



REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON 29 AUGUST 2017

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PROGRESS: CUSTOMER FOCUS STRATEGY AND CHARTER

BY: HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of progress in implementation of the Council's Customer Focus Strategy and Customer Charter.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (H) (10) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to scrutinising the effectiveness of the Council's policies.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the committee note progress in the implementation of the Council's Customer Focus Strategy and Charter.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's Customer Focus Strategy and Customer Charter were approved by full Council on 29 April 2015 as a response to Audit Scotland recommendations that the Council needed to take a more strategic approach to customer focus and use customer feedback to improve services (paragraph 8 of the Minute refers).
- 3.2 The **Customer Charter** sets out the minimum standards which all our services promise to meet. It complements the standards which some specific services are required to meet such as housing or regulatory services.
- 3.3 The **Customer Focus Strategy** details a number of actions which the Council has committed to taking to improve its responsiveness to customers. These actions, with progress against them, are shown in para 4.1 below.

4. **SUMMARY OF PROGRESS**

4.1

Action from Strategy	Progress
Put customers at the centre of our activities and look at how we engage with customers	
Draft, consult on and circulate the Customer Charter.	This was completed and the Charter published in April 2015.
Develop e learning modules for completion by customer facing staff.	These modules have been developed and it is now mandatory for customer facing staff to complete them.
Launch a webpage detailing the measures we are taking.	This has been developed and can be found on the Council's website under –Council and Government- Customer Care
Progress a digital services programme.	The Council approved a digital service programme in April 2015 which reports to the Policy and Resources Committee. A range of digital services is now available and continues to be developed.
Provide a framework to ensure that customer feedback (including complaints) is contributing to demonstrable service improvement	
Develop customer service performance indicators.	These have been developed at service committee level and are reported to committee as part of the performance reporting framework. A periodic review will be undertaken by the Customer Focus Group.
Link the annual complaints/feedback summary with the Community Engagement Group	This is now reported annually to the Community Engagement Group.
Provide elected members with an overview of customer feedback to help them prioritise improvement activity.	Regular reports on Customer Focus (including this report) are provided to Committee along with reports on Complaints.
Coordinate customer service improvements across the Council	
Co-ordinate customer service improvements across the Council through a Customer Focus Group.	The Customer Focus group monitors progress on the Strategy and has been meeting on a six monthly basis for over 2 years. Current initiatives of the group are summarised below.

4.2 Current initiatives of the Customer Focus Group are:

- **Council wide high level customer satisfaction survey.** A survey of the Citizens Panel was carried out by Craigforth consultancy in 2016. 456 responses were received, a 50% response rate. Detailed results were received in November 2016. Feedback has been put to individual services and the results considered by the Community Engagement Group. A summary of the results is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- **Roll out of the Customer Services Excellence Model** This is a self - assessment model to help services determine how responsive they are to customer needs. All services have committed to go through the self-assessment during 2017 with support from the Customer Focus Group. A table showing progress is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Each service has been asked to come up with an **action plan** after going through the assessment, detailing what improvements they have identified.

It is hoped that the results will give a picture of the stronger and weaker areas, in terms of customer focus, within the Council. This will help the Customer Focus Group prioritise the weaker areas for improvement.

4.3 The next report to this committee will summarise the outcome of the Customer Services Excellence Model self-assessments, with details of the actions identified by services.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015 - 2017**

Customer Focus helps support both national and local outcomes:
“Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs”.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

Customer focus has been identified by Audit Scotland as an area where the Council could improve.

(c) **Financial implications**

None arising directly from this report.

(d) **Risk Implications**

Failure to achieve Customer Focus and the outcomes of the Strategy/Charter would present risk in terms of reputational damage, loss of public confidence in our ability to deliver quality services and risk of further adverse audit comment.

(e) Staffing Implications

None arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

None arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities

Customer insight and service user feedback helps services ensure that the needs of service users are met. It can help identify where diversity needs have not been addressed, e.g. disability or cultural issues.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Management Team receive regular briefs on the work of the Customer Focus Group.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The Council has made good progress on the objectives of the Customer Focus Strategy and Charter.

6.2 It is important that the Customer Focus Group maintain focus on these objectives and foster continuous improvement across all Council services in remaining responsive to the needs of customers.