



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 11th July 2012

Subject: Customer Management – Progress Report on Recommendations of the Task and Finish Group

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To update the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on the progress made since the recommendations of the Customer Management Task and Finish group were agreed on 20th December 2011.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee:
- 1) Note the progress reported
 - 2) Identify any further recommendations to progress the Customer Management Review

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 On 23rd March, 2011, a briefing was held for all Members about the Customer Management abc review, which was looking at improving and making more consistent the way in which the Council manages contacts with its customers. At that briefing Members said that they wanted to be involved in this review by means of a task and finish group supporting specific aspects of the work.
- 3.2 Therefore, on 15th June, 2011, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee established a Task and Finish Group comprising Councillors Fletcher, Johnson, Lucas and M. Mutton who had expressed an interest in this issue. Subsequent to this Councillor Ruane expressed an interest and was invited to join by the Chair of the Committee. The Group appointed Councillor Fletcher as its Chair. The Group was supported by officers of the City Services, Customer and Workforce Services and Chief Executive's Directorates.
- 3.3 The Group identified the following recommendations which were accepted by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 20th December 2011.
- a) The Customer Management abc review includes the following:
- i) an end-to-end review of the process for dealing with complaints/requests about potholes and bin collections, aimed particularly at improving the speed of feeding back information from the back office to the Contact Centre, so that responses to customers'/Members' requests are made more quickly. This work to be completed by February 2012. Any proposals for improvement must be capable of being applied to all services, not just these two, and any future complaints/requests process must include service standards, particularly target response times.
 - ii) work to see how the City Services Business Services Centre could be used to address the issue of closing down service requests, with the current backlog being

given top priority and cleared as a matter of urgency. This work to be completed by December 2011

iii) work to see how the Customer Relationship Manager system (CRM) and IT solutions could be used to improve the service to customers/Members in the longer term, including how the Members' Casework Tool and the CRM could fit together.

This work to be completed by end of April 2012

b) that the Cabinet Member Community Safety and Equalities considers authorising the purchase of a "bolt-on" for the Council's website, which will make it more accessible for customers using smart phones and which will eventually allow customers to report issues/problems more easily;

c) that, at the same time, in order to improve customer contact as quickly as possible, the Cabinet Member asks officers to investigate the feasibility of providing appropriate mobile phone applications as an interim measure, which could be implemented should it become apparent that the "bolt-on" solution is likely to take some time to implement;

d) that a report on the progress made on these recommendations be submitted to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in six months' time.

4 Progress Made to Date

4.1 Recommendation a)

i) End-to-end process review

Processes were looked at for Customer Requests relating to;

- Bin Collections - Assisted Collection, Collect (abandoned) Refuse/Recycling bin, Extra Refuse, Missed collection and New Refuse/Recycling bin (or repair)
- Pot Holes

Back Office As-Is processes have been recorded and mapped for the above service request types. Details of the Front Office processes have been observed with an emphasis on any re-contact by the customer to check on progress, whether the request has been closed and any specific comments noted at time of customer's initial request.

This end-to-end process review, for both services, identified a number of "pinch-points" in the system. Once these pinch-points had been identified, officers have been able to work together to smooth out these issues. This has led to general service improvements.

General Service improvements - Bin Collections

Missed collections recorded on the CRM are printed on a Friday and issued to the relevant rounds ready for collection the following week. What previously happened was when the paperwork was returned to the Whitley Depot Business Service Centre they were automatically entered onto the CRM with the date of closure, rather than the day the job was actioned and the job completed. The date on the record is now being corrected to show the date they were actually actioned, allowing accurate reporting and monitoring. Arrangements are also being made for the Head of Fleet and Waste to be provided with weekly reports to show the missed collection by round, for improved monitoring.

To help improve the responsiveness of the back office to both public and elected member complaints, all Supervisors have now been issued with Blackberry's so that they can pick up individual issues whilst mobile and respond accordingly.

General Service improvements - Pot Holes

Over this period there have also been improvements made as a result of changes to working practices.

- The roll out of hand held technology for all of the highway street inspectors
- Appointment to the role of senior street inspector to improve the monitoring of potholes and our response times to those reports
- Number of potholes jobs raised from service requests and routine inspections has reduced significantly over the last 3 years:
 - 2009/10 – 24,446 potholes reported for repair
 - 2010/11 – 18,005 potholes reported for repair
 - 2011/12 – 12,668 potholes reported for repair
- Potholes jobs raised are now reported and monitored on a weekly basis by the highways management team
- Potholes repaired on a right first time permanent basis wherever possible.
- Reduction in the amount of temporary blobs used.
- A number of different materials and processes have been tried in repairing potholes, such as cold material for busy roads, Nuphalt system for permanent patching
- Reintroduction of preventative maintenance programmes during 2009/10 to waterproof existing road surfaces such as; surface dressing, micro-asphalt.

ii) Service request close down backlog

The Business Service Centre at Whitley Depot has now removed the backlog of service requests that need closing down on the CRM system, and there is currently no backlog. Service request close downs are being managed effectively. Co-ordination between the different systems is now more efficient. However, there are further plans to migrate and integrate the back and front office systems which should bring about further efficiencies and improvements.

iii) Improvements to IT solutions to improve the service to customers and Members

The Council's Customer Relationship Management system (Microsoft Dynamics) is to be upgraded to the next version by March 2013. Part of this upgrade will provide the infrastructure to support improved Self-Service.

In addition to that piece of work, those services that have to date remained on previous CRM systems, are to be 'migrated' to the upgraded Dynamics CRM system. Bin Collections and Pot Holes both fall into this category and this piece of work will be complete by March 2013. The 'migration' works will include the interaction with other systems i.e. Servitor and Confirm and improvements to closure issues (ref; Pot Holes needing receipt of payment leading to 'delay' with service request closure).

Improvements to the integration with the CRM and Members Casework Tool have been made. These include:

- New Functionality: Enabling Members / PA's to automatically send details of their enquiry to the Contact Centre or the relevant Director's A/D's PA
- New Functionality: Enabling Contact Centre staff to update progress of Member enquiries raised with them within the Casework tool
- New Functionality: Enabling Members / PA's to automate responses / letters to the customer raising the enquiry
- (These changes will only be applied by selecting a 'tick-box' on the main Casework screen)
- Change: View of the Main Casework page – so that more detail is available on the first page of an individual case

In addition, a PA was given access to evaluate how the tool may be used to assist Member Support staff irrespective of whether the Members they support use the system. This is currently running as pilot until the end of June.

4.2 Recommendations b) and c)

The www.coventry.gov.uk bolt-on has been adapted in-house and is currently going through final testing of functionality by officers. It will be soft launched (with no publicity) in late July to allow a limited period for further internal testing and piloting before public rollout - and members role in supporting this pilot will be important. We will brief all members with full details of the launch next month to ensure a wide level of involvement in the pilot. Once any final glitches or issues have been addressed we'll launch the bolt-on to the public.

The app repurposes some of the most used content to makes the website more accessible for customers using smartphones. However, the bulk of website content (including the payment system and online forms) does not change its look and feel when viewed from a smartphone. It has nine sections:

1. Popular web pages (school term dates, Recycling and re-use centre, Green, blue and brown-lidded bins, voting details, Council Tax, Library catalogue). These can be changed depending on the time of year e.g. election results, firework displays etc, school admission details etc
2. Search (searches whole website)
3. Events listings (by dates)
4. Councillor (searchable by ward, postcode or alphabetically)
5. Ward Forum meetings (contains dates, locations and links to meeting documents)
6. News releases (by date)
7. Car parks (links to all car parks within city centre with costs and map)
8. Contact us (Coventry Direct is listed as well as our e-mail for app feedback)
9. Coventry 2012 app (link to smartphone app developed for Coventry 2012)

It can be found at the following link

<http://coventry.weejot.com/mobile/site.php>

(It's designed for mobile, but works on a PC too).

5 Next steps and future plans

- 5.1 The work to improve the effectiveness of the relationship between front office and back office functions will continue. Officers from different services will carry on meeting to ensure there is continuous improvement
- 5.2 With effect from July a member of staff from ICT will be seconded for 12 months, from IT to highways, to work on an action plan of improvements that covers system integration, reporting on performance, training of employees, streamlining of processes and systems
- 5.3 There will also be a further roll out of hand held technology to front line operations to remove paper trail that currently exists. Also systems will be automated to ensure that pothole jobs are closed automatically on the system and there will be an automatic cost recovery through the systems (currently reliant on manual systems where pieces of paper changes hands several times before a job is closed and charged for)
- 5.4 The improvements to the Members Case-work tool will be evaluated at which point a decision will be made whether to:
 - Offer the facility to all elected Members (use is optional)

- Or whether it will be used by Member Support staff to manage Casework carried out on behalf of Members

- 5.5 The Contact Centre already has a dedicated Member's hotline and email address and once a final decision is made on the wider roll out of the casework tool this will be integrated into current member provision within the contact centre. Furthermore, once the casework tool is rolled out contact centre staff will ensure that all Members' casework is tracked and followed up so that Councillors have the most up to date information available with regards to customer queries.
- 5.6 Work with Waste Services and the contact centre will continue to further improve the service received and response times. The migration between CRM systems and the specification of what the new systems can deliver in the way of back office support will be key.
- 5.7 The introduction in 2012/13 of telematic software will also help the Contact Centre to give real time information to customers on their bin collections and crew location. Further long term work is also planned to link the collections crews directly with the front office and CRM system.

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Background Papers:

Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Task and Finish Group – Customer Management – 20th December 2011

<http://cmis.coventry.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=20385>