



Subject:	Customer Focus Programme Update
Date:	21 June 2019
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Finance & Resources
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	Members are reminded that in March 2019 Committee considered proposals for the Customer Focus Programme and agreed the implementation approach, key milestones of the implementation plan, the programme workstreams and the resource requirements that will be necessary to successfully take forward the programme of work.
1.2	This report provides an update on activity during the last quarter and seeks support to progress a number of elements including the establishment of a mechanism to involve elected members in the design of the Customer Hub to ensure Members' needs are met.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: 1. Approve the establishment of a cross party task and finish group to engage with the Customer Focus programme to represent Members' needs throughout the design and

	<p>implementation phases of the programme. A draft Terms of Reference for the task and finish group is attached at Appendix 1.</p> <p>2. Approve the use of the 'Nextdoor' social media platform as a pilot to assess its effectiveness and potential as part of the Customer Hub design.</p> <p>3. Note progress during the last quarter including the appointment of a Customer Services Manager and the award of contract for the Strategic Delivery Partner.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Elected Member Engagement in the Customer Focus Programme</u></p> <p>The Customer Hub will deal with customer contact for all departments and services, across all channels (online, mobile, telephone, face-to-face, email, social media) and will oversee the introduction of a single telephone number for the Council.</p>
3.2	<p>A key focus in the design of the Customer Hub will be a streamlined process to proactively manage the information requirements of elected members. It is important that, during the design and implementation phases, elected members are engaged in the design process. It is therefore proposed that a cross party task and finish group is established to provide insight and guidance regarding Members' requirements to influence the design of the Customer Hub and the channels therein. A draft Terms of Reference is attached at Appendix 1.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Appointment of Customer Services Manager</u></p> <p>Integral to the overall Customer Focus programme will be the design and implementation of the Customer Hub including staffing and operation. The post of Customer Services Manager is seen as critical to the successful operation of the hub and therefore recruitment of the post was a priority. Members are advised that the post has been recruited successfully.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Proposed Pilot of Nextdoor</u></p> <p>The design of the Customer Hub will include a review of how social media channels are managed from both corporate and service delivery perspectives. A new channel called 'Nextdoor' has emerged in recent years and is growing in use in Neighbourhoods in Belfast (currently 20,000+ members). Nextdoor is a website and app for neighbourhoods connecting people with their neighbours to build stronger, safer and happier communities. Residents use Nextdoor for a variety of things but some of the most popular are to discuss local issues, get recommendations and to get to know their neighbours. The tool is used effectively to tackle growing issues in communities such as fighting loneliness among older people and setting up self-help groups.</p>
3.5	<p>This platform differs from other social media platforms in that it is geographically based, it has a residents' only membership and is moderated within neighbourhoods by local residents. Nextdoor has clear community guidelines that stop negative behaviour like trolling or aggressive language. As every Nextdoor member must be a verified local resident using their real name, negative behaviour is unusual.</p>
3.6	<p>Nextdoor provides public service with a free tool to communicate and engage directly with residents with every account having unlimited user accounts for staff. Public service accounts cannot see residents' posts but they can see responses to their posts as well as receive private messages. Posts can be targeted to local area e.g. ward or DEA.</p>

3.7	<p>Photographs, videos and other documentation can be attached to posts. Types of posts can include general information, polls, an event or urgent alerts, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public services can use the polling feature to get resident feedback about concerns and priorities. Residents can only vote once and are verified as living in the ward. • Urgent alerts are messages that appear as app notifications, emails and if residents have signed up for the service, a SMS text message. <p>Members may be aware that PSNI has recently committed to using the platform regionally.</p> <p>We have received a proposal from Nextdoor for Belfast City Council's use of the platform for publishing public service messages. It is proposed that Council assesses the use and effectiveness of Nextdoor on a pilot basis as part of the design of the Customer Hub.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Award of contract for Strategic Delivery Partner</u></p> <p>The Council needs to make savings, increase efficiency and also meet the expectations of the city's citizens in delivering services which are centred on their needs. To fast track implementation, we have procured a strategic delivery partner to assist with the design and implementation of a corporate approach to Customer Management. The contract has been awarded to PA Consulting. The role of the strategic delivery partner will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and implementation of a Multi-Channel Customer Hub, taking a 'wide and thin' approach to managing customer services. 2. Delivering a business process review of Cleansing and Waste services to facilitate a 'digital first' approach to agile user-centred service design. 3. Transfer of knowledge to allow the Council to continue service design in other areas. 4. Programme oversight to ensure projects align with established design principles ensuring seamless UX (User Experience) design and integration.
3.9	<p><u>Workstream Update</u></p> <p>The technical workstreams of the Customer Focus programme (Website, CRM and Integration) are at the initial stages of development and focus in the last quarter has been on researching the market, defining requirements and our approach to procurement.</p> <p>The Service Design and Implementation workstream continues to work on coordinating the programme of change across the organisation ensuring alignment of objectives and will, with the appointment of the strategic delivery partner, focus on development of our agile service design approach to transformation in order to make significant and accelerated progress to meet the key aims of the programme. A key part of this process, will be to involve our staff at all stages of the design and to ensure that communications on any impacts will be clear and timely.</p> <p>Workstream definitions can be found at Appendix 2.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>SP&R agreed in November 2017 to establish a specified reserve to finance the customer focus programme.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications</u></p>
3.11	<p>Work on the EQIA and Rural Needs Assessment for the Customer Focus Programme has been initiated.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached

	Appendix 1 – Customer Focus cross party task and finish group draft Terms of Reference
	Appendix 2 – Workstream definitions