



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 25 July 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor P N Bentu (Vice-Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

S Joy
F D O'Brien

Councillor(s)

E T Kirchner

Councillor(s)

L V Walton

Also present

Councillor A S Lewis Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Officer(s)

Emily-Jayne Davies	Strategic Policy Officer
Sarah Lackenby	Head of Digital and Customer Services
Jeremy Parkhouse	Democratic Services Officer
Lee Wenham	Head of Communications & Customer Engagement
Jonathan Wills	Lead Lawyer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): V M Evans

9 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, the following interests were declared: -

Councillor P N Bentu declared a personal interest in Minute No.11 – Digital Transformation: Customer Services / Communication and Engagement with the Public – Customer Charter and Service Standards.

10 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Corporate Services & Financial Resilience Service Transformation Committee held on 20 June 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

11 Digital Transformation: Customer Services / Communication and Engagement with the Public - Customer Charter and Service Standards.

Sarah Lackenby, Head of Digital & Customer Services presented for discussion the draft Customer Charter and Service Standards, attached at Appendix A and to consider the questions posed at Section 2.3 of the report.

It was outlined that excellent Customer Service aligned with our Service Standards is the first goal of the new Digital Strategy agreed by Cabinet in April 2023. Within that goal, the Council made a commitment to, "Review and publish our service standards so residents and businesses know what to expect when they contact the Council".

It was added that Service Standards were already in place across the Council, however, they were not all held in one place. Heads of Service and Directors across the organisation had been involved in the review of existing service standards and the development of a new Customer Charter.

The Committee were asked to discuss the draft Customer Charter and Service Standards, attached at Appendix A and the following questions:

- The Charter lists a series of promises to residents across a range of ways for people to access services. Would the Committee like to see any changes or additions?
- The Service Standards have been reviewed by Heads of Service and build on existing service levels. They have also been described in ways which residents may ask for services, as opposed to a Council hierarchy. When the information is online it will be easy for people to search using key words. However, could this be improved to make it easier for residents to find the information?

The Committee discussed the following: -

- The difference in the work of the Committee in respect of this report to the work being undertaken by Scrutiny and how the work is linked to reflect current and future performance.
- How the consultation and engagement would be far reaching, involving Councillors, residents and staff.
- The importance of managing expectations, consulting with residents in areas of poor digital connectivity and ensuring those people who are not digitally literate are consulted, including groups and organisations.
- The inclusion of digital exclusion in the Strategy.
- The use of plain language being a very positive move.
- Examining the timescales for actions, e.g. 28 working days to process requests for free school meals.
- Specific requests being referred to the applicable Head of Service.
- The follow-up report following consultation being reported to the Committee.

The Head of Digital & Customer Services stated that she would refer the query regarding the timescale to process free school meals applications to the Education Department.

Resolved that: -

- 1) The discussions regarding the draft Customer Charter and Service Standards, attached at Appendix A, be noted.
- 2) Consultation and engagement with residents and businesses be undertaken, prior to any final decision on adoption.

12 Work Plan.

The Chair presented the Committee Work Plan 2023-2024.

She noted that there were no items at present in respect of the meeting in 27 February 2024. It was proposed that any amendments to the Work Plan be discussed later in the Municipal year.

Resolved that: -

- 1) The Committee Work Plan 2023-2024 report be noted.
- 2) Any amendments to the Work Plan be discussed later in the Municipal year.

The meeting ended at 2.23 pm

Chair