

Quality Organisation in South Kesteven

Deliver quality services and be an employer of choice

Our progress March 2011



Your council working for you

Deliver quality services and be an employer of choice

So far this year we have reported on our Customer First theme in September, Quality Living in December, Good for Business in March and this, the final report is looking at how we are progressing towards the actions we set out in our Quality Organisation theme.

The aim of Quality Organisation is to deliver quality services and to be an employer of choice.

The following sets out our projects, successes and what we plan to do next. Many of the projects have been influenced by the comments and contributions we have received from our customers, which we always welcome.

The aims of our Quality Organisation priority theme are:

- Effective communication and engagement with our customers, partners and staff
- Build capacity, develop, utilise and retain the skills and knowledge of all our staff and members to deliver quality services
- Effective planning and management of our finances, performance and decision making arrangements
- Value for money for our customers by managing our costs, performance and our assets to achieve efficiencies and deliver best value services
- A lower carbon footprint reducing the council's carbon usage by 1348 tonnes a year



What we achieved April 2010 – March 2011

Effective Communication and engagement with our customers, partners and staff

We do this by ensuring our communication is clear, accessible and timely and delivered by a large variety of mediums

Project	Progress	What next
<p>Deliver an external/internal communications action plan</p>	<p>Communication plans have been developed and delivered to inform residents of our progress on priority themes for example; Greener, Cleaner, Safer & Healthier advice, budget consultation results and decisions, Bourne Core Area and Grantham Growth projects. These were communicated via a variety of media including sktoday, local press, radio interviews, community events and our website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve the website to ensure that it is easy to use, up to date with refreshed information for our customers to access. • Ensuring local residents are aware of the improvements to Grantham Market Place and the overall future developments of Grantham. • Promoting key messages at public events for example Grantham Carnival, Christmas Markets, Grantham Festival etc.
<p>Review Local Area Forums and ensure the council can engage and empower effectively with local communities.</p>	<p>Consultation in partnership with Lincoln University took place with attendees of Local Area Forums to listen to their views and suggested improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently developing proposals for improved communication and engagement with Parish Councils and local communities. Re-launch in autumn 2011. • Parish council engagement – develop a regular newsletter to encourage joint working supported by face to face communication.
<p>Deliver a consultation and engagement plan - Listening, Learning and delivering our services</p>	<p>Consultation and engagement activities were carried out to ascertain the views of our residents on Bourne Core Area proposals, budget proposals, the choice of public realm for Grantham Market Place, taxi licensing, planning site allocations, Wyndham Park,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A combination of community events and consultations will be carried out during the year to support our priorities, campaigns and services for example Grantham Carnival, Christmas Markets,

Greyfriars & Wharf Place development briefs, Grantham Area Action Plan display at the library, executive arrangements, and council tax. These results have been used to inform decision making in these areas. Recently undertook Vox Pop in the district's four main towns to understand what is important to local people and what they would like us to focus on in the future.

and Grantham Festival etc.

- Vox Pop results will be used in a report highlighting the key issues of the district.

We're making a difference.....

- By actively engaging with our communities to listen and understand what's important to them
- By ensuring our focus and priorities reflect the feedback we receive

We're working on.....

- A review of our local forums to make sure they continue to meet the needs of the local community



Build capacity, develop, utilise and retain the skills and knowledge of all our staff and members to deliver quality services

We do this by training and developing our staff to ensure they are able to deliver our services

Project	Progress	What next
Deliver the Learning Plan to support skills development and build capacity	<p>"All About People" training has been completed. This targeted service managers and team leaders to enhance and develop their management skills.</p> <p>Training has been taking place to ensure our officers can deliver the services we provide.</p>	Further development programmes are planned through 2011/12 including member training.
Deliver the equalities action plan and gain 'Achieving' status on the new equalities framework	<p>Work is being done on the new Equality Duty and items on the action plan are being progressed and monitored by the Implementation Team and Customer Focus Forum Service Area Impact Assessment.</p> <p>All Service Equality Impact Assessments have been completed or arranged.</p>	Work being done on new equality duty and assessment as to "Achieving Standard" to be carried by Autumn 2011.
Develop and implement a programme to meet the requirements of the Member Development Charter.	A comprehensive member development programme has been arranged to follow the election which includes Quasi Judicial training fro Development Control and Licensing Committee members plus Governance & Audit committee training as well as core training for all councillors.	A 4 year member development programme is being delivered over the life span of the next council.

We're making a difference.....

- By ensuring that our staff receive up to date training that supports improving the delivery of our services
- By ensuring our services reflect the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

We're working on.....

- A culture change programme that puts the customer at the heart of everything we do

Effective Planning and management of our finances, performance and decision making arrangements

We do this by effectively planning and using our resources in an efficient way

Project	Progress	What next
<p>Review and update our Medium Term Financial Plan to include the results of community engagement on priorities.</p>	<p>The review of the Medium Term Financial Plan has been undertaken and a 4 year finance model has been approved. A transformation programme is being developed that incorporates the key messages of the community engagement programme.</p>	<p>The state of the district assessment has been undertaken which will inform and support the review of the priorities. This will set the framework for the allocation of resource planning in the medium term.</p>
<p>Implement Use of Resources Action Plan for 2010/11 assessment</p>	<p>The Use of Resources rating assessment by the Audit Commission has been abolished with immediate effect following the Government's recent announcements on changes to funding arrangements. However, it has been acknowledged by the Auditor that significant improvements across the key headings of the assessment had been achieved during 2009/10 which would have improved the overall organisational scoring and improve the value for money judgement. The principles underpinning the framework will be developed to facilitate the progression to maintain effective use of resources.</p>	<p>The key aspects of the use of resources assessment have been incorporated into service business plans and are being implemented. Therefore this priority action is now completed.</p>
<p>Complete the implementation of recommendations from 2008 Audit Commission review (inc a data quality strategy, training and information sharing agreements)</p>	<p>The key recommendations arising from the Audit Commission findings have been incorporated into the service business plans and have been implemented.</p>	<p>This priority action is now completed.</p>

We're making a difference.....

- By delivering a balanced budget without reducing service quality and with no council tax increase
- By developing a transformation programme that ensures the services that are important to our residents are maintained at current service levels

Value for Money for our customers by managing our costs, performance and our assets to achieve efficiencies and deliver best value services

We do this by ensuring we deliver our services in an efficient, economic and effective way

Project	Progress	What next
<p>Utilise 'lean' systems thinking to drive service improvements in key areas across the council</p>	<p>Letting service has been reviewed and the information and data gathered will be used to deliver an improved customer focused letting service.</p> <p>The Council's payroll service has been fundamentally reviewed including the policies and procedures underpinning absence management and the workforce remuneration process.</p> <p>We have reviewed our processes within Planning and Economic Development to improve our customer service by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring we understand our customer needs • Providing them with a single point of contact • Arranging seamless support for all our services • "Development" team approach being implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rent recovery service will be reviewed utilising lean system thinking principles. • An improvement plan for the Payroll service is being developed that will result in more efficient processes and ways of working.
<p>Implement the Development Control Service Improvement Plan to secure improved performance and customer satisfaction</p>	<p>New qualitative performance measures are being introduced during 2010/11 aimed at measuring satisfaction with quality of product as well as timeliness and quality of decision making processes.</p>	<p>These surveys will be regularly reviewed.</p>
<p>Implement the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan</p>	<p>The Business Plan is incorporated into the medium term financial plan and is reflected in both the revenue and capital budgets.</p>	<p>The Business Plan will be re-modelled and updated in response to the national changes being proposed with respect to the abolition of the Housing Subsidy.</p>

<p>Introduce a Choice Based Lettings Scheme to improve applicants choice and satisfaction</p>	<p>We have taken external advice on the viability of this project to identify how we could move it forward.</p>	
<p>Realign Supported Housing Service to deliver the county's revised service specification</p>	<p>At the end of January 2011, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) issued an extension to the contract until 31st March 2012. However, it should be noted that LCC may issue notice to terminate the contract earlier within the extension period once their procurement process has taken place. There has been no further information from LCC about the new service or specification for Older Peoples Services.</p>	<p>LCC Supporting People, Core Strategy Group meetings are arranged for March 2012 and it is hoped that more information will be forthcoming at this time.</p>
<p>Realise cash efficiencies of 4% in line with LAA target for NI 179</p>	<p>Although NI 179 has been abolished the core principles of delivering value for money and maximising efficiencies is included in the medium term financial plan of the authority.</p>	<p>The Audit Commission work plan for 2011/12 includes submitting a value for money conclusion which will be presented to the Council in September.</p>
<p>Carry out a programme of service reviews to compare performance, cost, quality and options for future service delivery.</p>	<p>Critical friend challenge has been undertaken by a third party on the reviews already done to date in order to review and improve review methodology. Service reviews have been undertaken for Leisure, Grounds Maintenance, Printing and Cultural services.</p>	<p>The service review programme is a key component of the transformation programme all outcomes from the reviews will be actively monitored to ensure they are delivered.</p>
<p>Maximise existing income streams from services and assets and identify potential new income streams and asset management options</p>	<p>An asset utilisation programme has been developed in accordance with the review of the Asset Management Plan. This will undertake feasibility studies of each asset and identify opportunities for maximising income or reducing operational costs.</p>	<p>The Capital and Asset Management Group are reviewing assets and working with the Resources Policy Development Group (PDG) to review fees and charges accordingly. A car parking review is also being undertaken</p>
<p>Complete a fundamental review of council office accommodation to ensure they are 'fit for purpose'.</p>	<p>Accommodation review project team has been implemented, PFD finalised and the initial work streams have been created. Fact finding visits have taken place at Kettering, Huntingdon, Gainsborough and the Woodland Trust in Grantham.</p>	<p>A feasibility study and options appraisal to take place to ensure the office accommodation meets the organisations needs, including looking at options with partners.</p>

We're making a difference.....

- By ensuring we deliver value for money quality services by focussing on what's important to the customer and improving systems and their design

We're working on....

- A comprehensive service review programme that will ensure all aspects of service delivery are efficient and focussed on the customer

A lower carbon footprint reducing the council's carbon usage by 1348 tonnes a year

We do this by introducing initiatives and methods to help our staff to reduce our carbon footprint

Project	Progress	What next
Reduce energy usage in council buildings by 20% over 5 years	<p>Voltage optimisers have been installed at Grantham and Stamford Arts Centres, Stamford and Bourne Leisure Centres, Bourne Corn Exchange, Wharf Road Car Park and Grantham Council Offices.</p> <p>Upgrades to lighting and controls have been installed.</p> <p>We have achieved a 13.4% reduction in energy across our buildings over the last 3 years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further investigative work is now taking place with regards to other energy measures. Review of current heating system is to be carried out. The feasibility of photovoltaic solar panels is being assessed for potential use in 1 of the 3 options: Commercial buildings, Group Old Peoples Dwellings (GOPD) or Housing stock. A decision is to be made on which of these 3 options is the best suited to enable us to continue reducing our energy usage. There is currently an accommodation review which will maximise utilisation of Council assets.
Introduce more fuel efficient vehicles with lower emission ratings	<p>100% of the pool car fleet now comprises of energy efficient vehicles.</p> <p>Fuel efficient driving skills training has been completed by key pool car users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HGV vehicles are being procured that comply with EU regulations with respect to fuel emission levels. All vehicles under 3.5t weight are to be fitted with fuel optimisers that will lower fuel consumption.
Reduce paper usage by 20% over 5 years	<p>The consolidation of printers and raising awareness of printing and costs of printing has helped to reduce paper.</p> <p>Over the last 3 years we have achieved a 10.3% reduction.</p> <p>The distribution of the multifunctional devices (MFD's) has been completed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of duplex printing and providing service areas with reports on printer usage will have a further positive impact on reducing our paper usage. Review to take on the use of lower quality paper.

<p>Review the opportunities to use remote/flexible working to optimize use of our buildings, increase productivity and reduce carbon emissions.</p>	<p>Aligned to the business cases developed for Lincolnshire ICT shared working we are developing an IT solution for remote and flexible working, building on currently available solutions. This is likely to be based on an initial pilot project and will deliver flexible working and maximising the current accommodation.</p> <p>Bourne CAP requirements are being established and will be based on maximising new ways of working principles.</p> <p>Wireless access for the main office and a video conferencing suite has been delivered at no cost to us in conjunction with our partners within the Lincolnshire area.</p> <p>This work is likely to require a review of the home working policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project team has been established to progress work in this area. • Training on how to use 'Wireless' access and Video Conferencing to be rolled out.
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We're making a difference.....

- By reducing our energy usage at council buildings by 13.4% over the last 3 years we have done this by installing energy efficiency technology

We're working on....

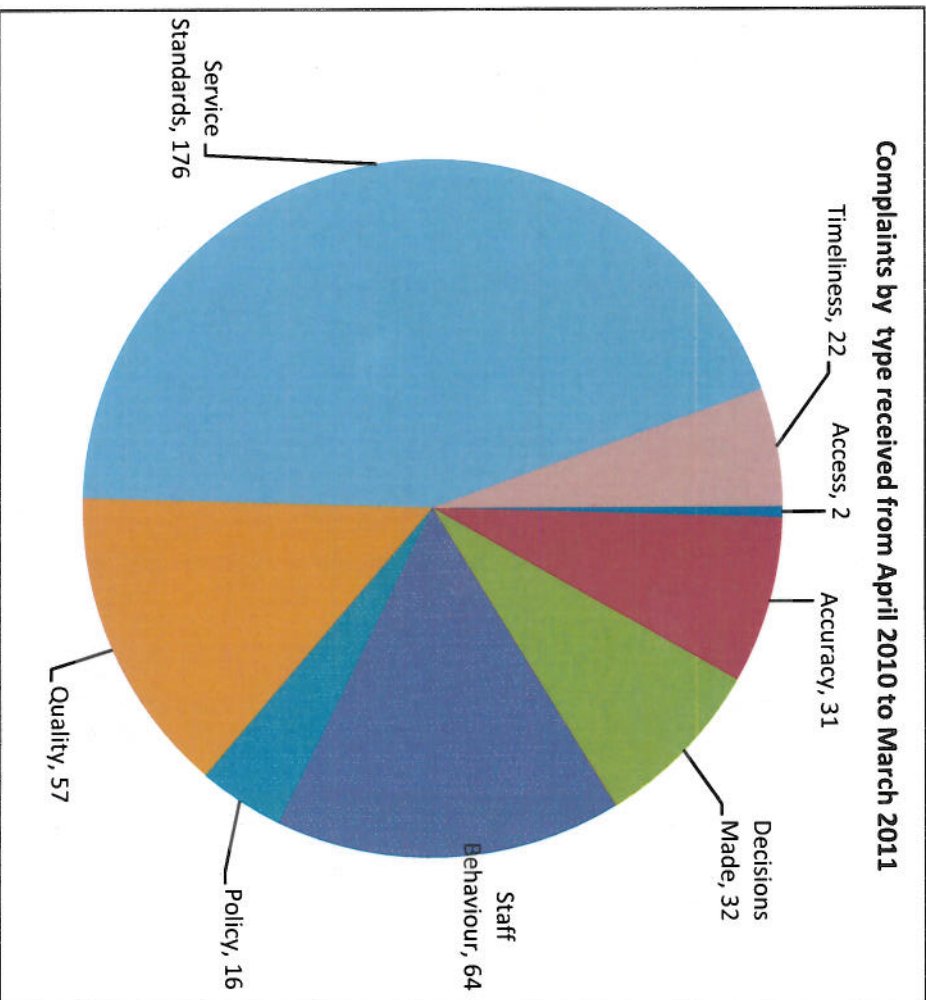
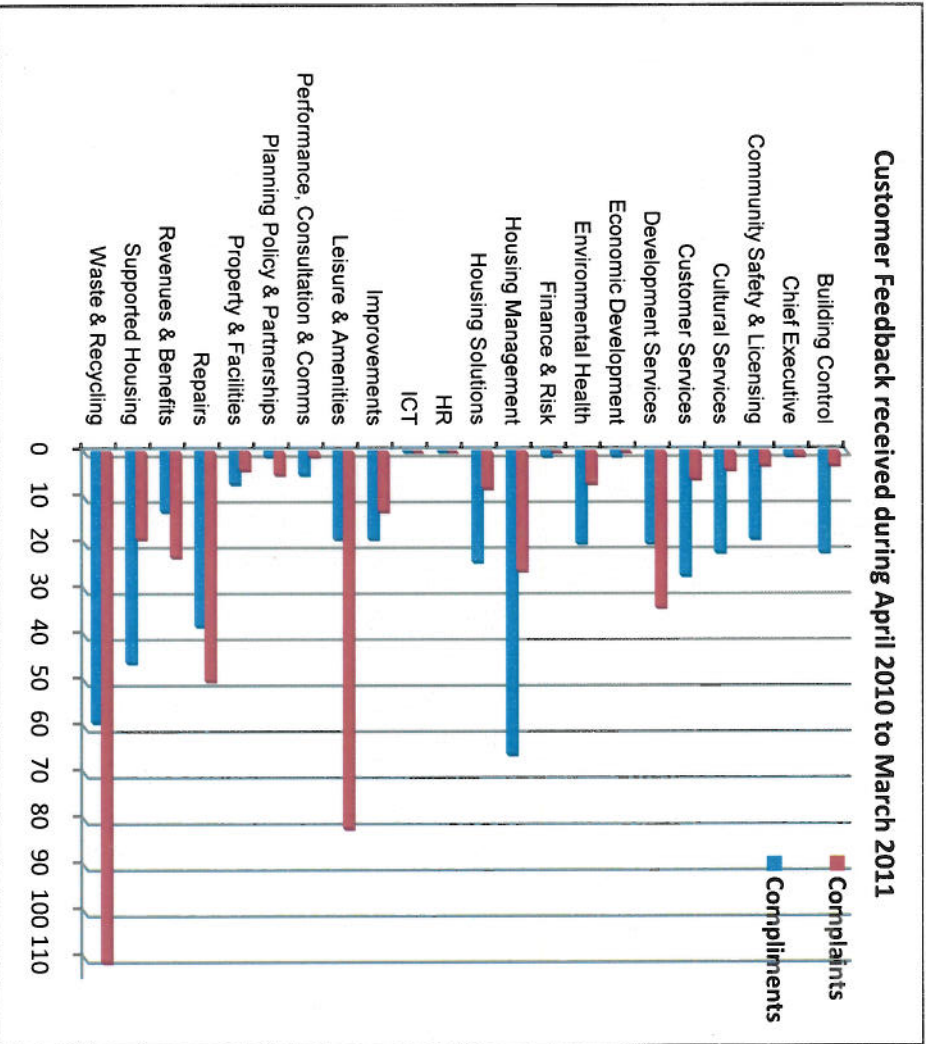
- An asset utilisation programme that will ensure all our buildings are fit for purpose and provide an efficient and flexible working environment



Customer Feedback

Listening to our customers is at the heart of what we do. We always try to get things right first time. However, we appreciate this doesn't always happen. We welcome comments from our residents so that we can address the things that are most important to them.

During the last 12 months from April 2010 to March 2011 we have received 396 complaints when compared to the number of contacts received during the same period of approximately 188,673 our complaints stand at 0.21%. In addition we have also received 407 compliments about our services.



The actual numbers of complaints received by our Waste and Recycling team appear higher than the average received by other service teams. However, when analysed the majority of complaints received relate to "missed bins" this is 0.002% of the 72,295 collections that take place every week across the district.

Customers told us:

- A customer had complained about the lack of advice and information available on what to do on the death of a council tenant. We tackled this by working with the customer to produce an advice leaflet that is appropriate and understandable, this is now available.
- A customer complained over confusion of garage rental charges. Having investigated the issue it was apparent that papers had gone missing, incorrect keys sent to the customer which caused confusion and they had been charged rent for a garage that they had not been using. Customer was reimbursed for over payment and subsequently due to the way the garage allocation system worked a full review of this service took place to ensure that it is customer focused and that officers are fully trained in how the allocation of garages should work.
- One customer has complimented our refuse collectors and street operatives that work in Bourne: "I would like to compliment the work that you do, I have often walked to work on a Saturday and seen the mess the Friday night revellers leave and how hard your staff work to keep Bourne tidy".
- You told us how polite an officer was on the phone and how quickly we despatched someone to repair a blocked toilet (within $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour) "the service you provided was marvellous".
- Customer said "I just wanted to thank the council for the swift response given to me over my urgent housing needs. The staff have been so kind and helpful".

We will use your feedback to try and improve our services and endeavour to make changes and improvements where possible.