

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 21 APRIL 2015**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE)**

SUBJECT: **NEW CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek Member approval for the introduction of a new Customer Service policy.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council is committed to ensuring that customer service excellence is an integral part of the planning, resourcing, and delivery of all services. A Customer Service policy has been produced with the underlying principle that the Council is here when customers need us.

2.02 The new policy provides a commitment to customers that when they access Council services they will receive consistently excellent standards of customer service. The policy has been designed in three parts which cover customer expectations, the workforce and customer service standards.

2.03 Although the policy has been revised and some standards are similar to those in the previous policy, there is an emphasis on digital, reflecting the change in the way that customers deal with the Council and recognising the advances in technology.

2.04 The standards set out in the policy are the minimum that customers can expect from the Council; individual services may produce additional service specific standards or targets that are more relevant to the service they provide or the customers they serve.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 A draft Customer Service policy was considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 December, 2014 and no issues were raised except for minor changes which were taken in to consideration and the draft policy amended.

3.02 A four week public consultation followed between February – March, 2015 but take-up was disappointing (only 19 responses were received). However, from this feedback the policy is well received with a few suggestions on how we can enhance the guiding principles set out in the policy:

- Taking ownership; *customers should not be passed around individuals, enquiry details should be recorded and a response provided when the answer is known.*
- Acting promptly; *employees should be effective in listening, acting and responding to enquiries thus avoiding customers having to make repeated telephone calls.*
- Taking action; *enquiries should be followed up and customers should receive a response (email to reduce costs).*
- Welsh language; *the quality of services should be the same in both English and Welsh.*

3.03 Customer Services will be responsible for monitoring implementation of the new Customer Service policy and reporting to Chief Officers in relation to portfolio performance.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Cabinet is asked to approve the revised Customer Services policy

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Internal consultation has been undertaken via InfoNet.

9.02 The new Customer Service policy will be published on InfoNet and all relevant training will be reviewed and updated e.g. Corporate Induction, Complaints Awareness training.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The new policy has been considered by Chief Officers followed by consultation at Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 December 2014.

11.02 During a four week public consultation period between February – March, 2015 employees were also invited to provide their feedback on the new policy.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 The final Customer Service policy.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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