

CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY AND COMMITMENTS

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Mike Ashbrook
LEAD OFFICER: Jane Salt Head of Customer Services
REPORT AUTHOR: Jane Salt Head of Customer Services

Summary: To consider introducing a customer service strategy and commitments as part of becoming a customer focused organisation.

Recommendation: The Council adopt the Customer Service Strategy and commence measurement against the Customer Service Commitments.

Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan: To put the customer at the heart of everything we do.

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): None

Financial and human resource implications: To achieve measurement against the targets within the commitments it will require commitment of time by staff through out the Council.

Project & Risk Management: None

Key Decision Status

- **Financial:** None
- **Ward:** None

Other Ward Implications: None

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In its inspection report of December 2004 (Improving services through accessibility and user focus) the Audit Commission recommended that in order to rise to the challenge of continuous improvement the Council should develop a customer service strategy and introduce systems for monitoring standards.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 Whilst the organisation has recognised the high priority of Customer Services through the restructure the Council realises that this in itself will not produce the change to become a more customer focused organisation. This will only be achieved by a change in culture and this is a long term project.
- 2.2 The introduction of a strategy will help senior managers to have a collective vision of how we can achieve the objective in the Corporate plan to put the customer at the heart of everything we do. The strategy outlines how the Council will achieve this as a part of realising the overall mission of working together to deliver excellent customer services and prosperity for West Cumbria.

- 2.3 The strategy is designed to ensure that excellent service is consistently delivered across the wide range of services that Copeland Borough Council is responsible for.
- 2.4 The strategy states that performance will be measured against all published service standards and action taken to ensure that a pattern of improvement is achieved. As a result the commitments were developed so that the organisation has a benchmark against which to measure our performance. Once this regular monitoring is in place and a performance reported these can then become the standards for the Council.
- 2.5 Both of the documents have been the subject of discussion and agreement with the Corporate Team, the Manager's group and the Challenge Group.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 As part of a customer focused organisation the Council should adopt a customer service strategy and make commitments to its customers on the level of service they should expect.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Customer Service Strategy
Appendix B – Customer Service Commitments

List of Background Documents:

List of Consultees: Corporate Team, Cllr E Woodburn, Portfolio holder for Customer Services