

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

From: Councillor Suzie Morley Cabinet Member for Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement	Report Number: CMU13
To: Council	Date of meeting: 23 January 2020

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMERS, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & IMPROVEMENT

1.0 Overview of Portfolio

1.1 The Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement Portfolio encompasses Customer Services, Digital Transformation & Improvement, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Communications. Since October we have started our Customer Transformation Programme focusing on gathering customer insight to inform solutions as well as engaging across the organisation with service teams to understand their priorities. A summary of activity that has taken place across the four teams over the last few months is as follows.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That Council notes the report.

3.0 Key activities since October 19

3.1 *Customer Services*

3.2 Performance from Q2 to Q3 has improved by 2% from an average of 87% of calls answered in Q2 to 89% of calls answered in Q3. The call volumes have increased from Q2 to Q3 by 9%.

3.3 In Q2 58% of our calls were answered in 30 seconds. Across Q3, 60% of the calls were answered within 30 seconds.

3.4 Our average wait time has reduced from an average of 1 minute 42 seconds in Q2 to an average of 1 minute 35 seconds in Q3.

3.5 Over Q3 we have seen 2,265 customers across Stowmarket, Sudbury, Shotley and Hadleigh and of those customers they have rated us 9.6 out of 10 for levels of customer service provided, which was an increase from 9.5 in Q2. Of those customers, we scored an 88% first time resolution rate.

3.6 We have now completed the refresh of our customer access point in Stowmarket to include two self-service tablets, a hearing loop and a TV screen to provide rolling information and advice to visitors. Additionally, we have installed a freestanding feedback kiosk survey stand in both Stowmarket and Sudbury, which makes it simpler and easier for customers to provide us with feedback at the time of the visit.

- 3.7. We have rolled out our Customer Charter across the organisation and provided service teams with an opportunity to engage about how they embed this as part of their daily work; through team charters and commitments to answering customer queries. We will be publicising this to customers in the New Year.

4.0 *Digital Transformation & Improvement*

- 4.1 We have reviewed our Equality & Diversity objectives and will be sharing a draft version with our partner organisations who represent our protected characteristic groups. A review of our training and a resulting action plan with measures of success will follow. We will also be delivering additional training sessions for Councillors to ensure that all have had an opportunity to attend.
- 4.2 Q2 performance reports contained additional measures reflecting data collated from East Suffolk by way of a benchmarking comparison. The focus for benchmarking will continue but targeted on areas of concern rather than all measures. Our Project Management framework is now in place, and training has commenced with over 50 colleagues participating.
- 4.3 We have also been extending the use of Power BI (a tool that allows us to analyse and create visual dashboards) for Learning & Development requests, Customer Surveys, and Housing Stock – this means we can more easily identify issues and trends in performance.
- 4.4 Programme Board, chaired by the Strategic Director, have been established to support the delivery of key projects underpinning the Joint Corporate Plan. More than 50 staff have completed Project Management Training over the past few months.

5.0 *ICT*

- 5.1 We have upgraded our online payments platform, (Civica Icon) enabling it for the latest version of the Banking Industries secure card payment toolset. This improves the security and usability for those making payments online whilst ensuring Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils avoid any additional costs that banks could have levied in processing card payments if we had not complied.
- 5.2 Enhancements to our OpenHousing and Totalmobile solutions have been made over the last quarter which provides for better integration and management of gas safe, stock condition surveys, and heating servicing.
- 5.3 We are currently working on a new contact centre telephony solution which will be implemented in the New Year. As we develop the solution, this will give us a more responsive and flexible system as well as improved reporting.
- 5.4 Matthew Harding has been appointed to the role of Corporate ICT Manager, and has a wide ranging set of skills and experience directly related to ICT. Matthew will be overseeing the integration of existing ICT colleagues who are currently managed by Suffolk County Council back into a wider ICT team incorporating, ICT project management, Information Management including Geographical Information Systems, data cleansing and ICT Business Support.

6.0 **Communications**

- 6.1 The last quarter has seen the team both promote and respond to a wide range of projects and issues across our districts. From Sept 1 to Dec 1, the team issued 24 separate press releases to the region's media outlets and dealt with 74 media enquiries as well as managing social media activity, in order to keep residents informed of news and developments across both districts.
- 6.2 Proactive campaigns via media and social media during this period have included messages around the General Election, support for public consultation on the Joint Local Plan, Tree for Life, free swimming for youngsters, promoting the minor adaptation grants and Christmas-related messages across a range of services for residents.
- 6.3 The team has also delivered a number of campaigns and messages to support business as usual activities. These have included announcing our support of the county-wide carbon neutral ambitions and climate emergency, the development of the Needham Lake visitor centre, our continuing efforts in relation to the fire at the Fisons site earlier in the year, and redevelopment of the Stowmarket Middle School site which will see 38 affordable homes delivered for the community.
- 6.4 Internal communications during this period have included helping employees to start to understand our Corporate Plan, messages to encourage participation in our annual staff survey; the launch of our internal staff awards; the re-launch of our internal briefing document for managers; Christmas arrangements and messages; and guidance for both staff and councillors in using Mod.Gov to access council meeting papers to improve the ways we work digitally – as set out in the Customer Charter

7.0 **Future Key Activities**

- 7.1 As we start the New Year, our Customer Transformation Programme will gather pace with the conclusion of a series of customer forums, which have taken place across the districts, to gain insight and intelligence about how our customers want to engage with us and specifically through our website. These activities will conclude in January with feedback thereafter and will form part of the requirements gathering for a refreshed website. We will be adding detail to the programme plan and commencing a set of wide-ranging activities which include; developing a refreshed intranet (Connect), business process re-engineering across service teams, and behavioural insight training.