

Customer Access Strategy

Delivering a better experience for customers

2011 - 2015

Understanding our customers
and designing our services
around their needs

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
SECTION 1: RATIONALE FOR CHANGE AND THE STRATEGIC CUSTOMER OUTCOMES.....	5
Introduction	5
The Rationale for Change.....	5
Customer Outcomes	6
SECTION 2: THE CURRENT POSITION.....	7
SECTION 3: TARGET OPERATING MODEL.....	8
SECTION 4: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF DELIVERY	10
Customer Insight.....	10
Service Redesign	11
Channel Management	11
Performance Management Framework.....	12
Business Change and Training	13
SECTION 5: KEY DELIVERABLES AND BENEFITS	14
SECTION 6: SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS IN DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY.....	16
Definition of Customer.....	16
Partnership Working and Integration.....	16
Locality Working	16
Intelligence-based Decision-Making	16
SECTION 7: GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY	17
CONCLUSION	18

Please Note

A number of short stories are included to highlight how, by delivering this strategy, current examples of service failure will be rectified and the council's services will become more customer-focussed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leeds City Council is striving to be the best council in the UK and to develop a future for local government built on the principles of Civic Enterprise. To ensure we meet these ambitions, a key success measure is commissioning and delivering services in an efficient and effective manner whilst ensuring they meet the needs of the people of Leeds.

This customer access strategy is focussed on delivering this capability.

Everyone in the authority has a role to play in putting customers first and ensuring that we are truly meeting their needs. This strategy will be supported by robust monitoring of clear and transparent standards that customers can understand and expect.

There are many drivers for delivering services which place the customer at the centre and focus on meeting their needs:

- Customers increasing expectations, the drive towards greater localism and the need to address the structural economic deficit. Customers want a greater say in decision making and they want to engage on their terms.
- Services need to operate in a coherent manner, have a single view of the customer and deliver services around customer journeys/pathways. There is a greater drive towards targeting service delivery in the pursuit of efficiency.

Five **customer outcomes** reflect the drivers for change. These outcomes are:

- All customers have fair and equal access to services
- Customers have greater control over the services they receive and how they access them
- Customers influence the design and delivery of the services available for them
- Customers needs are where possible, resolved at the first point of contact
- Customer satisfaction drives service improvement

Despite the recent achievements and improvements made around delivering customer focussed services there is still much work to do to ensure that Leeds City Council is truly customer focussed. Recent diagnostic work on customer contact and management evidences that within the current arrangements there are still pockets of replication and duplication of processes, systems and people.

Therefore there is clearly still much the council can do to ensure it is truly customer focussed. The move towards a single council operating model will continue. The integration of front and back office processes, systems and colleague relations, which build trust and empathy will create a culture of 'first time on time'. End to end transformation of services will allow the Council to provide a holistic service to the customer. Beyond this arrangement there remains the need to forge stronger links with other public and private sector partners to meet our ambitions to be the best city in the UK.

Fundamentally it is our duty to make it easier for customers, by taking ownership of enquiries right through to a successful conclusion. Good customer service is fundamental to the 'quality of life' and other outcomes Leeds City Council is focused upon achieving.

A set of **Design Principles** have been agreed and are contained within this Strategy. Putting customers first covers all areas of Council operations and therefore the task of adopting a council wide focus on customers is all-encompassing. The principles include the need to provide excellent customer service where enquires and service requests are resolved promptly, we will keep our customers informed of progress and empower colleagues to seamlessly deliver services first time, on time. We will ensure value for money by fully utilising our investment in customer access points and by maximising the range of services delivered through them. Our services will be responsive to the needs of our diverse customers and will be delivered against a set of service standards to ensure customers know what they can expect.

The Outcomes and Design Principles will set out the parameters within which the work of this strategy will be carried out. The following activities will form the building blocks for delivery of the Strategy:

Customer Insight involvement and feedback will be used to identify the different needs of different groups of customers and target services to those people that need them most. More focussed marketing and communication can increase the take up of services, maximise income generation and create channel access approaches that maximise take-up of self-service and electronic service delivery.

Service Redesign will be informed by a better understanding of customer journey/pathways. Projects can be established to re-engineer services end to end. By reviewing and improving all processes in the service delivery chain, not only will there be a reduction in avoidable and repeat contact - but also a reduction in duplication and administration throughout the end to end process.

Channel Management is the process by which the council provides access to its services. Channels may include face to face; telephone; e-mail; Internet; digital TV; mobile technology (including SMS text messaging, 'apps' and mobile web); automated telephony technology (interactive voice recognition), voice over Internet protocol and post. The development and implementation of access channels will be informed by customer insight, the ease by which services lend themselves to alternative methods of access and the delivery channels already in place.

Information and Technology has enabled the provision of One Stop Centres, the Corporate Contact Centre and the LCC website, however this is not enough and the role of information and technology in supporting delivery of this customer access strategy is crucial. There is a need to invest in newer technologies to support the delivery of new channels and more customer choice. This includes intelligence and performance management technologies, authentication tools, plus applications to allow such things as book and pay for appointments and the tracking of applications.

A **Performance Management Framework** that reviews and improves service delivery ensuring that customer needs have been identified and met. The council will (as part of this strategy) develop, publish and monitor a new set of specific customer care standards for each of its service areas. These service standards will be agreed and developed by all staff, customers will know what to expect and when.

Business Change and Training within the organisation will be provided to develop the skills, capacity and attitude of all colleagues to ensure the customer is central to what we do at Leeds City Council. To achieve this, the specific programmes and projects developed will ensure colleagues are supported through business change and appropriately trained to deliver the changes implemented.

Within the Council people are our most valuable resource therefore working with them and supporting them through the inevitable business change process and training them in the new ways of working will be the key to changing the culture of customer service in the authority in the medium to long term.

The responsibility for delivering the actions identified in this document ultimately lies with all staff and Directorates, a programme of projects will be required that will deliver the building blocks and ultimately the customer outcomes. However the final section of this strategy proposes a governance structure which sets out the roles and responsibilities necessary for delivery.

SECTION 1: RATIONALE FOR CHANGE AND THE STRATEGIC CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

Introduction

Leeds City Council has always taken pride in delivering better services and putting customers at the heart of all we do. The authority has a good track record in delivering services to meet the needs of customers with our Customer First Strategy having first been created in 1999. The approach now being outlined for the next few years builds on the work already undertaken which has seen the development of a network of one stop centres and joint service centres, a corporate contact centre and the provision of alternative access channels.

It is important to define the scope of this strategy and to do this a customer definition is important. In terms of this strategy the 'customer' is defined as 'all those who benefit from the services we provide, and therefore, everyone in the chain that supports the final delivery of front-line services, has customers. Our customers are those people for whom we work to commission, contract, deliver, and enable services. They are also local citizens, or people coming in to the Leeds area to work or visit. They may be direct service users, employees of the council, employees of other organisations, elected members or partners.'

The vision for this new customer access strategy is to ensure that the services we commission and deliver are designed and managed to be affordable and meet customer need. The strategy brings together how we will tailor our services around the customer by delivering a programme of change focussed on creating a customer-centric culture within the organisation and providing services to customers first time and on time. It outlines the strategic customer outcomes and key principles that will form the foundations of how Leeds City Council will commission and provide its services in an effective, responsive and efficient way.

There is a greater need to link and coordinate information and advice available in Leeds to make sure that customers get good consistent access to all the information available. Public, private and voluntary sector service providers will all need to play a part in making sure that people can easily find the information.

Leeds City Council has five values:

- Working as a team for Leeds
- Being open, honest and trusted
- Working with communities
- Treating people fairly
- Spending money wisely

The principles that form the foundation of this strategy have a direct link to each of these values. Directing our focus more on the needs of our customers means we will be working as a team, treating people fairly whilst offering choice and working with customers to ensure that services deliver for the overall good of the wider community. Our proposed approach to insight and change will ensure customers continue to access and receive the services they require in ways that suits them.

Mrs Jones called to report her black bin being missed for the third time. Although she spoke to an understanding and apologetic customer service officer, the same advice was given, she needed to leave her bin outside her property for 48 hours and then take it back in if the collection was not made. She was also advised that the officer would pass her details to a Streetscene manager to investigate. Her bin remained un-emptied with no explanation for a further week.

In future Mrs Jones can choose whether to report her missed collection through on-line self-service technology, or call the contact centre. Customers Service Officers will be able to advise on the refuse wagons progress & whether it has passed/been to her street; confirm if the bin has been missed and also the reason why. Through the use of 'in cab' technology linked to real time mapping, customers can self serve, or customer service officers can provide bespoke information & realistic recovery timescales. Crews will be made aware of missed collections and arrangements made to return for the bin. Route data will be maintained so that previously missed collections, or special collection requirements can be flagged to crews.

The Rationale for Change

There are many strategic, operational and customer-led drivers for delivering services which place the customer at the centre and focus on meeting their needs. These include:

Strategic

Customer's increasing expectations of choice, quality and control across a range of public services. This creates mixed demand for service provision which means the council needs to be more agile and responsive to customer need. Providing a 'one size fits all' solution will be no longer acceptable. Given this, understanding customer need and providing appropriate and effective access channels is therefore essential in ensuring services are commissioned, provided and delivered in a flexible and agile manner. The customer journey may start from a number of different places but customers should have guidance on what is there.

The drive towards greater localism. There are significant benefits to be gained from a more co-ordinated approach to front line service delivery across the council, and with our partners to meet the needs of our customers. This will create less dependency, greater choice, a greater range of providers, more transparency and more local power and empowerment within communities and localities. Fundamentally it means that the council and its partners will be

closer to their customers and therefore will need to be fully responsive to them. Ultimately the council will begin to take the lead from them.

- **The need to address the structural economic deficit.** The Comprehensive Spending Review (October 2010), outlined a reduction in local government funding of 7.1% each year for the next four years. As a result, Leeds City Council must make spending cuts of approximately £160 million over the next four years. Our approach to customer access will make a significant contribution to the council being able to meet this funding gap. Good information received early on may lessen or even prevent the need for services later on.

Customer-led

- **Customers want a greater say in decision-making.** Customers want to know that they are influencing decisions taken by the council on service delivery. Therefore through their involvement (by using the information we glean from understanding their interactions with the council, what they tell us as feedback, and what we are told as a result of broader consultation and engagement), the council can ensure that their voice has impact.
- **Customers want an open and honest relationship.** Customers want their expectations managed and to be treated in an open, honest and adult way. They will form their relationship with the council on this basis. By having a single view of the customer and a more consistent approach to how we contact them, customers will begin to trust the council, enabling a more honest and open relationship to develop.
- **Customers want to engage on their terms.** Customers want their interactions with the council to be self-determined where possible, and undertaken in the easiest way possible for them. By increasing the range of channels available for accessing a full range of services, customers are better able to engage at a time and in a way that suits their lifestyle.

Operational

- **The drive towards greater targeting of service delivery in the pursuit of efficiency.** This requires insight into customer needs, behaviours and motivations, plus more information for customers on the services on offer and service design. This will ensure the right service is delivered to meet their need with no wasted effort.
- **The drive to operate in a coherent way and have a single view of the customer.** Ensuring consistency and a more 'joined-up' approach in service delivery will make it easier for our customers to communicate, interact and receive services. It will also mean that our staff are supported and empowered to deliver excellent customer service at the first point of contact.
- **The need to deliver services around customer journeys/pathways.** This requirement extends service delivery across organisational boundaries. Therefore understanding these journeys/pathways from a whole-system perspective, where customers 'touch' council services and how we can work in partnership with others such as Health is a key rationale to improve and simplify customer access and deliver services end to end.

The rationale for change clearly demonstrates that everyone in the authority has a role to play in putting customers first and ensuring that we are truly meeting their needs. By focussing on the customer, Leeds City Council can deliver on its promise to provide better outcomes for its citizens and therefore make a significant contribution to the ambition of the authority to 'be the best City Council in the UK'.

Customer Outcomes

Given the above, it is important that in building on the work already undertaken within the authority to deliver a more customer focussed approach to service delivery, consideration is given to how the above key drivers are reflected in the work the organisation is going to undertake over the next four years.

In this regard, outlined below are five customer outcomes that reflect the drivers for change. These outcomes are supported with a number of key objectives and provide the strategic direction for this customer access strategy. These outcomes are:

Mr Bloggs had arranged for 3 household items to be collected from his property. Unfortunately, he returned home from work on his collection day to find his items still in his front garden. He called the contact centre who could not explain why his items had not been collected and was advised he needed to make another appointment which could be up to 6 weeks in the future.

If this happens in future, Mr Bloggs will receive an SMS text or email to advise that the crews have been unable to collect his items. The message will provide Mr Bloggs with an explanation and will advise him when they will be collected. This means Mr Bloggs does not have to contact the Council himself. As Mr Bloggs had booked his collection on-line his up-to-date mobile number or email address had been collected.

Outcome 1: All Citizens have Fair and Equal Access to Services

- We understand customer diversity issues and address barriers to access, particularly for groups we have been less successful at reaching.
- We actively target increased take-up of services for under-represented and vulnerable groups and signpost to other services where appropriate.
- Where customer insight highlights a demand for alternative provision, we will help and support its establishment.

Outcome 2: Customers have greater control over the services they receive and how they access them.

- Where it is appropriate to do so, we encourage and enable customers to determine their interaction with the council.
- We use customer insight to determine the most appropriate channels for service delivery.
- We give seamless service delivery across the principle access channels – face to face, telephone and on-line.

Outcome 3: Customers influence the design & delivery of the services available for them

- We have a clear and consistent approach to the capture and application of customer insight.
- We have a clear and consistent approach to the identification of customer pathways/ journeys.
- We place customer insight and pathways at the heart of service commissioning and re-design.

Outcome 4: Customer needs are where possible, resolved at the first point of contact

- We have a single view of the customer and know their touch-points with services.
- We ensure all access channels provide consistent information, advice and tools to deliver services at the first point of contact.
- All front-line staff are trained and enabled to provide resolution at the first point of contact wherever possible.

Outcome 5: Customer satisfaction drives service improvement

- We place customer satisfaction at the heart of our performance management framework.
- We place customer satisfaction at the heart of our commissioning framework.
- We publish satisfaction levels against a set of measurable customer service standards.

The above, together with the design principles that are outlined later (Section 3) provide the framework within which the deliverables and benefits articulated in this strategy will be achieved.

SECTION 2: THE CURRENT POSITION

Leeds City Council has a good track record in delivering customer focussed services to local residents and customers which deliver consistently high satisfaction levels across a wide range of service areas.

Key achievements in recent years include:

- The development of the Corporate Contact Centre that handles over 1 million calls per year through a simplified numbering strategy.
- A network of One Stop Centres and Joint Service Centres that handles over 450,000 customer visits per year and has achieved Customer Excellence accreditation.
- Development and utilisation of a Corporate Customer Management System: Contact Leeds.
- Development of a Contact Centre solution able to manage and monitor customer demand across a wide range of services and channels.
- Implementation of the technical platform to develop a Unique Customer Master Index to allow for a single record of customers.
- Development of a Neighbourhood Index that provides clear and contemporary understanding of communities.
- Customer First, a national recognised assurance standard, has been achieved in services such as Jobs and Skills.
- Many services across Leeds City Council have achieved excellent customer satisfaction levels and industry recognised accreditation such as Customer Services Excellence.
- Corporate achievement of Excellent in the Equality Framework for Local Government
- The Localities Framework and definition has been determined.

However despite these achievements there is still much work to do to ensure that Leeds City Council is truly customer focussed. Recent diagnostic work on customer contact and management within the council demonstrates that:

- Despite investment in a corporate contact centre and a network of One Stop Centres, recent research shows a significant amount of customer contact happens in other parts of the council and as a result there are significant 'customer service' resources that sit outside of the council's corporate Customer Services team. The Delivering Efficient Corporate and Transactional Services review of customer processes found that 1,596 FTE's are deployed in this area. 291.05 FTE's (18.24%) are deployed within the corporate Customer Services team..
- There is no coherent Channel Management strategy within the council and therefore no plan currently exists for e-services delivery or channel migration outside of Customer Services. The Council has also found it difficult to manage, communicate and deal with additional customer contact about major changes to the way high demand services are designed and delivered.
- Leeds City Council often has numerous buildings in a locality, these are often 'not fit for purpose' and aren't always accessible to customers. The creation of the One Stop Centres has clearly illustrated the benefits of

service alignment, both in terms of physical location and in terms of channel. This approach needs to be further developed through the Customer Access and Changing the Workplace Programmes.

- Although online and interactive telephone self-service transactions have increased significantly, these are concentrated in a small number of service areas such as payments and libraries. The Council does not make full use of its website for citizens and businesses to interact.
- There is no coherent corporate approach to understanding our customers. Where customer insight is obtained it is ad-hoc and service specific. Furthermore, the council has little experience of customer segmentation analysis and is therefore effectively 'blind' to understanding or responding to customer preferences on access channels or service delivery.
- Whilst processes in the Contact Centre and One Stop Centres have been redesigned, there is little end-to-end process integration to the extent that hand-offs are significant and resolution at the first point of contact is comparatively low.

Mrs Dunn was out shopping when she noticed a large pothole in the street. By the time she had returned home she could not remember the exact location so didn't bother to report it.

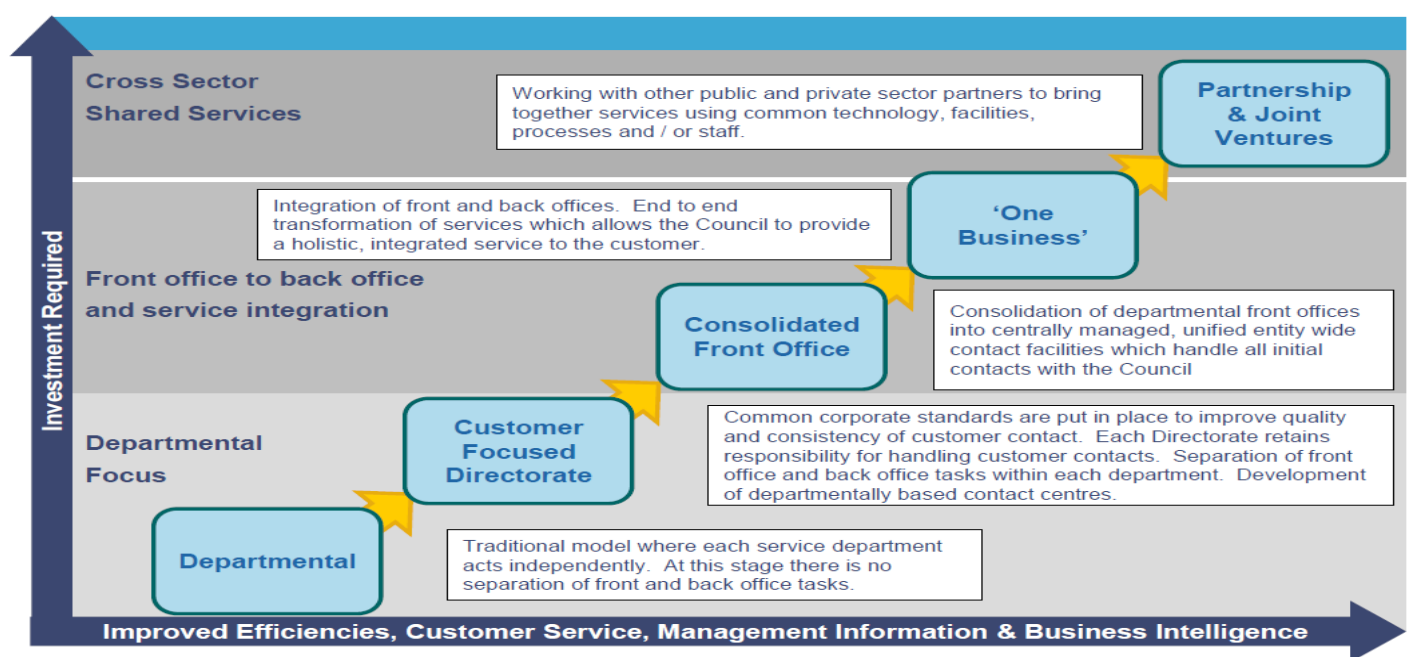
In future Mrs Dunn will be able to report potholes by an App on her phone, it will provide exact location using GPS technology and she will receive an immediate acknowledgement of her report with timescales for the repair. The information will also be sent directly to the service via linked technology which will update the wardens/contractors hand-held device, enabling the repair. This information will be published on the Councils website via maps, allowing customers to track reports and prevent duplicate reports being made. Mrs Dunn can also report graffiti, dog fouling and fly tipping using this same 'app'.

- A very traditional view of the customer exists corporately within the council. The impact of this is that little emphasis is given within the corporate customer agenda to the significant personalisation and choice agendas initially developed in Adult Social Care and Children's Services but now gaining currency through the Localism and Big Society agendas. In all these areas the focus is one enabling a much more person-centric approach and therefore fundamentally challenges our approach to meeting customer need.
- There is a lack of coherency in our approach to meeting customer need. This manifests itself in a number of ways; most pertinently through service opt-out from the corporate infrastructure (people, process and technology) and a general absence of collective ownership for customer relations and management.
- There is an inconsistent approach to partnership working and joining up across traditional organisational boundaries to meet the needs of citizens and business.

Therefore there is clearly still much the council can do to ensure it is truly customer focussed and the next section details the design principles on which this future direction will be built.

SECTION 3: TARGET OPERATING MODEL

There is now a general expectation of a 'first time, on time' level of service delivery irrespective of channel. Local authorities are no exception to this. Our customers expect high quality services; they are less concerned with who delivers the services as long as they are delivered and they expect to be involved in the decisions we make about services.



The diagram above demonstrates the stages by which this can be achieved and it acts as an operating model template for the council and has been adopted from other local authorities who have the same ambitions around this agenda as Leeds.

Currently the council operates between Customer Focussed Directorates and Consolidated Front Office. Certainly the ambition from this strategy is to move on from where we are now towards a more appropriate organisation, be that the single council model (One Business) or indeed the more integrated public-service / best city model (Partnership and Joint Venture). Decisions around this will be based largely on the nature of the services in questions and the

Miss May is a nurse. She is on her way to work early one morning when she notices some graffiti on a wall in her street. She phones the Contact Centre whilst on the bus to report this but it doesn't open for another half an hour. She doesn't have time to report it whilst at work and her shift doesn't finish until 7.00 p.m., by which time, the Contact Centre has closed.

In future, when Miss May phones the Contact Centre at 7.30 a.m. she will be greeted by an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) service. The IVR will allow Miss May to report the graffiti without having to speak to a member of staff and will give her advice on timescales for when the graffiti will be removed. The information will be sent directly to the service via linked technology which will update the wardens hand-held device for actioning.

customer pathway, however there is already much pressure around this progression given the Government's ambitions for a renewed public service and relationship with citizens, specifically within the social care environment.

We will build our processes and transform our services from a customers' perspective so as to ensure they are efficient, effective and meet our customer's needs. This will be supported by the development of additional access channels that will broaden the options available to customers and enable them to contact the council at a time and place of their choosing. In turn, this will allow us to

make increasingly more effective use of our staff.

We will use the information we hold about our customers intelligently, so we can provide a more holistic and seamless end-to-end service that is tailored to the customer's specific needs. This will be further enabled by maximising the usage of the corporate customer relationship management (CRM) system within the council. Through improved capturing of customer information, we can identify weaknesses in processes and use performance information to drive service improvement.

Fundamentally it is our duty to make it easier for customers, by taking ownership of enquiries right through to a successful conclusion. Customers expect Leeds City Council services to be:

- clearly signposted and more convenient than in the past;
- tailored to their needs - this means we listen to their needs and make more effort to find out what they want in the future;
- accessible from home or work at a time that suits them;
- delivered utilising modern access channels to keep them informed of the services we provide.

Putting customers first covers all areas of council operations and therefore the task of adopting a council-wide focus on customers is all-encompassing. To provide a framework within which this can be achieved, a set of Design Principles have been agreed. These will be used to redesign services around the customer in line with our operating ambitions set out above.

The design principles are:

- Our customers will experience consistent, high quality outcomes, regardless of the type of enquiry, where it is made or the channel used.
- Everyone is responsible for providing excellent customer service, managing expectations and delivering on promises.
- Where we have failed to deliver on our promises, we will keep our customers informed of progress and have appropriate escalation processes in place.
- Our services will be responsive to the needs of our diverse customers, not the organisation, and based on customer insight and feedback.
- Our customers will be able to access information and services through a range of channels and we will maximise the use of self service options.
- We will respond to customer enquiries and service requests promptly and, wherever possible, at the first point of contact.
- We will empower and enable our employees and partners to seamlessly deliver services first time, on time, by using integrated and consistent systems and processes.
- We will ensure efficiency and value for money by fully utilising our investment in customer access points (Corporate Contact Centre, One Stop Centres, on-line) and by maximising the range of services delivered through them.

- We will publish a set of open and honest customer care and service specific standards and these, together with customer satisfaction, will be used as a key measure to manage the performance of our employees and our partners.
- We will work with partners, external agencies and the private and voluntary sector, where appropriate, to deliver cost effective and high quality customer services.

These principles form the framework for the delivery of this strategy and inform the key deliverables through which effective and efficient reshaping of customer services will be delivered.

SECTION 4: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF DELIVERY

Miss Atherton was concerned about a leaking gutter above her child's bedroom, she was afraid that the room could become damp. Miss Atherton had called the corporate contact centre to report this and was told that a contractor would make an appointment to visit her home within the next 5 working days. It is now 5 days since she reported the issue and she has not heard anything, so needs to call the contact centre again.

In the future Miss Atherton uses the online repair reporting service, using simple diagrams to identify & report her fault. The system refers her report to the relevant contractor and provides her with a reference number and a timescale for the repair. This reference can be used to check into the on-line repair system with updates on the progress of her case, confirming the date the contractor is due to visit & repair the gutter, and also details of any follow up work required.

The Outcomes and Design Principles outlined earlier set-out the parameters within which the work of this strategy will be carried out. They establish the working principles for customer-centred service delivery and the outcomes that the approach is seeking to achieve.

Section 5 of the strategy outlines the key deliverables for each outcome alongside the key benefits that can be expected for both the customer and Leeds City Council. These deliverables

are significant and will be delivered across the whole council; however they are focussed on delivering a relatively small number of activities that are utilised across all services. What follows in this section outlines these activities, with a brief explanation of what they are and why they are the building blocks of delivery.

There are six building blocks for this strategy and they are:

- Customer Insight
- Service Redesign
- Channel Management
- Information and Technology
- Performance Management
- Business Change and Training

Customer Insight

What we know and understand about our customers and their needs; through their interactions with the council, what they tell us as feedback and what we glean as a result of broader consultation and engagement, are crucial ingredients in delivering services back to them that meet their needs and expectations on quality and timeliness of the services themselves.

We can use customer insight to:

- Identify what is most important to our customers.
- Help target services to those people that need them most.
- Better understand what channels work for what type of customers and services.
- Create a channel access approach that maximises self-service and electronic service delivery based on customer need.
- Better tailor and design services around customer need.
- Design a customer centric asset strategy.
- Focus marketing and communications upon the targeted groups, helping maximise service usage and income generation.

Elaine is a single parent living in a deprived area of the city. Since leaving school Elaine has struggled to stay active due to lack of time and awareness of opportunities in the local area. Recently she received an SMS text message outlining a new project called 'Women into Sport'. This offered Elaine a 12 week reduced cost activity programme at her local leisure centre. Since starting Elaine says she feels much better emotionally and physically. At the end of the programme she hopes to get a Leeds Card Extra to continue participating in reduced cost activities.

Elaine was identified using customer insight, specifically the Sport England Market Segmentation Model. This allowed the Sport Service to develop a project to tackle the city-wide inequality in participation in sport by females in deprived areas

However despite holding a lot of this information, the council is poor at bringing it together, analysing it and using it to inform service delivery. Furthermore there has been significant development in how information can be utilised to shape organisations around their customers (customer and market segmentation) which can be adopted and used in Leeds relatively easily.

Understanding the customer and gaining insight is therefore a key building block for this strategy going forward and key deliverables around building our Customer Insight capacity have been identified. The evidence base generated by customer insight will be critical in ensuring that when decisions are made, especially with regards to equality – Leeds City Council clearly understands service users and non-users, and is better informed to choose the correct service delivery option. Therefore this is a key deliverable of this strategy.

Service Redesign

There is a long history of using service redesign techniques within the public sector to change and improve services to the customer which is grounded in an evidence-based approach to change. Increasingly, the concept of service redesign is used within local authorities, this is becoming increasingly important in Adult Social Care and Children's Services as greater integration with the health sector grows.

Fundamentally the approach is aimed at ensuring customer outcomes are met and because it is predicated on an evidence-based approach. The general principles for good service redesign are that it should:

- Follow the customer's journey/pathway
- Be based on customer insight and customer need, not driven by the organisation
- Be service led with facilitation and help from all support services
- Involve all stakeholders
- Promote effective team working
- Focus on improving the customer's experience and outcome in a fair and equal manner
- Follow a structured methodology.

Working with officers tasked with community engagement we will support ways to involve customers in the earliest design stages, throughout the change process and after implementation. In this way services will always have direct input from those that use them.

Whilst the council will in the short-term, focus its attention on improving access based on high benefit, low cost initiatives, a full programme of service redesign is essential if the council is to truly meet customer needs and maximise the investment it has/will make in the customer access infrastructure. Therefore the council needs to articulate its preferred methodology for Service Redesign and establish a programme across all services to ensure that end-to-end processes involved in a customer journey/pathway are meeting needs in the most efficient and effective way. This is a key building block for this strategy going forward.

Channel Management

Customers receive a high standard of customer service from many other public and private sector organisations and are right to expect the same of Leeds City Council consistently. Whilst citizens do not think in terms of 'channels', the channels through which public services are delivered, and by which the public has contact with the authority, are a critical part of service provision and must be managed effectively.

Channels may include face to face; telephone; e-mail; Internet; digital TV; mobile technology (including SMS text messaging, apps and mobile web); automated telephony technology (including interactive voice recognition) and post.

Channel Management is the process by which the council provides access to its services. It focuses attention specifically on two areas:

- Having the right range of access channels within the council. The development and implementation of access channels will be informed by customer insight, the ease by which services lend themselves to alternative methods of access; the delivery channels already in place and equality impact assessments to ensure access to services is non-discriminatory and where possible equality, cohesion and diversity outcomes are improved.
- For each channel that is used within the council, ensuring they are easily accessible; simple to use; streamlined; convenient; cost effective and robust.

By offering a wider range of access channels, particularly around self-service, we will both encourage and enable customers to access our services via the most effective and suitable method.

This strategy will not aim to remove channels, as customers will always use different channels, not just for different types of interactions, but also to suit their own convenience. Instead, the strategy will adopt an approach based on channel optimisation so we will use each channel for what it is best in order to realise the greatest benefits in terms of service delivery. The benefit of this approach is that customers will be able to choose more ways to access services at times and places which suit them, whilst the council will improve customer satisfaction through channel optimisation and benefit from efficient service delivery.

Having an appropriate approach to Channel Management is therefore a key building block for this strategy going forward and key deliverables around channel development and use have been identified in Section 5.

Information and Technology

The council has invested significantly in recent years in technology that supports a more customer focussed approach to service delivery. Through the development of the Corporate Contact Centre and the network of One Stop Centres that exist across the city, the council has invested in a corporate customer relationship management (CRM) system, plus a suite of technologies to support telephony requirements including voice over internet protocol (VOIP) and interactive voice recognition (IVR).

Further to the above, the council has embarked on an investment strategy under Changing the Workplace to enable colleagues in the organisation to work how, where and when they need to support improved end-to-end services to the customer. The Council is also developing a new website with a key workstream being around e-services delivery. This will allow the council to deliver more choice for all customers around how services are accessed through the provision of more on-line services. There has also been investment in the technical platform for the development of a Universal Customer Master Index (UCMI). This will enable the council to have a single view of the customer by linking customer records across line of business systems. The development of the website and UCMI are key deliverable for this strategy. Key benefits of a single view of the customer are:

Mr C is overwhelmed by his wife's death and is not sure which services need to be informed.

Mr C phones to make an appointment to register his wife's death. He accepts the offer of using the Tell Us Once service and is given a confidential appointment with a specially trained Customer Services Officer immediately after he registers the death.

The Customer Services Officer is able to look up his wife's details and see a single view of her involvement with different services. The single view enables the Customer Services Officer to ask the right questions and help Mr C decide which services need to be informed.

As the single view has already identified the correct record for Mrs C in the different systems, staff in service areas do not have to spend time searching for her records in order to deal with her death

- Lower operational costs by enabling once-and-done processing across lines of business.
- Allows for more accurate customer records by integrating a number of 'live' sources of data.
- Supports better analysis of customer pathways and allows for improved across service marketing and delivery.
- Should help reduce the number of databases required and therefore reduce IT and administration costs, although this is partly dependent on the alignment of other IT systems.
- Should enable the removal of process duplication and simplify customer circumstance amendments.

However, the above is not enough and the role of information and technology in supporting delivery of this customer access strategy can not be over-emphasised. There is a real need to invest in newer technologies to support the delivery of new channels and more choice. This includes intelligence and performance management technologies, authentication tools, plus applications to allow such things as book and pay for appointments and the tracking of applications.

Together the above technologies enable the council to take significant steps towards achieving the customer outcomes and therefore having the right information and technology is a key building block for this strategy going forward and key deliverables to ensure this have been identified in Section 5.

Performance Management Framework

The key to ensuring that the council's services continue to meet customer needs will be based on a solid approach to performance management. Traditionally, local authorities have been required to measure a large number of indicators on behalf of the government which has stifled a true performance management process and instead focussed attention purely on measuring and monitoring. The demise of the national indicator set provides a perfect opportunity to now address these shortcomings and deliver a new performance management framework that places customers at its heart.

Therefore one of the six key building blocks for delivering this strategy is a new performance management framework that utilises the intelligence we obtain from both customers and from service delivery to drive improvements which meet customer need and drive up satisfaction levels. This approach needs to ensure it:

- plans services around the customer,
- delivers services that meet customer need,
- monitors delivery in a balanced way using both qualitative and quantitative measures; and
- reviews and improves delivery on the basis of this monitoring.

Alongside this new performance management framework, and fundamental to how we are going to performance manage on the basis of meeting customer need, is the requirement for the development of a new, measurable set of

customer service standards. Customer service standards are necessary as they let customers know what they can expect from the council and what things are likely, possible and impossible. One of the benefits of this is that the scope for misunderstanding or the need for repeat phone calls from customers is minimised. Furthermore, they support the council's complaints procedure, setting out the minimum levels of service for staff and customers. This means that it is easier and fairer to judge when there has been a failure to deliver services to an acceptable level and then, to carry out an objective investigation to identify and resolve any problem areas.

Therefore as part of the new Performance Management Framework, the council will (as part of this strategy) develop and publish a new set of specific customer care standards for each of its service areas. These standards will be:

- developed with direct input from customers
- a commitment that people using the service should always be able to expect;
- clearly defined so that it is obvious to all if the standard is not being met;
- the minimum level of service the customer can expect;
- objective and unambiguous;
- clearly defined and linked to support service outcomes;
- agreed and understood by all staff; and
- monitored by customers as well as ourselves

Having a new performance management framework focussed on meeting customer need is therefore a key building block for this strategy going forward and key deliverables around the framework and associated customer standards have been identified in Section 5.

Business Change and Training

Customers expect their enquiries to be 'owned' by colleagues within the council and not handed-off through the system and passed to someone else to resolve. Indeed, colleagues themselves want to take ownership of customer queries and resolve them at the first point of contact. It is an ambition of this strategy that ownership of customer outcomes and resolution at the first point of contact are key values held by all colleagues within the organisation.

Given this, whilst the five building blocks outlined above are all crucial ingredients in delivering a new focus around meeting customer need, this one remaining building block will make the most significant and important contribution to delivering this strategy. It is the glue that binds everything else together as it is focussed solely on ensuring that colleagues in the council have a clear focus on customer care and work to ensure that when services are being delivered, the needs of the customer are at the forefront of delivery.

This strategy plans to develop the skills, capacity and attitude of all colleagues to ensure the customer is central to what we do at Leeds City Council. To achieve this, the specific programmes and projects developed will ensure relevant colleagues are supported through business change and appropriately trained to deliver the changes implemented. Beyond this, services will be supported to ensure further training is provided and deliverable standards are achieved. This change will be embedded through application of the new performance management framework that will offer accountability and responsibility for outcomes

Miss Lee doesn't have a LeedsCard but wanted to book a squash court at her local sports centre, when she rang she was advised that all the courts were fully booked. Miss Lee then spent 30 minutes ringing other local Leisure Centres in her area to find a free court.

In future, Miss Lee will be able to book and pay for her squash court on line. She will be able to pay with her bank or credit card in order to authenticate the transaction.

Within the council, people are our most valuable resource and we do have a committed and skilled workforce. Therefore working with them and supporting them through the inevitable business change process and training them in the new ways of working will be the key to changing the culture of customer service in the authority in the medium to long-term.

A failure to address how people change as part of this strategy would make delivery of the other five building blocks very difficult as it is our colleagues in the organisation that will ensure the building blocks work efficiently and effectively in all service areas. We will also make links to planned new guidance and training on community engagement, to help us properly involve customers in service redesign, measure customers experiences and satisfaction and explore methods such as mystery shopping. Therefore business change and training is a crucial part of the deliverables within this strategy.

SECTION 5: KEY DELIVERABLES AND BENEFITS

The section below outlines the key deliverables for each outcome alongside the key benefits that can be expected for both the customer and Leeds City Council. As can be seen from the key deliverables, they are all aspects of one or more of the six building blocks identified and will form the basis for the action plan to be developed to support delivery of the strategy.

Outcome	Objectives	Key Deliverables	Key Benefits	
			For the Customer	For Leeds City Council
All Citizens have Fair and Equal Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We understand customer diversity issues and address barriers to access, particularly groups we have been less successful at reaching. We actively target increased take-up of service's for under-represented and vulnerable groups and signpost to other services where appropriate. Where customer insight highlights a demand for alternative provision, we will help and support its establishment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is provided in an appropriate accessible format for all customers, irrespective of channel used. All Customer Access projects and policy changes are equality impact assessed to ensure that access is fair and equal. Fair and equal access is a key measurable attribute of the performance management framework. Customer insight is used to evidence demand for the establishment of non-traditional channels which will increase service take-up and ensure fair and equal access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and appropriate access routes to services. More inclusive service provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understanding of communities in Leeds. Better understanding and management of risk of customers being excluded Better equality outcomes.
Customers have greater control over the services they receive and how they access them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where it is appropriate to do so, we encourage and enable customers to determine their interaction with the council. We use customer insight to determine the most appropriate channels for service delivery. We give seamless service delivery across the principle access channels – face to face, telephone and on-line. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated CRM with a clear vision for systems integration, development and customer service delivery. A fully transactional website providing channel choice and online services that will benefit customers the most. Full on-line authentication with choice options for determining the level of engagement and interaction with the council. On-line functionality to enable book and pay for appointments and the ability to track application requests. Services are grouped around commonality of need and access and the most cost-effective channel is used for service delivery irrespective of the type of contact. An initial focus on low cost, high volume transaction activities that will deliver quick benefits to both customers and the council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services available at times and locations to suit the customer. Greater choice and personalisation over service provision. Greater awareness of the services to which customers are entitled. Appropriate access channels that suits customer needs and lifestyles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More efficient service delivery. Direct link between service request and channel used.
Customers influence the design & delivery of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a clear and consistent approach to the capture of customer insight which is linked to our 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A consistent approach to customer insight (including market segmentation) is used to profile our 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlined, joined-up service delivery around key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better customer intelligence.

Outcome	Objectives	Key Deliverables	Key Benefits	
			For the Customer	For Leeds City Council
services available for them	<p>community engagement developments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a clear and consistent approach to the identification of customer pathways/ journeys; Signpost customers to other services provided by the voluntary and private sector as appropriate. We place customer insight and pathways at the heart of service commissioning and re-design. 	<p>communities and service users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A consistent approach to mapping and redesigning customer pathways/journeys is used to support service redesign. All services have been redesigned around the customer and are provided, commissioned or signposted on this basis. Locality and locality based services will be supported through Changing the Workplace by streamlining processes, enabling a more agile and flexible workforce, and making more efficient use of assets. 	<p>life-events and episodes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored service provision based on customer interaction with the council. Self-determination over how customer needs are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More targeted service delivery. More effective partnership working.
Customer needs will be resolved where possible at the first point of contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a single view of the customer and know their touch-points with services. We ensure all access channels provide consistent information, advice and tools to deliver services at the first point of contact. All front-line staff are trained and performance managed to provide resolution at the first point of contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidation of resources to develop a cost-effective approach to customer contact through greater utilisation of the Corporate Contact Centre, One Stop Centres, Joint Service Centres and the Website to enable them to be the operational front-line for service delivery in the city. Through service redesign, fully integrated customer management, service management and back office functions which maximise the depth of enquiry handling at the first point of contact (irrespective of channel and 'back office' ICT systems) and minimises the level of 'pass back' and double-keying. A unique and consistent view of the customer through a customer master index which links line of business systems together. A Customer Relations training and development programme which equips colleagues with the skills and knowledge to resolve customer need at the first point of contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service request is resolved first time, on time. Expectations are managed where first time resolution is not possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in avoidable contact. Reduced service failures. Shorter handling and queue times. Increased value for money from existing infrastructure.
Customer satisfaction drives service improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We place customer satisfaction at the heart of our performance management framework. We place customer satisfaction at the heart of our commissioning framework. We publish satisfaction levels against a set of measurable customer service standards developed with customers themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear, performance management framework which delivers a balanced approach to monitoring and managing customer outcomes is in operation for all services. A set of measurable corporate customer standards is monitored and published annually. Customer Satisfaction with service delivery is a corporate requirement of Chief Officer Appraisals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service standards which are met consistently. Greater confidence that service requests will be dealt with satisfactorily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer focussed culture.

SECTION 6: SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS IN DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY

Sections 1-5 have set-out a broad framework and infrastructure for delivery of this strategy. However the principle contribution to delivery will come from the services themselves as it is through service redesign that this strategy will be brought to life and drive changes in the way services are commissioned and provided.

It is a requirement of this strategy that all services will undertake a self-assessment to gauge their relative position in respect of being fit for purpose and delivering more efficient and effective customer access in line with this strategy. This self-assessment will enable services to identify what actions they need to take to ensure the necessary steps are made to improve access to their services. These actions will help drive both a council-wide programme of customer access change, and on a more local level impact on service plans where simple and effective changes can be made.

In undertaking this work, consultation with directorates and services has highlighted four areas where consideration needs to be made by the service ahead of any action-planning as they are important factors that will play a role in future service delivery. Consideration of these cannot be made in detail at a corporate level as each plays its part differently depending on the service.

The four considerations are:

Definition of Customer

The term customer is used generically in this strategy as a catch-all term for anyone who may come into contact with services either provided by the Council or commissioned through the Council and its wider partnership structures. However it is important to realise that this does not therefore limit the population to which this strategy applies and instead asks services to give consideration to who their 'customers' are and seek solutions to address their access needs. In asking this, the strategy is not limiting its scope.

Therefore the strategy provides a framework and a set of principles which is fit for purpose irrespective of who the service's customers are, be they internal colleagues, businesses, partners, other professionals, citizens and visitors to Leeds, schools, children centres, suppliers etc. etc. However to ensure that access solutions are fit for purpose, services must give consideration to who their customers are when action planning.

Partnership Working and Integration

A clear ambition in this strategy is that services are designed around customer pathways and journeys and in this regard the Council in a significant and increasing number of service areas is merely one part of the pathway jigsaw. Therefore in designing customer access solutions for their customer pathways, services must look to work with and integrate their activity with that of other partners and stakeholders involved in the pathway.

This is already a key consideration for both Children's and Adult's services but is increasingly being demanded across other service areas and therefore in taking forward this strategy, services must give due consideration in their action planning to the partnership working and integration issues that need to be addressed to ensure that access is as seamless and effective as it can be.

Locality Working

The drive towards greater localism is a key driver for this strategy and is identified as such in Section 1. However the practical manifestation of localism is dependent on the nature, type and scope of service delivery.

In this regard services must give consideration in designing customer access solutions for their services to how the service will be delivered in a more localised way and what impact this has on the access routes into the service. Again, the strategy in itself cannot provide this detail and must instead rely on services to give this consideration as part of their action planning going forward.

Intelligence-based Decision-Making

As Section 1 outlined, the drivers for change are dictating the environment within which services now have to deliver and by and large it is one which is differentiated, local and increasingly 24/7. Therefore in meeting the needs of customers, given this broader context, it is important that we use our insight and intelligence to better understand the requirements, needs and motivations of our

customers and communities as a single-delivery framework is now, in the majority of service areas, no longer an option.

The strategy states that customer insight is a key building block for improving customer access as it gives us intelligence on which decision can be made and service delivered. However it will be the practical application of this customer insight within services that will ensure that more intelligence based decision-making is used to deliver services. Therefore services must give consideration in their action planning to their intelligence needs with regards to service delivery and increasingly use this intelligence to better target service delivery.

SECTION 7: GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY

The key to providing excellent customer-centric services lies in transforming the way we deliver those services. Through a robust redesign of systems, processes and structure within each service area, we can identify appropriate areas for change. Those changes will deliver effective, efficient services which are accessible to, and meet the needs of all our diverse customers. This strategy document sets out a roadmap for achieving this.

Whilst the responsibility for delivering the actions identified in this document ultimately lies with all staff and Directorates, a programme of projects will be required that will deliver the building blocks and ultimately the customer outcomes. What follows outlines the proposed governance for ensuring delivery of this programme of projects.

Corporate Leadership Team: CLT will engage and support members, directors and senior managers in understanding and embedding the principles set out in this strategy.

Directors: Directors are responsible for ensuring services engage with this strategy and work with the Customer Access Delivery Board to define a programme of service redesign that will ensure all the services for which they are accountable are redesigned to better meet customer need.

Customer Strategy Board: CSB will monitor and embed delivery of the customer access strategy. They will manage the delivery of strategic and policy change affected by this strategy as well as ensuring adherence to the new performance framework and corporate customer service standards.

Customer Access Delivery Board: A new Board will be established to drive delivery of the strategy. The Board will be responsible for delivering the six building blocks by agreeing prioritisation within the programme with Directorates and obtaining and managing the resources needed to deliver and ensuring delivery.

Customer Services: Customer Services will be responsible for the operational management and delivery of the principle access channels maintained and created through this strategy and for the performance management framework that is delivered as part of the strategy. They will also act as the operational front-line for services where the service redesign process dictates this to be the most efficient and effective method for meeting customer need.

Intelligence and Improvement Team: The Intelligence and Improvement Team will provide the programme and project management resource required to deliver the programme. Working directly to the Customer Access Delivery Board, they will undertake the financial management, risk management and benefit management requirements associated with the programme, be responsible for defining and delivering the Service Redesign approach utilising Business Process Re-engineering capacity within the council, plus provide the team tasked with delivering projects on the ground. The team will also lead on the development of the Customer Insight work.

ICT: ICT will be responsible for delivering the technical infrastructure needed to deliver this strategy. Working closely with the Business Transformation Team and services, they will define, architect and build the technical infrastructure to meet the channel requirements within each service as a result of the redesign work.

CONCLUSION

Customer access supports delivery of the Vision for Leeds and the City Priority Plans. The scope to remove duplication and improve services is significant, this area is key in that it drives customer experience and can inhibit customers from accessing high quality services. Section 5 illustrates the strategic intent and deliverables of this strategy, in summary, in 5 years the following will have developed across the organisation:

- A deeper understanding and level of insight in terms of customers, non customer and communities will emerge. This will provide clear information on transactions, geo-demographic profiles and shape customer services to meet the needs of identified groups.
- Clearer customer insight on communities that Leeds City Council has been less successful in reaching will have developed, meaning more transparent and clearer equality, diversity and cohesion decisions are made. This information will also be used to better structure and target services for those most in need.
- More services will have a single view of the customer, reducing IT costs (less duplicate systems), less process duplication and clearer customer pathways will emerge as a result.
- More channels will suit the needs of identified customer groups (market segmentation) with a much more transactional website that is integrated into end to end customer processes. Other channels will also be better integrated.
- Across the Leeds City Council's City / Planning Framework business intelligence and performance information with regards to customer service will be fully embedded.
- Culture across Leeds City Council will embed the customer as one of our most important priorities. Putting the Customer First will be re-addressed through business and service transformation. Joint working with other information providers across the city will help ensure that we are providing set of information to customers no matter how they access the service.
- Changing the Workplace is based upon understanding the locality needs for services across the diverse administration area Leeds City Council serves. The needs of the most deprived communities are very different from the affluent areas. Significant benefits can be gained from a more co-ordinated approach to front line service delivery, including working with partners and commissioning bodies to meet the needs of our customers. Integrating service delivery locations and specific customer service delivery elements offer clear opportunities. Often, on a locality basis delivery is fragmented across many locations that often don't meet community need, when one better placed asset could do this to a better quality, more efficiently and deliver better outcomes. Changing the Workplace and Customer Access offer Leeds City Council a significant opportunity to not only transforms customer service delivery, but also the way it does business.