

REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

Date of Meeting:	13 January 2011
Subject:	Customer Contact Access and Decide
Key Decision:	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost• Impact across the borough
Responsible Officer:	Carol Cutler , Director of Customer Service and Business Transformation
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation Councillor Graham Henson, Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Enclosures:	Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the case for expansion of the services offered as part of Access Harrow.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to approve the implementation of the Customer Contact Assess and Decide (CCAD) project as set out in the Blueprint.

To authorise the Corporate Director of Business Transformation and

Customer Services in agreement with the Portfolio holder for Customer Services to take all actions necessary to implement the project.

Reason:

The proposed transformation project will deliver improved customer service, operational efficiency and cost reductions.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Introduction

The Customer Contact Assess and Decide project is part of the Better Deal for Residents Programme. If approved, it will be delivered by a joint Capita/Council team under the auspices of the Business Transformation Partnership.

The project will deliver cost savings and an improved customer experience through the consolidation of customer facing staff in Access Harrow. This will support the Council's objectives of improved customer satisfaction and greater efficiency.

2.2 Options considered

A number of operational and IT solutions were assessed. Given the need to develop a more efficient, consistent and technology driven solution the status quo was not considered a viable option. Similarly the development of separate contact centres for each service area, with local Receptions was not seen as a cost effective alternative to the further expansion of the high performing Access Harrow service.

The Blueprint therefore focussed quickly on evaluating which services would be appropriate to manage through Access Harrow and the depth, or detail, of the service to be offered. We have found in general terms the deeper the service, the greater the increase in customer satisfaction and resolution at first contact.

2.3 Background

The overall objective of the CCAD Project is to design the next phase of customer contact. Currently Access Harrow offers the current service:

- Face to face (One Stop Shop)

- Telephone (Contact Centre)
- Emails and Webforms
- Self Service portal

It currently delivers a range of Council services including:

- Revenues
- Housing Benefits
- Housing – Repairs & Resident Services
- Planning & Building Control
- Parking
- Electoral Services
- Environmental & Public Realm Services
- Education & People Line
- General Enquiries / Switch Board

The CCAD project will significantly improve customer service and represent a more efficient means of doing business with customers by:

- Consolidating contact in Access Harrow
- Standardising and simplifying contact processes
- Consolidating and simplifying pre-assessment and moving to Access Harrow
- Moving contact to lower cost channels
- Implementing automated transaction and self assessment for selected processes

The CCAD programme will deliver these objectives by integrating the following services into Access Harrow:

- Place Shaping (Planning, Building Control);
- Legal and Governance (Registrars);
- Corporate Finance (Shared Services);
- Adults and Housing (Adult Social Care; Helpline);
- Community and Environment (Adult Learning and Corporate Minor Works). Final details are under discussion with the Corporate Director

and will be reflected in the costs and financial benefits of the overall project. A LEAN review will take place within the Housing Adaptations and Repair Team (HART) as a precursor to the transfer of the service into Access Harrow.

This will also demand a range of technological, process and organisational changes involving system integrations and automations, web forms and the extension to our current MyHarrow Services portal, used by the Council for its Citizen Account service. This will also see a significant effort in process re-design and integration, and associated organisational restructure across both the back office service delivery teams and Access Harrow.

Each service area work stream will be delivered in a series of phases involving:

- Develop, document, sign-off detailed solution
- System build
- Complete System Integration testing
- System Test Acceptance document signed off
- Complete UAT User Acceptance Testing
- Training
- Go-Live
- Stabilisation

The duration of each of these phases is dependant on the complexity and size of the solution being developed.

2.4 Implications of the Recommendation

In agreeing to the proposed project the service will be able to make significant progress towards meeting service and corporate objectives. It will enable both financial savings and improved customer service. Whilst there will be a need to manage significant change within the service it will be building upon the technology and team that underpin the current high performing Access Harrow service.

2.5 Considerations

2.5.1 Resources

The costs of the project are based on a fixed price with rigorous change control processes. They include the cost of Capita (and their sub-contractors) and all Council resources. Capita will be the prime systems integrator and will be providing programme and project management.

2.5.2 Staffing/workforce

The project will be introducing significant organisation and individual job design changes. These will be developed in consultation with Unions and staff. It will be introduced using Harrow's HR guidelines for managing organisational change.

In addition, a full training needs analysis will drive an approach to training that will reflect the style and content that staff will find most effective.

2.5.3 Legal comments

The project has been progressed under the auspices of the Business Transformation Partnership in line with requirements of the Incremental Partnership Agreement with Capita.

2.5.4 Community safety

There is no direct impact associated with this project.

2.5.5 Financial Implications

Details of the benefits to be derived from this project are detailed in the Blueprint with the MRP 5 year model at Section 9.5. The key points are as follows:

- Total Blueprint & implementation costs: £2.703m (Capita £1,758k, Council £945k - this includes costs for PwC of £220k)
- Ongoing costs (per annum): £104.4 (Capita £84.3k and Council £20.1k)
- Net benefit over 5 years: £835k
- Net benefit over 10 years: £3.85m
- Net reduction of 32 staff (Full Time Equivalents) This will be delivered in part by removing posts currently occupied by temporary staff, and through re-deployment to other projects such as re-ablement. This supports our corporate approach to change, and reduces the level of potential redundancies for staff.

The Council has full visibility of the Financial Model based on the open book principles of the original Partnership contract with Capita, including full visibility of third party supplier costs and the Capita margin and overhead.

Benefits will be tracked using the Better Deal for Residents established benefits management process, monitored by the Project Team and Service, and further reviewed by the Better Deal for Residents Programme Board (CSB).

Capital will be funded from the BTP capital programme allocation.

Following ongoing discussions with the Corporate Director of Community and Environment any services that are not to be migrated into Access Harrow will result in a reduction in overall costs and benefits of the project.

2.5.6 Performance Issues

Although the position of the National Indicator Set is still unclear following the abolition of CAA, it seems likely that some National Indicators will be retained, especially where local authorities wish to collect comparative data to an agreed definition.

The key performance indicators used to drive performance in Access Harrow, and that are relevant to this project, are:

Indicator	Current Performance	Impact
Customer Satisfaction	95% in 2009/10	Levels of satisfaction will be monitored as new services are introduced to Access Harrow
Avoidable Contact	23% in 2009/10	Data will be base-lined for new services and a new target will be set to reduce avoidable contact
Resolution at First Contact	90% in 2009/10	Data will be base-lined for new services and a new target will be set to increase resolution
Cost per transaction	£0.82 in 2009/10	Data will be base-lined for new services and a new target will be set to reduce as efficiencies are realised and web presence is improved
Channel Migration	59.4% in 2009/10	Levels of channel migration will be closely monitored alongside improved web capabilities and further releases of the MyHarrow Services account.
Waiting Times	95% calls answered 86% calls answered in less than 30 secs Average waiting time in One Stop Shop 14 mins	Data will be base-lined for new services and a new target will be set to improve performance

The overall aim of the project is to bring the new services up to the performance of current services within Access Harrow.

2.5.7 Environmental Impact

There is no direct impact associated with this project, although the consolidation of staff in Access Harrow will support the wider reduction in the number of Council buildings.

2.5.8 Risk Management Implications

The risks will be included in the Directorate risk register. The project team will maintain a separate risk register to manage day to day issues.

ID	Title	Description	Mitigating Action
1	Insufficient space for new services	The new service will require an extension to the current contact centre.	Ensure sufficient room to expand further if required (or contract if possible) by using the space in Civic 1 vacated by HITS.
2.	Volumes are higher than predicted	Call volumes could be higher than planned or could rise as a result of the new service offering.	Volumes have been measured over an extended period. The cross training of staff will be able to managed higher volumes or seasonal peaks.
3.	Unable to migrate sufficient calls to web transactions	The assumption of the project is that early call volumes will be lowered through significant use of web forms by customers	High volume services have been assessed for appropriate web forms. An associated communications campaign will support migration.
4.	Staff unwilling to join Access Harrow	Staff from services may not wish to work in a call centre environment.	Access Harrow's growing reputation for staff satisfaction and high performance has lowered this risk. In addition opportunities for career progression, and a degree of job security, will prove attractive to many.
5.	Customers resist new processes	Customers more accustomed to the old service may resist the change.	Communication to customers at the time of transfer will indicate how access to the services will be improved.
6.	Costs cannot be controlled	Costs of technology and project management may increase.	The contract with all suppliers will be at a fixed price.

2.5.9 Equalities implications

A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been conducted (attached). It requires further review when the details of the organisational and job designs are established. Initial issues have been identified as:

- the use of Access Harrow, with its ground floor access and technology will greatly support access to services for a large number of Harrow residents and customers;
- the need to ensure that selection for the new roles is fair and in line with Harrow equalities approach;
- the need to ensure that training meets the requirements of all parts of the service;
- the need for baseline equalities data to monitor later impact;
- the need to ensure equal access to services for customers.

2.5.10 Corporate Priorities

The project will primarily support the Corporate Priority of improved customer satisfaction and greater efficiency in service delivery.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Steve Tingle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 6 January 2011		
Name: Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 6 January 2011		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Alex Dewsnap	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director Partnership, Development and Performance
Date: 6 January 2011		

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: John Edwards

on behalf of the
Divisional Director
(Environmental
Services)

Date: 6 January 2011

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Carol Cutler, Director of Business Transformation and Customer Services

Background Papers:

- CCAD Blueprint (published on the website with the agenda)

**Call-In Waived by the
Chairman of Overview
and Scrutiny
Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE