

Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3 December 2015

Customer Journey and Customer Feedback Update

Recommendation:

That the Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the progress made to date with the Corporate Customer Journey Programme and Customer Feedback.

1 Background

- 1.1 In January 2015 Cabinet endorsed the revised Customer Service Strategy 2015-18. The strategy supports Warwickshire County Council's core purpose 'Develop and sustain a society that looks after its most vulnerable members, delivers appropriate, quality services at the right time, and seeks opportunities for economic growth and innovation'. As an example of the levels of customer contact, the Warwickshire County Council website receives more than 6 million visits a year, the libraries footfall is 1.63 million a year and the Customer Service Centre receives over 297,000 calls for the services it supports. The Corporate Customer Journey Programme supports the implementation of the Strategy by delivering end-to-end customer journey reviews of services.

2 Corporate Customer Journey Programme

- 2.1 Work on the programme began in January 2015. The Programme reports into the Customer & Transformation Board chaired by the Strategic Director for Resources Group. There are 4 priority areas of work:
- Highways and transport
 - Adult Social Care and Support
 - Children's Social Care and Safeguarding
 - Getting the basics right – this includes culture , behaviour and customer feedback (reported on separately below)
- 2.2 The programme works alongside individual service areas to:

- Understand how they currently deliver their services and the customers experience in receiving it. This includes understanding the costs of the current provision down to transactional level
- Redesign the service to improve the customer experience whilst seeking to deliver efficiencies and to change the way a customer accesses the service (channel shift) with the priority being digital solutions first

2.3 Alongside this there has been supporting work undertaken to deliver the customer self-service account (Self) and to train all face-to-face staff (libraries and one stop shops) to provide digital assistance to customers.

2.4 'Self' is the individual customer account where, as new service solutions are developed, customers will be able to access a range of services and manage them themselves.

2.5 Digital assistance is support provided to enable a customer to access services online ie they are guided on how to do this whilst also building their skills and confidence to do this again.

2.6 Work is well underway in relation to Highways & Transport and Adult Social Care, more details on each is below:

2.6.1 Highways and Transport

Within the programme Transport and Highways has a number of services which are spread across County Highways, Design Services, Transport Planning, and Road Safety. Whilst these services are diverse, they have been categorised by function. The categorisations that have been used are Report It, Apply for It and Information and Advice.

Report it - Services identified are shown in the table below. Digital solutions are now being developed which will improve the customer experience in reporting faults as well as processes for fixing them. The first service to go live will be Bridges and Culverts.

Category	Solution Type	Service
Report It	Fixed Location	Bridges and culverts
Report It	Fixed Location	Street lighting
Report It	Fixed Location	Traffic signal fault reporting
Report It	Fixed Location	Winter maintenance – Refilling of salt bins
Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Road signs
Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Road markings
Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Highway problems
Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Potholes
Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Ragwort
Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Drains, ditches, hedges and trees

Report It	Non-Fixed Location	Large animal carcass on the highway
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Apply for it: Services identified are shown in the table below. These show a split of services used by residents and also by businesses.

Category	Solution Type	Service
Apply For It	Business	Skip Licensing
Apply For It	Business	Street Café License
Apply For It	Business	Hoarding / Cherry Pickers
Apply For It	Business	Temporary Traffic Signals
Apply For It	Business	Streetworks License (section 50)
Apply For It	Business	TTRO Temporary Road Closure
Apply For It	Business and Residents	Temporary Structure Licenses
Apply For It	Business and Residents	License to deposit materials on the highway
Apply For It	Business and Residents	Highways Planting License
Apply For It	Business and Residents	Recycling Centre Vehicle Permits
Apply For It	Business and Residents	Highways Services
Apply For It	Residents	Dropped Kerb
Apply For It	Residents	Disabled Parking Bays
Apply For It	Residents	Access Protection Markings (H – bar)
Apply For It	Residents	Country Parks Parking Permit

Other services soon to go live with digital solutions within Community Services are:

- Rights of way
- Concessionary Travel Renewals

Future areas of work within Communities Group include:

- Free school transport
- home to school transport
- SEN transport
- Insurance claims

2.6.2 Adult Social Care

As adult social care covers a large proportion of council activity and spend, a specific Programme Board has been set up to deliver progress on the adult social care customer journey improvements as part of Adult Social Care's wider change management work. This includes the delivery of the Customer Service Strategy ambitions for adult social care related services. This is called the 'Adult Social Care Customer Journey Programme Board' and is chaired by

the Head of Social Care and Support and includes representation from across the council, including Head of Customer Service.

The above approach enables exploration of different models and opportunities for service delivery in the future, and avoids 'silo working'. This programme reports progress to the overarching Corporate Customer and Transformation Programme Board. Progress on adult social care customer journey mapping has included:

1) **Defining the 'overarching' customer journey for Adult Social Care.**

'As is' and 'To be' stages have been reviewed as a result of the Care Act implementation work. The next steps include progressing the 'as is' and 'to be' mapping of the customer journey relating to services which enable people to stay well and independent and avoid the need for adult social care in the first place, where possible. This includes, for example, the further development of online information and advice. Another example is the need to better understand the difference that the council funded voluntary services make to support people with lower level needs and enable them to stay as independent as possible. Using this and other information, work is progressing to define how adult social care services need to look in the future, to respond to the demographic, Care Act and further financial challenges. Specifically, digital solutions, assistive technology (such as falls detectors and health monitoring equipment) are central to this, as are further alignment and integration opportunities with health.

2) **Defining a range of more detailed 'customer journeys'**

The Adult Customer Journey work has used detailed customer mapping to support successful delivery of a range of specific projects for different aspects of social care delivery. For example, the Transitions Project has improved the experience of young people with higher needs moving from children's to adults' services and has saved over £200k to date, by developing a more consistent approach in supporting young people to prepare for adulthood and more independent living. This approach will continue across the full range of Adult Social Care change activities, for example, an Occupational Therapy project is currently being scoped jointly between Adult Social Care and Customer Service, exploring the potential for utilising a wider range of equipment and assistive technology to provide alternative support solutions for some traditional 'home care packages'. This is planned to deliver more independence for the customer and reduced costs for the council.

2.7 Customer Self-service Account - Progress to Date

- 'self' accounts were launched at the end of April, to date 23,828 have been opened
- 11+ applications were this year made online through 'self' accounts. The application window was open from 12th May-12th July. 2111 successful online applications were made. The whole service was shifted digitally from the previous paper application process. This has created a saving of just over £5,000 in staff time.
- Faulty street lighting was launched through 'self' on 9th June, to date 340 faults were reported through this system
- Contact Us was launched on 15th June for Resources Group services as part of the new customer feedback system. This is reported in more detail below
- To date 51,311 people have been supported by face-to-face staff in to access online services
- iPad E-Hubs were launched in Nuneaton, Rugby and Leamington libraries on 1st August - by 30th September these devices had been used by 2125 members of the public to access information

2.8 Efficiencies

2.8.1 It is too early to provide any real detail on operational savings as we must see how services are used by customers to understand in real detail what savings have been made. However, SOCITM's channel costs indicate that the front door transactional costs are as follows:

- An online transaction costs 15p
- A telephone transaction costs £2.83
- A face-to-face transaction costs £8.62

2.8.2 As the work with services continues, the cost of transactions will be identified at the service level. This will allow the organisation to understand the anticipated levels of savings.

2.9 New services to be launched in quarter 3

2.9.1 During quarter 3 new digital services will be launched through self for:

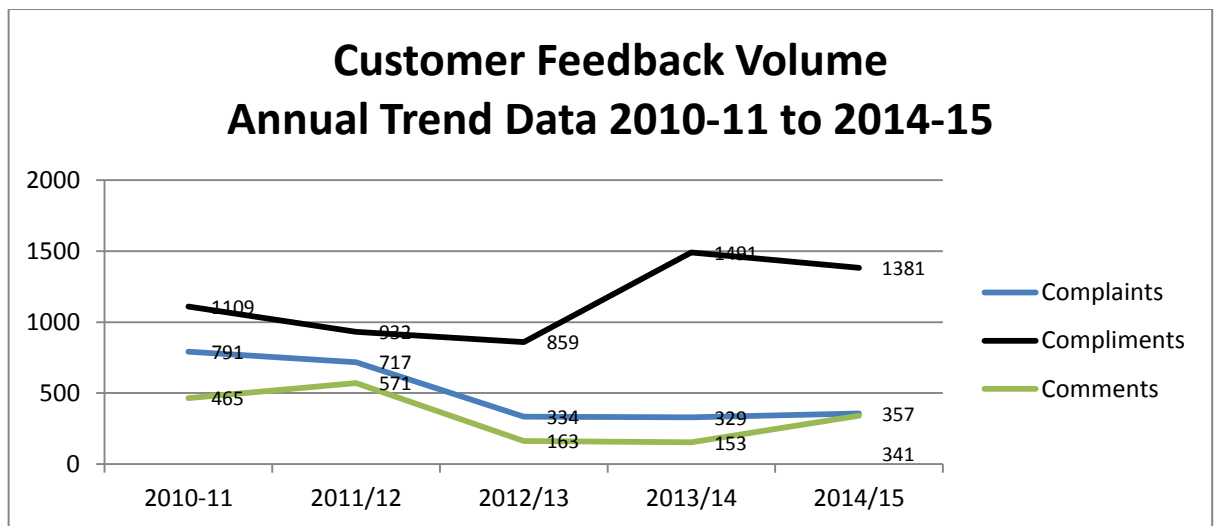
- Blue badge applications
- Concessionary travel renewals
- Roll-out of Contact Us across Fire & Rescue Service
- Bridges and culverts repair reporting – this provides a blueprint for other geographical reporting services eg faulty traffic lights

3 Customer Feedback

3.1 Customer feedback is critical as the organisation needs to understand how customers experience the services that are provided. The Council wants to hear from people when things are done right, and when things could be done better. This helps to:

- understand what services people value and why;
- share best practice;
- make sure lessons are learnt and continual improvements are made to provide a good service to customers;
- recognise and reward staff who “go the extra mile”.

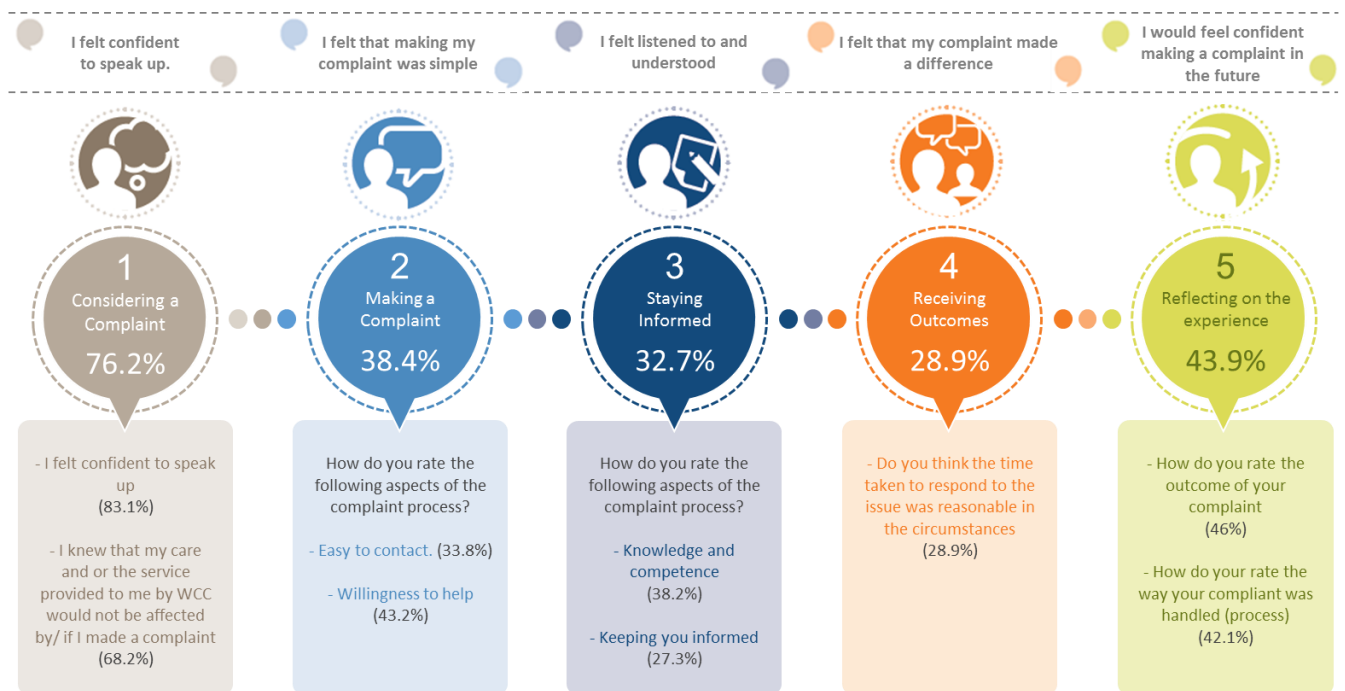
3.2 Some important performance data for 2014/15:



Local Government Ombudsman Outcome Decisions 2014-15						
LGO Decision	Communities Group	Named School	People Group	Resources Group	Grand Total	
Closed after initial enquiries – no further action				12	2	14
Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction		3	1		2	6
Not upheld: No Maladministration		2		21	1	24
Premature Complaint		1				1
Premature Complaint		3		7		10
Report issued: Upheld; maladministration and injustice					1	1
Upheld: Maladministration and Injustice		3		12		15
Upheld: Maladministration No Injustice				2		2
Grand Total		12	1	57	3	73

- 3.3 It is very pleasing, despite the current economic climate and the difficult decisions being made, that customers clearly still feel that staff and services should be complimented but it is not simply about a self-congratulatory “pat on the back”. Compliments have implicit benefits in recognising and validating the good practice of staff, impact on staff morale and engagement, and enabling the organisation to see what services “work” for customers, and what can be learnt from that feedback.
- 3.4 It is also pleasing to note that there has not been an increase in overall negative customer feedback, despite difficult times and significant changes to service delivery, for example with the roll out of Care Act changes.
- 3.5 The increase in Local Government Ombudsman interest in the Council is noted. This was largely related to a difference of view between the Council and the LGO regarding the interpretation of guidance for the Blue Badge process. A lot of work has been undertaken over the last financial year, in consultation with the LGO, to ensure that the Blue Badge process is fully compliant with LGO expectations, and this has led to much reduced LGO enquiries in the current year.
- 3.6 In 2015 the Customer Service Network undertook a survey, by phone, to customers who had made complaints about adult or children’s social care services. The organisation is now in a much better position to understand what customers think of the way their customer feedback is handled. The results are based on 73 telephone surveys conducted by the Customer Service Network between February and May 2015 split as follows: Adult Social Care – 43, Children’s Services - 30.

The overall picture of satisfaction is shown in the graphics below:



3.7 Summary of Findings

3.7.1 Positives

- Most people felt confident to speak up when they were experiencing problems (83%)
- In adult social care there was a very high level of customer confidence that their care would not be affected if they raised a complaint (91%)
- In adult social care most people said they would use the process again if they had concerns in the future (83%)
- In adult social care over half of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the way their complaint was handled (55%), and the outcome of their complaint (62%)

3.7.2 Areas of Concern

- Few customers thought that the Council was easy to contact about their complaint (35% adult social care, 33% children's social care)
- Few customers felt that the Council was willing to help with children's social care complaints (27%)
- Few people felt that those who dealt with their children's social care complaint were knowledgeable and competent (20%)
- Relatively low numbers of customers felt that they were kept informed about the progress of their complaint in adult social care (44%), and

extremely low numbers felt they were kept informed in children's social care (7%)

- Relatively low numbers of customers felt that their complaint was dealt with in a timely way in adult social care (40%), and very low numbers felt they were kept informed in children's social care (17%)
- Very few customers in children's social care were satisfied either with the way their complaint was handled (27%), or the outcome of their complaint (18%)

3.7.3 The picture the above figures provide is that there is clearly a significant problem in the timeliness of complaints handling and communication whilst the complaint investigation is underway. Work is being progressed in conjunction with the Head of Social Care & Support and the Head of Children's Social Care & Safeguarding to making improvements.

3.8 An adults and a childrens workshops, have taken place as part as of the Customer Journey workstreams. The purpose of these workshops was to:

- Understand and review the recent complaint survey results
- Gain insight from colleagues about what is working and what is not working in the Customer Journey and Complaint Process
- Plot the Pain Points on the complaint journey map
- Develop an action plan of priorities to address these pain points to achieve improvements
- Reinforce a collaborative approach in the management of complaints and learning lessons for the process

3.9 The survey has helped to identify critical gaps between customer expectations and Council performance. It helpfully focuses attention on the following key basic satisfaction drivers for customers:

- Ease of contact
- Effective communication during the process
- Confidence in the fairness and openness of the process
- Timeliness of response
- Confidence in the quality of the review and those undertaking it

3.10 This survey approach will be extended in 2016, to get customer feedback from people who have complained about any non-social care services, so that a more complete picture across the Council as a whole is obtained.

3.11 The introduction of a new Contact Us record management system across the Council over the next few months is intended to ensure a more consistent and streamlined approach to handling customer feedback. It will ensure "real time" electronic recording of actions taken to resolve customer feedback, enable customers themselves to track progress, ensure more effective and secure information sharing and governance, and ensure effective escalation and intervention to ensure delays in dealing with feedback are quickly acted upon.

Resources Group is currently piloting the new approach, and there are plans for roll out across the Council on a Group by Group basis by the end of the financial year.

- 3.12 In the Resources Group, 328 customers have provided feedback with 79% of these using the new online 'self' account to do so. This is significant because it means the new system is enabling customers to provide feedback without any direct contact between customers and staff, therefore changing the way customers are engaging with the organisation..
- 3.13 The system should improve the transparency and accountability of services in responding to customer feedback.
- 3.14 Some of the key actions which the Customer Service Business Unit will lead on over the next few months are:
- Integration of customer feedback handling into the new Customer Relations Management system
 - Planning and supporting the development of the Complaints Handling Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
 - Embedding the annual complaint handling phone survey to improve direct customer feedback about how complaints are handled in this Council
 - Focused Customer Journey work to identify and prioritise key touchpoints, enabling more effective focusing of effort on improvement
 - Embedding a consistent culture of customer care across all service areas
 - Ensuring performance measurement with respect to customer feedback leads to change in performance
 - Squeezing the value out of customer feedback, and making it count

4 Conclusions

It is recommended that the Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the progress made to date with the Corporate Customer Journey Programme and Customer Feedback.

5 Background Papers

None

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