **3.0 Delivery of Outcomes**

3.1 The principal outcomes which will be delivered by the programme are:

- Services which are more attuned to the needs of the customer, meaning that they will get a quicker turnaround, answers which meet their needs and not the needs of the service, access to services at a time and through a medium which is more in line with how they live their lives and is consistent with other service providers and quicker resolution when things go wrong.
- Services which are affordable in the long run and are able to withstanding the budget pressures the Council is facing over the next few years.