

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

CORPORATE SERVICES CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At: Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Wednesday, 28 September 2016

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Erika Kirchner

Membership:

Councillors: J A Hale, T J Hennegan, Y V Jardine, A J Jones, R D Lewis, D J Lewis, H M Morris, M Thomas and L V Walton

AGENDA

Page No.

- | | | |
|----------|---|----------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence. | |
| 2 | Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.
www.swansea.gov.uk/DisclosuresofInterests | |
| 3 | Minutes.
To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record. | 1 - 5 |
| 4 | Update - Smoke Free Spaces. | 6 - 9 |
| 5 | Customer Contact Aspect. | 10 - 16 |
| 6 | Agency Workers. (Verbal) | |
| 7 | Work Programme 2016-2017. | 17 |

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 26 October 2016 at 4.00 pm



Huw Evans

Head of Democratic Services

Wednesday, 21 September 2016

Contact: Democratic Services: - 636923

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
WEDNESDAY, 31 AUGUST 2016 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J A Hale (Vice-Chair) presided

Councillor(s)

J A Hale
D J Lewis

Councillor(s)

T J Hennegan
M Thomas

Councillor(s)

R D Lewis

Officer(s)

Mike Hawes
Lee Wenham
Steve Rees

Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer
Head of Communications & Customer Engagement
Head of Human Resources & Organisational
Development

Julie Nicholas-Humphreys Customer Service Manager

Adrian Osborne

Category Manager, Commercial and Commissioning Unit

Jeremy Parkhouse

Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): Y V Jardine, A J Jones, E T Kirchner and L V Walton

15 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interest was declared: -

Councillor J A Hale - agenda as a whole - my wife works for the Authority.

Councillor M Thomas - agenda as a whole - my wife works for the Authority.

NOTED that Councillor M Thomas had received dispensation from the Standards Committee in respect of his wife.

16 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2016 be agreed as correct record.

17 **CUSTOMER CONTACT ASPECT.**

The Head of Communications and Engagement and the Customer Service Manager presented an update report on Corporate Customer Services.

It was outlined that the Authority's vision was to:

- To improve customer experience.
- To achieve a fundamental shift in customer contact to digital self- service channels.
- To consolidate current customer contact.
- To use customer insight to improve services and achieve the other aims.

With the key principles being:

- Operating as a single customer service organisation, not a number of separate customer services businesses.
- Bringing current customer contact resources under a single management structure.
- Adopting the principle of digital by default and transfer, wherever possible, customer contact from face to face and telephone to digital channels.
- Making every contact count to reduce or minimise demand and change resident behaviour.

It was added that the new Customer Service Manager was appointed on 1st August 2015 and Corporate Customer Services went live on 1st October 2015. Phase 1 brought together five areas of the organisation, as below, into one new service across three sites:

- Contact Swansea
- Switchboard
- Environmental Services
- Housing Repairs
- Blue Badges

In November 2015, contact for the Highways service also migrated into Customer Services. All telephony teams were relocated and amalgamated into one site in the Civic Centre in January 2016 and the multi skilling of advisors commenced. In order not to lose the knowledge and experience gained over many years, each advisor had a 'primary' skill and 'secondary' skill so that they can assist each other during periods of high demand, sickness absence and annual leave.

The Committee were also informed that a staff restructure had saved £235,000 by losing 11 full time equivalent posts.

During our first year the Service had answered 526,642 calls and served 40,615 customers at the Contact Centre face to face, with only 7 Corporate Complaints received in total across both channels since the service was created. A Welsh language Line was introduced in April 2016 and constant review of the website and increasing the ability to report or request services online was starting to pay dividends, encouraging our residents to contact us '**digitally by choice**'. This had resulted in fewer calls through the switchboard and less face to face visits to the Contact Centre. Access times would also be standardised across all services which would be Mon-Thurs 08:30-17:00 and 08:30-16:30 on a Friday.

Development proposals for the Service included procuring voice recognition services for customers and building an 'in house' Corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which would provide the Council with more control and flexibility to develop the product to meet needs and vision of working towards a 'single customer record' across the Authority.

The customer contact strategy identified areas for consideration in Phase 2. A proposal for approval to commence discussions with these services would be submitted to Corporate Management Team in September with a view to replicating the same/similar implementation to Phase 1.

It was added that there were many other areas across the council that dealt with customer contact, for example, social services, planning, education etc. and although the Swansea Standard that sets out best practice in relation to how all staff should deal with customers, the responsibility to ensure staff meet customer needs lied with managers. The recent introduction of the Welsh Language Standards had brought extra demands in terms of dealing with customers in Welsh and all external calls should now be answered bilingually.

It was recognised that there was a need for consistency across the entire council in terms of answering the phone, replying to emails and even issues such as email signatures.

The Committee asked a number of questions of the Officers, who responded accordingly.

Discussions centred around the following: -

- Systems available for dealing with telephone queries, such as IVR;
- Working in partnership with other organisations, such as ABMU Health Authority;
- The Authority continuing to utilise Swansea Voices in order to gauge public opinion;
- Services provided at District Housing Offices;
- Access to services for individuals who do not own a personal computer / mobile phone;
- Options available for the Authority to provide services via Libraries / District Housing Offices;
- Utilising technology to improve services for customers;
- Benchmarking with other local authorities / organisations;
- The Authority continuing to focus upon the quality of call handlers;
- The Committee visiting the Contact Centre in order to observe operations.

The Director of Resources commented that it was important that the Authority embraced technology in order to improve services for customers whilst maintaining business continuity.

The Committee congratulated the Service for answering 526,642 calls and serving 40,615 customers at the Contact Centre face to face, with only 7 Corporate Complaints received since the service was created.

RESOLVED that: -

- 1) The content of the report be noted;
- 2) An update report be provided at a future meeting;
- 3) A visit to the Contact Centre is added to the Work Programme.

18 **INVEST TO SAVE LOANS. (VERBAL)**

The Director of Resources provided the Committee with a verbal update regarding Invest to Save Loans. He stated that the Welsh Government had introduced the loans in 2011 and all public sector bodies can bid for money. The purpose of the loans were to improve efficiency by delivering projects that were designed to make cash savings.

He added that while Swansea had not applied, a number of other local authorities and public bodies in Wales had been granted loans and he gave examples of some of the schemes the loans had been used to support. However, that the loans were non-negotiable and were repayable over 3 years and the successful applicant must put 25% towards the overall cost. Less than 5% of local authorities had generated enough savings to make the loan repayments.

He stated that because of the way the Council had managed its budget, there was sufficient cash in the contingency fund to pay for any schemes the Authority wished to pursue. He added that any potential schemes would be dealt with on merit.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

19 **WORK PROGRAMME 2016-2017.**

The Chair presented an updated Work Programme 2016-2017.

RESOLVED that: -

- 1) The contents of the report be noted;
- 2) A visit to the Contact Centre is added to the Work Programme.

20 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC.**

The Committee was requested to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendation to the report on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exemption paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, relevant to the item(s) of business set out in the report.

The Committee considered the Public Interest Test in deciding whether to exclude the public from the meeting for the item(s) of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the public be excluded for the following items of business.

(CLOSED SESSION)

21 **AGENCY WORKERS.**

Adrian Osborne presented a report which considered the case for insourcing responsibility for agency staffing from a commercial perspective.

It was explained that unless and until an internal agency worker system was established by the Authority, the existing arrangements for the provision of agency staff should remain unchanged. In accordance with this, the Commercial and Commissioning Unit would proceed with the Invitation to Tender for a replacement agreement for employment agency services (due to be published autumn/winter 2016/17), as the Council's existing agreement was shortly due to expire.

It was recommended that the current arrangements for agency staffing be maintained. It was added that by insourcing responsibility for these arrangements the Council could do so at an increased cost.

The Committee discussed in detail the information contained within the report.

RESOLVED that: -

- 1) The contents of the report be noted;
- 2) The recommendation contained in the report be refused;
- 3) The Authority seeks to develop an internal agency worker system;
- 4) The Authority reduces the number of temporary agency workers it employs by making them permanent employees and making it easier to establish an internal agency worker system.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm

CHAIR

Agenda Item 4

Report of the Divisional Officer (Trading Standards)

Corporate Services Cabinet Advisory Committee – 28 September 2016

SMOKE FREE SPACES UPDATE - SMOKE FREE BEACH REPORT AND EVALUATION

BACKGROUND

On 27th April 2016, as part of Swansea's Healthy City Commitment and following work within the city under the Smoke free spaces umbrella, The City and County of Swansea launched the trial of a smoke free beach at Caswell Bay, Swansea.

The launch of the voluntary ban was in collaboration with a number of partner agencies such as ABMU, Public Health, Ash Wales, Stop smoking Wales and Surfers against sewage.

Prior to the launch the businesses at Caswell were consulted and signage was erected.

The launch was very well supported and children from Bishopston primary school were invited to take part in organised activities on the beach arranged by our Play team and The Environment Centre. Fortunately it was a dry sunny day and support was also shown from the local lifeguards and surf school at Caswell.

The Lord Mayor officiated over the event and formally launched the smoke free beach surrounded by a number of local councillors, heads of service and interested parties.

Media and social media involvement ensured the launch had both local and national coverage and prompted a series of chats on social media sites (which was recorded for evaluation purposes).

EVALUATION

During the period immediately following the launch to date a number of evaluation methods have been used to evaluate the responses to the launch of the voluntary ban.

It was felt that the immediate response and comments should be noted from the conversations and comments posted on social media sites such as facebook and twitter, the subject seemed to generate a number of conversations and reached a large number of people as all parties involved re-tweeted the information on their respective sites. A reporting mechanism was set up on our council website for any comments/observations to be reported see www.swansea.gov.uk/smokefreespaces

Officers visited the beach to speak with users and on patrol lifeguards in early summer as concern had been raised about the fact that the ban was voluntary and

without officers policing it, issues would be reported to the lifeguards. At this time the lifeguards spoken to had not experienced any direct problems from the ban but felt due to the poor wet weather was not a fair picture due to the low number of beach users at this time.

Throughout the school holidays in August and September a number of visits were made to Caswell beach and users were asked to participate in a questionnaire relating the voluntary ban with their views and suggestions being recorded.

136 questionnaires were completed and the responses to questions noted below:-

Q1. Are you aware of the voluntary ban?

Yes	53	39%
No	82	60%
Other	1 (comments available on request)	1%

Q2. Do you support the ban?

Yes	123	90%
No	5	4%
Other	8 (comments available on request)	6%

Q3. Did the ban influence your decision to use the beach?

Yes	4	3%
No	128	94%
Other	4	3%

Q4. Does asking people not to smoke set a good example to young people?

Yes	127	94%
No	7	5%
Other	2	1%

Q5. Do you smoke?

Yes	13	10%
No	123	90%

Q6. Do you think refraining from smoking on the beach keeps it cleaner?

Yes	124	91%
No	10	8%
Other	2 (comments available on request)	1%

Q7. Have you seen the sign?

Yes	62	46%
No	74	54%

Q8. Do you think the sign is clear?

Yes	53	39%
No	76	56%
Other	7 (comments available on request)	5%

Q9. Do you have any other comments regarding making this beach non-smoking?

Various comments made which are available upon request.

Q10. Would you like to see a similar smoking restriction on other beaches?

Yes	120	88%
No	7	5%
Other	9 (comments available on request)	7%

The feedback from the social media sites seem well balanced in that where there is support for the ban it is negated by comments indicating the ban is draconian and takes away people's rights. Copies of the threads and conversations are available on request.

CONCLUSION

The trial ban has been well received with 90% of the people questioned being in support of the ban. 88% want to see similar restrictions on other beaches within Swansea however only 3% of people said it influenced their decision to use the beach.

94% of those questioned agreed that asking people not to smoke sets a good example to young people.

Of the 136 people questioned 90% were non-smokers,

The questionnaire generated a lot of comments around litter with 91% of people agreeing that refraining from smoking on the beach keeps it cleaner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As can be seen from the above evaluations, although there was support for the ban, only 39% of the people were aware of it.

If we planned to make other beaches within Swansea smoke free then maybe we need to give some further consideration to signage as under half the people surveyed (46%) claimed to have seen the sign with 56% feeling the sign was unclear. As we know the signage and publicity around the ban is vital to the success of the voluntary ban.

SMOKE FREE SCHOOL GATES - UPDATE



Following the soft launch of 'Best Start Swansea' The Jacks family in October half term, it is hoped that we can follow on the 3rd November 2016 with the launch of our Smoke free school gates.

Work is underway to get the above signage delivered to all primary schools in Swansea in preparation for the launch.

The school used to launch the voluntary ban is not yet confirmed; however partners such as Public Health and Ash Wales have indicated their enthusiasm for the event by offering support such as sessions, workshops and competitions with the school.

Once the date is confirmed it is hoped that the Lord Mayor or deputy Lord Mayor will officiate over the event.

Plans are to invite and include all interested parties which will be underway at this weeks Tobacco control Forum meeting.

It is hoped that we can involve local PCSO staff to assist in reinforcing the messages of smoking in cars with under 18's present to encompass as many 'smoke free' messages as we can.

Work is currently ongoing and invitations will follow shortly.....

Agenda Item 5

Report of the Chair

Corporate Services Cabinet Advisory Committee – 28 September 2016

CUSTOMER CONTACT ASPECT

The Head of Communication and Customer Engagement and the Customer Services Manager presented a report on Corporate Customer Services to the last Cabinet Advisory Committee on 31 August 2016. The Committee discussed the contents of the report at the meeting, noted the contents and asked for an update report to be provided to a future meeting.

However, the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Performance has given the Committee terms of reference to guide investigations. The Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix A. The report provided to the last meeting by the Head of Communication and Customer Engagement is attached at Appendix B.

The Committee must therefore consider which area of Customer Contact Aspect it wishes to investigate in order to be able to report progress to the Cabinet Member.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix A – Terms of Reference
Appendix B – Report on Corporate Customer Services
– 31st August 2016

Customer Contact - Terms of Reference

- Support Customer Service Model
- Preferred method of contact
- Digital Contact – Cost less
- Hours of opening/out of hours
- Follow up/ Keeping customer informed – reduce multiple contact
- Customer Charter/ The Swansea Standard – Impact ?
- Non- Customer facing etiquette – Phone handling, e-mail
- Not exhaustive

APPENDIX A: Proposed scope of delivery (discussed with Heads of Service & stakeholders)

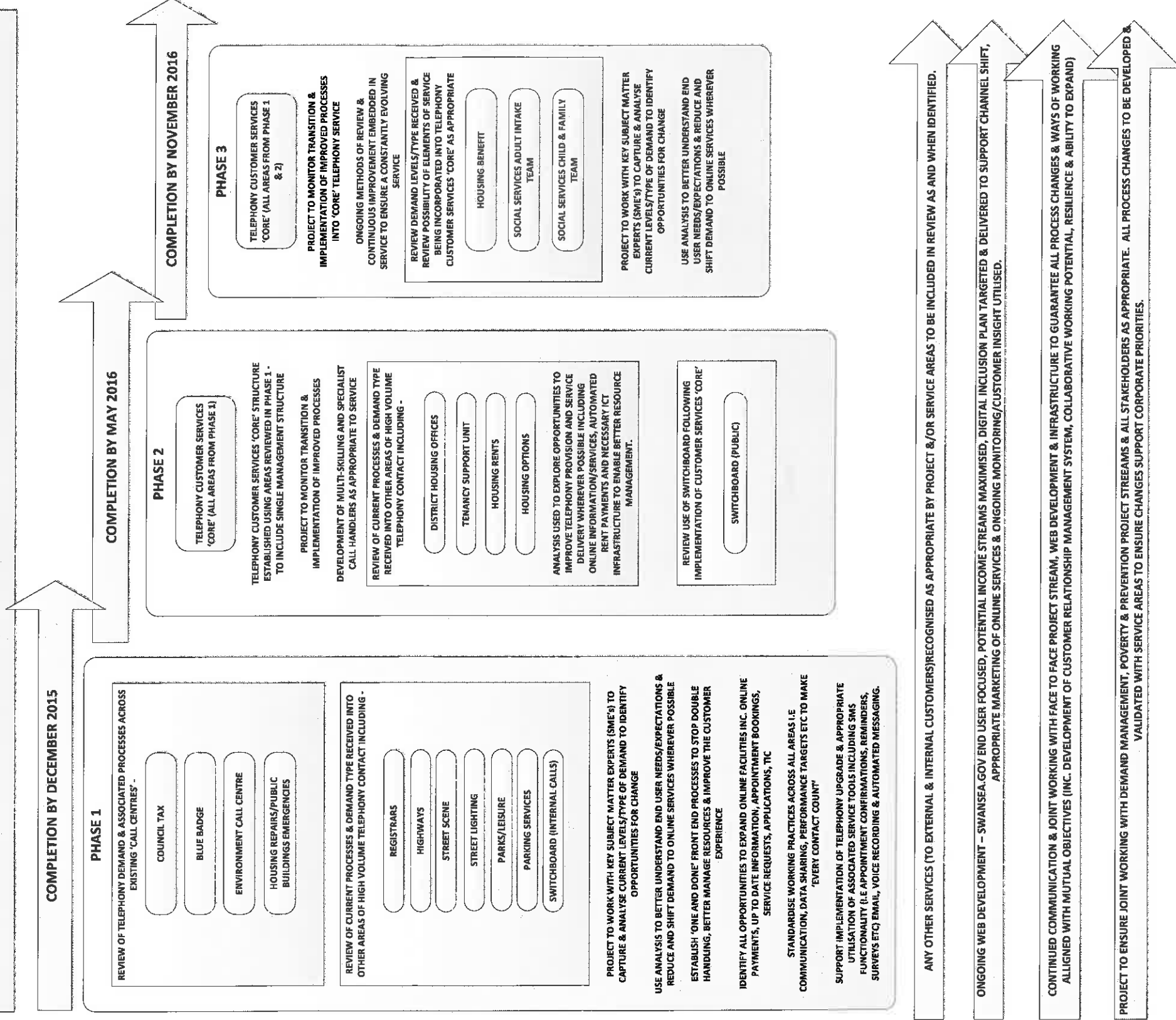
TELEPHONY CONTACT - PROPOSED SCOPE OF CUSTOMER CONTACT PROJECT & PROCESS OF DELIVERY

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW:

- CONSOLIDATE CUSTOMER SERVICES INTO A SINGLE MANAGED SERVICE
- PROVIDE A RANGE OF HIGH QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICES THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY (INC. WEB, PHONE, EMAIL, SMS MESSAGING, SOCIAL MEDIA ETC)
- SHIFT CUSTOMER CONTACT AWAY FROM TELEPHONY TO DIGITAL/SELF SERVICE CHANNELS WHEREVER POSSIBLE
- BETTER MANAGE DEMAND & USE CUSTOMER INSIGHT TO IMPROVE & SHAPE SERVICES
- BETTER USE OF RESOURCES TO IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

WHICH WILL RESULT IN:

- ✓ STRATEGIC DIRECTION & IMPROVED COMMUNICATION/LINKS ACROSS ALL CUSTOMER CONTACT CHANNELS
- ✓ CONSISTENT STANDARDS & PRACTICES TO MEET CUSTOMER NEEDS ACROSS ALL SERVICES
- ✓ REDUCTION IN UNNECESSARY CUSTOMER CONTACT
- ✓ BETTER USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY & DRIVE DOWN COSTS
- ✓ QUICKER & EASIER ACCESS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS
- ✓ INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



FACE TO FACE CONTACT - PROPOSED SCOPE OF CUSTOMER CONTACT PROJECT & PROCESS OF DELIVERY

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW:

- CONSOLIDATE CUSTOMER SERVICES INTO A SINGLE MANAGED SERVICE
- PROVIDE A RANGE OF HIGH QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICES THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY (INC. WEB, PHONE, EMAIL, SMS MESSAGING, SOCIAL MEDIA ETC)
- SHIFT CUSTOMER CONTACT AWAY FROM FACE TO FACE TO DIGITAL/SELF SERVICE CHANNELS WHEREVER POSSIBLE
- BETTER MANAGE DEMAND & USE CUSTOMER INSIGHT TO IMPROVE & SHAPE SERVICES
- BETTER USE OF RESOURCES TO IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

WHICH WILL RESULT IN:

- ✓ STRATEGIC DIRECTION & IMPROVED COMMUNICATION/LINKS ACROSS ALL CUSTOMER CONTACT CHANNELS
- ✓ CONSISTENT STANDARDS & PRACTICES TO MEET CUSTOMER NEEDS ACROSS ALL SERVICES
- ✓ REDUCTION IN UNNECESSARY CUSTOMER CONTACT
- ✓ BETTER USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY & DRIVE DOWN COSTS
- ✓ QUICKER & EASIER ACCESS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS
- ✓ INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

COMPLETION BY DECEMBER 2015

PHASE 1

REVIEW OF FACE TO FACE DEMAND & ASSOCIATED PROCESSES ACROSS EXISTING HIGH DEMAND AREAS INCLUDING:

- CONTACT CENTRE (MAIN RECEPTION/CONTACT CENTRE & HOUSING BENEFIT EXPRESS QUEUE)
- CASHIERS FRONT DESK
- REGISTRARS RECEPTION

PROJECT TO WORK WITH KEY SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SME'S) TO CAPTURE & ANALYSE CURRENT LEVELS/TYPE OF DEMAND TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

USE ANALYSIS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND END USER NEEDS/EXPECTATIONS & REDUCE AND SHIFT DEMAND TO ONLINE SERVICES WHEREVER POSSIBLE

WORK WITH SERVICE AREAS TO DEFINE WHAT SERVICES ARE TO CONTINUE BEING OFFERED FACE TO FACE, HOW TO MAXIMISE RESOURCES & STOP SERVICES WHEREVER POSSIBLE

ESTABLISH 'ONE AND DONE' FRONT END PROCESSES TO STOP DOUBLE HANDLING, BETTER MANAGE RESOURCES & IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

IDENTIFY ALL OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND ONLINE FACILITIES INC. ONLINE PAYMENTS, UP TO DATE INFORMATION, APPOINTMENT BOOKINGS, SERVICE REQUESTS, APPLICATIONS, TICKET PURCHASES ETC

STANDARDISE WORKING PRACTICES ACROSS ALL AREAS I.E COMMUNICATION, DATA SHARING, PERFORMANCE TARGETS ETC TO MAKE 'EVERY CONTACT COUNT'

COMPLETION BY MAY 2016

PHASE 2

FACE TO FACE CUSTOMER SERVICES 'CORE' (ALL AREAS FROM PHASE 1 - TO INCLUDE SINGLE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE)

PROJECT TO MONITOR TRANSITION & IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVED PROCESSES

FACE TO FACE STAFF EQUIPPED WITH NECESSARY TOOLS/TRAINING TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE QUERIES 'END TO END' WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

ONGOING REVIEW METHODS AGREED & IMPLEMENTED

REVIEW OF CURRENT PROCESSES & DEMAND TYPE RECEIVED INTO OTHER AREAS OF HIGH VOLUME FACE TO FACE CONTACT INCLUDING -

- DISTRICT HOUSING OFFICES
- TENANCY SUPPORT UNIT
- HOUSING RENTS
- HOUSING OPTIONS

ANALYSIS USED TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE FACE TO FACE SERVICE DELIVERY WHEREVER POSSIBLE INCLUDING ONLINE INFORMATION/SERVICES, AUTOMATED RENT PAYMENTS AND NECESSARY ICT INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENABLE BETTER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

COMPLETION BY NOVEMBER 2016

PHASE 3

FACE TO FACE CUSTOMER SERVICES 'CORE' (ALL AREAS FROM PHASE 1 & 2)

PROJECT TO MONITOR TRANSITION & IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVED PROCESSES INTO 'CORE' FACE TO FACE SERVICE

ONGOING METHODS OF REVIEW & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT EMBEDDED IN SERVICE TO ENSURE A CONSTANTLY EVOLVING SERVICE

PROJECT TO ENSURE MODEL OF DELIVERY FOR CORE SERVICES MEETS REQUIREMENTS FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE COLLABORATIVE WORKING

WORK WITH ANY OTHER AREAS POTENTIALLY FALLING UNDER 'SCOPE' OF REVIEW TO MAXIMISE ON ANY OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE I.E

- LIBRARIES & ARCHIVES
- COMMUNITY 'HUBS'

ANY OTHER SERVICES (TO EXTERNAL & INTERNAL CUSTOMERS) RECOGNISED AS APPROPRIATE BY PROJECT &/OR SERVICE AREAS TO BE INCLUDED IN REVIEW AS AND WHEN IDENTIFIED.

ONGOING WEB DEVELOPMENT – SWANSEA GOV END USER FOCUSED, POTENTIAL INCOME STREAMS MAXIMISED, DIGITAL INCLUSION PLAN TARGETED & DELIVERED TO SUPPORT CHANNEL SHIFT, APPROPRIATE MARKETING OF ONLINE SERVICES & ONGOING MONITORING/CUSTOMER INSIGHT UTILISED.

CONTINUED COMMUNICATION & JOINT WORKING WITH TELEPHONY PROJECT STREAM, WEB DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE TO GUARANTEE ALL PROCESS CHANGES & WAYS OF WORKING ALIGNED WITH MUTUAL OBJECTIVES (INC. DEVELOPMENT OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, COLLABORATIVE WORKING POTENTIAL, RESILIENCE & ABILITY TO EXPAND)

PROJECT TO ENSURE JOINT WORKING WITH DEMAND MANAGEMENT, ASSET REVIEW, POVERTY & PREVENTION PROJECT STREAMS & ALL STAKEHOLDERS AS APPROPRIATE. ALL PROCESS CHANGES TO BE DEVELOPED & VALIDATED WITH SERVICE AREAS TO ENSURE CHANGES SUPPORT CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

REPORT ON CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICES

Corporate Services CAC – 31 August 2016

1.0 Background and Context

This report follows on from approval by Cabinet for the Customer Contact Strategy in July 2014 and subsequent New Customer Services Model report approved by Exec Board in June 2015. As part of the Commissioning work stream of *Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future* a strategic review was undertaken of Corporate Services during 2015. The recommendations from the Business Support Commissioning Review were approved by Cabinet on 15 October 2015. At the heart of this was a mandate for a new whole Council operating model for business support which includes customer contact, both internal and external.

2.0 Journey so far in Customer Services

The authority's vision was to:

- To improve customer experience.
- To achieve a fundamental shift in customer contact to digital self- service channels.
- To consolidate current customer contact.
- To use customer insight to improve services and achieve the other aims.

With the key principles being:

- Operating as a single customer service organisation, not a number of separate customer services businesses.
- Bringing current customer contact resources under a single management structure.
- Adopting the principle of digital by default and transfer, wherever possible, customer contact from face to face and telephone to digital channels.
- Making every contact count to reduce or minimise demand and change resident behaviour.

The new Customer Service Manager was appointed on 1st August 2015 and Corporate Customer Services went live on 1st October 2015. Phase 1 brought together five areas of the organisation, as below, into one new service across three sites:

- Contact Swansea
- Switchboard
- Environmental Services
- Housing Repairs
- Blue Badges

In November 2015, contact for the Highways service also migrated into Customer Services. All telephony teams were relocated and amalgamated into one site in the Civic Centre in January 2016 and the multi skilling of advisors commenced. In order not to lose the knowledge and experience gained over many years, each advisor has a 'primary' skill and 'secondary' skill so that they can assist each other during periods of high demand, sickness absence and annual leave. The teams were also taken through a restructure and Management of Change between March 2016 and May 2016 in order to align job roles, terms and conditions, new ways of working and achieve an efficiency target of £235,000 through a reduction in headcount of 11FTE.

During our first year we have answered 526,642 calls and served 40,615 customers at the Contact Centre face to face with only 7 Corporate Complaints received in total across both channels since the service was created. A Welsh language Line was introduced in April 2016 and constant review of our website and increasing the ability to report or request services online is starting to pay dividends, encouraging our residents to contact us **'digitally by choice'**. Over the last 12 months our Switchboard Service has received approximately 3000 fewer calls and our Environment Service nearly 4000 fewer calls over the same period. Good examples of recent channel shift from face to face and over the phone to digital that have been well received by residents are the ability to place a bulky waste request online and the 'virtual' resident parking permit, where residents can apply online and are instantly covered, similar to the new car tax system introduced by the Department of Transport some years ago.

Our face to face Contact Swansea visitor numbers this financial year so far have reduced by 26% with 93% of those customers who required a ticket for a more in depth enquiry being seen within 15 minutes of arrival an improvement on the 86% during the same period the previous year and with fewer staff.

At the moment, access times to council services across the council is very varied and confusing and frustrating for our residents if they can't get a response to their query so next year we will be working with services to standardise and promote clear access times across all services which will be Mon-Thurs 08:30-17:00 and 08:30-16:30 on a Friday.

Customer Services are continually looking at new ways of working and technology to reduce and manage demand more appropriately. Automated telephony was initially introduced in the Authority in 2014 and we are currently procuring 'voice recognition' so that those residents who are happy to use these methods of contact can do so, however, this will be in **'addition to, rather than instead of'** and will eventually enable our residents to report or request a service not only through our website but also over the telephone 24/7, 365 days a year. Naturally, if they would prefer to use traditional methods then they will still be available during our normal Council opening times.

We are also in the process of building an 'in house' Corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which will provide us with more control and flexibility to develop the product to meet our needs and vision of working towards a 'single customer record' across the Authority.

3.0 Proposed areas for migration in Phase 2

The customer contact identified for consideration in Phase 2 (Sept 2016-Dec 2016) of the Contact Strategy as previously approved by Cabinet are:

- Registrars
- Street Lighting
- Parks/Leisure
- Parking Services
- District Housing Offices
- Tenancy Support Unit
- Housing Options
- Housing Rents

A proposal for approval to commence discussions with these services will be submitted to Corporate Management Team in September with a view to replicating the same/similar implementation to Phase 1.

4.0 Customer contact in other parts of the Council

This report sets out in sections 2 and 3 those areas that come under Corporate Customer Services, however, there are many other areas across the council that deal with customer contact – eg, social services, planning, education etc.

Although there is a council standard known as the Swansea Standard that sets out best practice in relation to how all staff should deal with customers, it is the responsibility of individual managers to ensure their staff meet customer needs.

The recent introduction of the Welsh Language Standards has brought extra demands in terms of dealing with customers in Welsh and all external calls should now be answered bilingually.

Although no study has been carried out, it is likely that services will have different arrangements in terms of answering the phone, replying to emails and even issues such as email signatures.

There is a need to bring some consistency across the entire council, whilst recognising that some services will have different demands and requirements.

Agenda Item 7

Report of the Chair

Corporate Services Cabinet Advisory Committee – 28 September 2016

CORPORATE SERVICES CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

Date	Subject Area	Lead
1 June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with the Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance • Feedback from Visit to Helping Hands 	Councillor Clive Lloyd Chair
29 June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest to Save Case Studies 	Jeff Dong
27 July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Contact Aspect – Terms of Reference • Update - Gender Pay Gap Project 	Councillor Clive Lloyd Linda Phillips
31 August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Workers • Invest to Save Loans • Customer Contact Aspect 	Andrew Williams / Adrian Osborne / Steve Rees Mike Hawes / Sarah Caulkin Lee Wenham / Julie Nicholas- Humphreys
28 September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update - Smoke Free Spaces • Customer Contact Aspect • Agency Workers 	Dave Picken / Natalie Parsons Chair Chair
26 October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Pay Gap Project • Customer Contact Aspect • Update Report on Equality / Welsh Language 	Steve Rees / Linda Phillips Sherill Hopkins / Phil Crouch