

Report to: **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **3 September 2019**

Title: **Customer Satisfaction Action Plan Progress**

Portfolio Area: **Customer First**

Wards Affected: **All Wards**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:
(e.g. referral on of recommendation or implementation of substantive decision) **N/A**

Author: **Nadine Trout** Role: **Commissioning Manager**

Contact: Nadine.Trout@swdevon.gov.uk or **01822 813624**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- 1. Notes the progress made to date in improving customer satisfaction as detailed in section 3 of this report.**
- 2. Notes the next steps as outlined in section 5 of the report.**
- 3. Makes any necessary recommendations**

1. Executive summary

1.1 This report is presented by the Hub Lead for Customer First and details progress made since June 2019 on improving customer satisfaction.

1.2 The report also includes recommended next steps to continue to improve the customer experience by further honing the Council website, to pre-empt customer needs and manage expectations.

2. Background

2.1 On 20 November 2018 the Hub Committee resolved to note the results from the Institute of Customer Service Customer Satisfaction Survey, and endorsed an action plan to improve customer service.

2.2 The Hub Committee also requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee amend its Work Programme whereby 'Progress against the Customer Service Action Plan' be included as a standing agenda item for consideration and reported on quarterly.

- 2.3 This report therefore provides an overview of progress made in improving customer service, since June 2019 when the Overview and Scrutiny Committee last met.

3.0 Outcomes/outputs

3.1 Weekly Customer Satisfaction Team Meetings

The introduction of standardised customer satisfaction agendas began on the 1 July whereby every team leader was instructed to conduct a 30 minute weekly meeting focussing solely on customer satisfaction.

- 3.2 Meetings have been well received by staff and primarily focussed on the following:

- *What's gone wrong for our customers this week? Think about complaints received both formal and informal, whether there has been increased contact from customers and why.*
- *What have we done to fix it and what can we do better next time?*
- *Any further action needed and who is responsible for sorting it and by when.*
- *Has it been communicated to the people who need to know?*
- *Are we satisfied that we have done everything to put this right for the customer? Think about the whole customer journey.*
- *What have we done to improve customer experience in the last week?*

- 3.3 Outcomes from each meeting are centrally recorded to promote best practice and shared via the Friday Flash – the Council's weekly staff e-newsletter. To view a list of service improvements see appendix A.

3.4 Website Improvements

July also saw the appointment of a part time web editor, seconded from the Council's Communications team. Work has begun on improving the Contact Us pages of the Council website to provide a comprehensive A-Z list of services, coupled with the development of standardised forms to ensure customer queries are targeted to the correct service area, as efficiently and timely as possible.

- 3.5 Visuals have been drawn up for an improved home page for both desk top and mobile devices see appendix B attached. Advertising has also been removed from the site and the prominence of the sign up facility changed to improve user navigation.

4 Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 The Council is committed to improving customer service. It is therefore consider prudent to continue with the implementation of the Customer Satisfaction Action Plan. Evidence suggests actions taken to date are contributing to improved customer service.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 Weekly customer satisfaction team meetings continue to ensure customer satisfaction is foremost in staff's minds and continual improvements are made.

- 5.2 The weekly team meetings have highlighted the need for clear customer communication. With this in mind it is proposed an in house, online "Effective Customer Communication" course is produced and is completed by all staff by the end of the year.
- 5.3 Continued focus on the website ensuring regularly searched information is quick and easy to access and service changes clearly communicated.
- 5.4 Participation in the Institute of Customer Service's National Customer Service Week, 7-11 October 2019. During this week it is proposed the Council hosts its annual Staff Awards, in recognition of staff delivering exemplary customer service. It is also proposed the Council launches its Institute of Customer Service benchmarking survey during this week.
- 5.5 Improvements be reported to this Committee in November along with the results of the benchmarking survey.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	Overview & Scrutiny Committee have a responsibility to assist the Council in identifying areas for improvement and to make any necessary recommendations to the Hub and Council.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	There are no financial implications as a result of this report that have not already been budgeted for.
Risk	Y	A failure to review and act upon the Customer Satisfaction Action Plan could lead to: Lack of coherent delivery Reputational harm Ineffective use of resources Poor quality service These risks are mitigated by: The recommendations outlined in this report
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	This report supports the Council theme i.e. <i>Delivering efficient and effective services</i>
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality & Diversity		None – no policy or service change is proposed.
Safeguarding		None – no policy or service change is proposed.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None – no policy or service change is proposed.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None – no policy or service change is proposed.
Other implications		-

APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Service Improvement
Appendix B – Website visuals