

Copeland Centre Reception

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor E Woodburn
LEAD OFFICER: Jane Salt Head of Customer Services
REPORT AUTHOR: Jane Salt Head of Customer Services

WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS

An improved customer service point delivering District and County Council services, also incorporating the HMRC enquiry point that improves access to services now and also for the future.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?

(eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council,etc.)

This is a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION: A sum of £150,000 has been approved as part of the capital budget for 2010/11 to develop the reception at the Copeland centre to create a Local Links office. The Executive are recommended to approve the Project Initiation document (PID).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Copeland Borough Council aims to offer the highest standard of service to customers. In order to achieve this we must be able to meet and greet our customers, in an efficient and professional manner whilst creating a first class first impression as they enter our premises.

Our Vision

Our vision is that customers feel welcomed both by the staff and by the environment. Upon arrival they should have a clear understanding of who we are, and the standards we operate within. We want our customers to have easy access to the building, and be clear about the systems in place for dealing with customers. Our intention is that all customers will be greeted within a minute of their arrival through a 'meet and greet' officer. A new 'floor walker' will manage the flow of customers and keep non productive waiting time to an absolute minimum. The office environment will promote the Copeland Borough Council brand and be informative about the services we offer. Our new reception area will allow for privacy and self service, customers will be supported in assisting themselves and

feel able to spend time using our facilities, and feeling comfortable in doing so. Customers will be attended to quickly and efficiently.

As well as being physically accessible the reception area should show case our services and make them more accessible, as well as developing customer understanding of all that we do. Our intention is that services such as, aste (Missed bins, bulky items requests, new bin requests, general enquiries), Revenues and Benefits queries, Fly Tipping, Pest Control, basic Planning queries and viewing applications on line, Concessionary Travel, Highways faults and Compliments, Comments & Complaints handling, homelessness and housing will all initially be served from the reception area, although, the flexibility in design, together with an effective flow management system will enable more services to be dealt with at the first point of contact overtime.

We will use our reception area as a hub of community information, sharing our premises with other public bodies to maximize convenience for all customers and offer a high and consistent standard of service.

1.2 Whilst revising our reception arrangements this also affords us the opportunity to incorporate the HMRC functions that are already being delivered from the Copeland Centre.

In addition we can also consider delivering Highways, Adult Social Care and Education front line services on behalf of Cumbria County Council (CCC). These were previously delivered from premises that are being vacated by CCC and an alternative solution is being sought. In so doing we can attract additional funding from County for this project.

1.3 Moving forward we also need to be able to encourage and meet our customer demands in terms of 'self service'. By providing customers with access to Information Technology and designing our services to be deliverable via self service methods, we can begin to move customers to a more appropriate/convenient method of accessing our service. A strategy will be developed corporately in order that we can understand exactly how we can do this and for which services. The aim is to have excellent access to our services however the customer chooses to contact us, either online from their own homes, or by telephone, or by entering the Copeland Centre.

By achieving this Vision Copeland Borough Council can lay the foundations to becoming a first class authority that delivers services it can be proud of. The vision provides future proofing for the Council and can allow us to develop further whilst becoming more flexible and fit for purpose. A monitoring programme will be developed to ensure the deliverables of this vision are achieved and reported to relevant officers and members.

1.4 For 2010/11 Copeland approved a capital budget of £150,000 to carry out improvements and we can now secure additional capital income from the County Council to assist in this process (£100,000).

1.2 Executive are now requested to approve the PID to allow the work to take place.

2. ARGUMENT

2.1 In order to deliver the desired improvements in the required timescale approval of the PID is required.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 To approve the PID and commence the work in accordance with the Project Plan and secure capital funding from the County Council.

3.2 To delay the project and lose the opportunity to work with the County Council and also lose their funding, whilst also compromising our ability to achieve our aims

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 To approve the PID at appendix A.

5. WHAT ARE THE LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS?

5.1 Approval for £150,000 has already been given to improve the reception facilities.

5.2 There will be significant resources required in managing the project as identified in the PID.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

6.1 A project team will be formed and responsibilities will be clearly documented and communicated to those involved. The main roles involved will be Project Sponsor, Project Manager, Assurance Team and a number of Workgroup Leaders. These roles will all be covered from existing resource.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

7.1

- Improved customer service delivery at the Copeland Centre.
- More self service facilities available
- Improved disabled access
- Improved customer satisfaction

List of Appendices

Appendix A - PID

List of Background Documents: Exec report