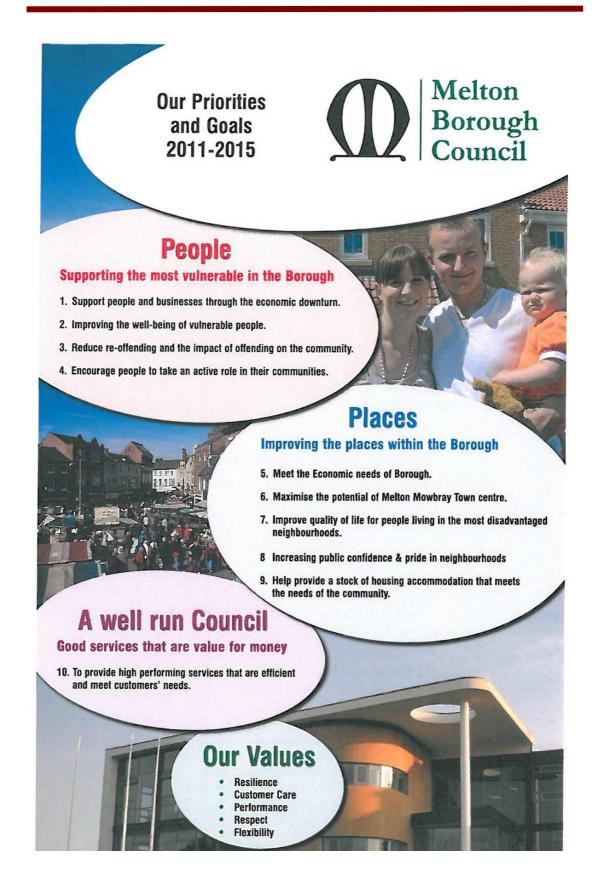# Communications Service Plan 2012/13

Council Service Delivery Ethos

SECTION

1

Description of Service

LONGER TERM VISION FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

Service users and improving satisfaction levels with the Council will be at the focus with the overriding aim being to provide services that are recognised by customers as being first class. We will focus on eliminating waste from service delivery processes and improve customer experiences of doing business with the Council. We want to build quality into the way we design service so that they always work 'right first time every time'. We want to encourage people to choose self serve options as their preferred way of contacting the Council to request a service. This will require a first class web site. It will also require improvements to systems, specifically the CRM to avoid dual keying of information.

We will focus on assisted access, using customer services advisors, on the most vulnerable people in our community and also aim to join up services for those vulnerable people to assist early intervention initiatives.

We will continue to build our knowledge of the community through the use of customer insight information to ensure that our services are designed to be more personalised and better meet the needs of different groups of people.

We will build up on the work already undertaken to embed more flexible and efficient ways of working for our staff.

Customer Services

Vision

"Work together to improve the customer experience in terms of speed, accuracy and comprehensiveness of response, based on a range of customer intelligence, for those seeking information on or requesting service provided by public organisations in Leicestershire in a way that reflects local needs resulting in positive customer satisfaction and confidence in public services and provide value for money and cashable savings"

Linking into the vision are 5 core values and 12 principles of high quality customer service. The aim of the next 12 months is to be working towards achieving these. The strategy is attached for reference.

Core Values

1. Equity
2. Ownership
3. Empowerment
4. Transparency
5. Co-production

Principles of High Quality Customer Service

1. Quality Service Standards
2. Equality and Diversity
3. Accessibility
4. Customer Involvement and Co-Design
5. Choice and Control
6. Value for Money
7. Information

8. Complaints
9. Reducing Avoidable Contact
10. Empowerment
11. People
12. Best Practice

Functions

Call Handling - First point of contact.
Face to face services at designated Council premises and customers' homes.
Council Tax
Benefits
Customer insight
Corporate complaint handling
Corporate handling of Freedom of Information and Data Protection requests.
CRM development
Reception cover.
Incoming postal service
Tell Us Once local implementation

ELECTIONS

Parish, Borough, Parliamentary, County Council
Referendums and Police and Crime Commissioners Elections
Electoral Registration
Outgoing Postal Services and Reprographics
Melton Mail and Olympic Torch Relay information distribution

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Management of recruitment and selection of staff
- Corporate training and development
- Advising on employee relations including disciplinary issues/ grievances
- Consultation with employee including maintaining excellent relations with the recognised trade unions.
- Monitoring and development of Pay Policy including job evaluation process and rewards
- Responsibility for maintaining the approved establishment and changes to the establishment.
- HR policy development
- Collecting and maintain employee data including equalities monitoring information
- Developing the People Strategy
- Maintaining and developing the employee performance/appraisal process
- Employee engagement
- Developing Corporate Social Responsibility
- Monitoring and developing employee leave policies including sickness absence and annual leave.
- Managing the Occupational Health contact and referrals

COMMUNICATIONS

- Developing and monitoring the Corporate Communications Policy
- Corporate communications with the media
- Corporate media releases
- Web site development and content
- Melton Mail publication

- Monthly Corporate Messenger publication
- Corporate use of Social media
- Providing communications advice on service specific projects

INFORMATION

- Corporate performance framework
- Transparency agenda
- Advice on FOI legislation
- Scrutiny support

DEMOCRACY

- Corporate consultation process
- Involvement and engagement
- Support to the Mayor
- Member development
- Professional advice
- Support for Full Council and Corporate Governance

SECTION

2

Recent Achievements

e Area/ Project	Corporate plan area	Values	Outcomes
Name of project/service area or initiative	*Named priorities under People, Places and/or well-run council*	*Link to the values*	*Specific outcomes delivered – indicators, physical projects, financial investment/saving etc*
Elections Borough Ward By Election	Well Run Council	Resiliance Customer Care Performance	Councillor Elected
Elections Review of Parliamentary Polling Places	Well Run Council	Resiliance Customer Care Performance	Equality for all electors
HR and Coms Investors in People Inspection	Well Run Council	Respect, Flexibility, Performance, Customer Care, Resilience	Achieved Silver status
HR & Coms Fit for the Future – Cascade restructure	Well Run Council	Flexibility, Resilience, Performance, Customer Care	Implemented second phase of restructure with no compulsory redundancies – right people in the right

			place – flexible generic job descriptions
HR & Coms Green Travel and Car Parking Policy	Well Run Council,	Respect, Flexibility	Implemented new policy for all staff and partners following move to Parkside
HR & Coms Melton's Information & Knowledge Environment - MIKE including E-Learning	Well Run Council	Flexibility, Performance, Customer Care, Resilience	Development of E-Learning packages through MIKE including additional information for employees and partners – cost effective training available at a time to suit employees.
HR & Coms Culture and Protocols	Well Run Council	Respect, Flexibility, Performance, Customer Care, Resilience	Developed and communicated protocols for Parkside in consultation with employees and partners. Clear and equitable use of building
HR & Coms Website	Well Run Council	Customer Care, Performance, Flexibility	Reviewed functionality of existing website, refresh of front page and content. Improving services and information to the on-line customer
HR & Comms Corporate Social Responsibility	Well Run Council, People and Places	Respect, Customer Care, Performance	Implemented new policy and collaboration with Pera Foundation. Volunteer opportunities for supporting entrepreneurship in young people.
Information Pilot of balanced scorecard	Well Run Council	Performance Customer Care	New corporate performance management process
Completion of two large pieces of customer insight work surrounding those in Rent and Council Tax arrears and Death of a Parent with Dependent Children	People A Well Run Council	Customer Care	Multi-agency approach required to bereavement Gained an understanding from those who have suffered the death of a parent/partner Gained an understanding of those who are affected by the recession

Revised induction process for new Advisors	A Well Run Council	Performance Flexibility	Quicker training of new staff
Implemented Tell Us Once	People A Well Run Council	Customer Care Respect	Customers can update all their records at the first point of contact
Successful move into Parkside, including the partnership working of the reception area	People A Well Run Council	Customer Care Flexibility Respect	Effective collaborative working of the front desk Better outcomes for customers as they can deal with all their issues, across different agencies, at the first point of contact Better accessibility
Revised Corporate Complaints Procedure	A Well Run Council	Customer Care	A procedure which is better understood both by staff and customers
Better collection of Equalities data	People A Well Run Council	Respect Customer Care Performance	Achieving status for Equalities assessment

The Next Steps

3

During 2012/13 the following short-term actions are to be completed:

Action	Links to corporate plan. (People, Places and/or well-run council)	Values	Outcome targets
Name of project, initiative, service area	*Named priorities under People, Places and/or well-run council*	*Link to the values*	*Specific outcomes targeted – indicators, physical projects, financial investment/saving etc*
Register of Electors	Well Run Council	Resilience Customer Care Performance	Complete and accurate Register to be produced
Police and Crime Commissioners Election 15th November 2012	Well Run Council	Resilience Customer Care Performance	Transparent and well run Election
Website – Culture shift	Well Run Council	Flexibility, Customer Care,	Consultation on requirements for new site, improving usability and increase in usage linking to

Action	Links to corporate plan. (People, Places and/or well-run council)	Values	Outcome targets
		Performance	culture shift
Develop Equality monitoring information	Well Run Council	Customer Care, Performance	Provision of data for use in equality impact assessment - improving services
Increase take up of staff satisfaction survey	Well Run Council	Respect, Flexibility, Resilience	Improved participation and engagement with employees
Consider option for employee assistance programme	Well Run Council, People, Place	Respect, Flexibility, Performance, Customer Care	Improved well being of employees especially those dealing with situations with high emotional demands.
Review Social Media policy and corporate use.	Well Run Council, People, Place	Flexibility, performance Customer Care	Improved communication with customers
Remuneration panel	Well Run Council	Performance, respect	Review of Cllrs allowances
Provide Communications advice and support for Olympic Torch Relay event	Well Run Council	Performance, Customer Care	Promotions of activities and event – linking with LOCOG and Police
Support Communications for refurbishment of Waterfield	Well Run Council	Performance, Customer Care	Mitigating negative press and keep public informed of developments
Implementation of balanced scorecard	Well Run Council	Performance, Customer Care	Corporate process for collecting performance data.

Action	Links to corporate plan	Values	Outcome targets
To adapt the telephone system so that more complex calls are routed to the more experienced Advisors and less complex calls to the newer or less experienced Advisors	*People A Well Run Council*	*Flexibility Performance Customer Care*	*Improved first contact resolution* *Reduced dual handling of work* *Improved customer service* *Address vulnerable customers' needs better*
With the additional resource, improve performance and keep on top of incoming work, including the peaks	*People Well Run Council*	*Resilience Customer Care Performance Flexibility*	*Improved accessibility to a quality service* *Reduced failure demand* *Improved benefits and council tax performance* *Improved outcomes for the customer*
To create an improved training plan for the Advisors	*Well Run Council*	*Performance Customer Care*	*Better first contact resolution* *Aim of reducing training from 3 years to 1-2 years* *Improved Advisor retention*
Improved Advisor involvement in dealing	*Well Run Council*	*Performance Customer Care*	*Better management of customer demand*

with failure demand and introducing a champion role so that changes in service policy can be weighed against customer impact and demand		*Links into the Customer Service Strategy*	*Begins to install customer focus into service areas* *Empowers the Advisors to take ownership of service delivery*
Improved complaints handling corporately following the policy change	*Well Run Council People*	*Performance Customer Care Respect*	*Improved consistency of complaints handling across the authority* *Better reporting of complaints information* *Ensures complaints are used as a source of customer feedback and utilised to improve service delivery*
Align customer insight better to corporate initiatives such as website design, understanding the impact of life events and understanding customer behaviour	*People Well Run Council*	*Respect Customer Care Flexibility*	*Aim to be more proactive with service delivery* *Understand how customers interact with the Council and other partner organisations* *Make better customer focused decisions corporately using customer insight as a base*
Develop the CRM to include more automation for Council Tax and remove dual keying through the installation of the IDOX connector	*Well Run Council*	*Customer Care*	*Removed dual keying* *Remove the need for work to be assessed by an 'expert'* *Improves consistency through automation*
Use customer insight to help design a more customer-friendly website with relevant online transactions and is peer reviewed by the Advisors	*People Well Run Council*	*Customer Care*	*More customer-friendly website* *Reduction in call volumes* *24/7 Service* *Frees up resource to deal better with vulnerable customers*

11111

4   Resource Utilisation

Resources to support this Service Plan are available through the Council's Budget Book

Q:\11 Finance\Financial Provisions Management\Financial Publications\2012-13\Budget Book 2012 2013.pdf

SECTION

5 Risk Management

Corporate Risks are managed through the corporate risk register, however, service risk are identified within respective service plans.

Risks have always been dealt with and risk management is not a new responsibility but simply the formalisation of what is good working practices. A number of key risks for the Service have been identified that could affect the Council's ability to achieve its objectives, perform its duties or meet the expectations of its stakeholders.

These risks capture those previously managed through the Council's Risk management Team and include those identified in the Priority Action Plans.

The table below sets out the key risks.

Probability
↓

	IV Neg-ligible	III Marg-inal	II Critical	I Catast-rophic
Very High A				
High B				
Significant C			5,	
Low D				
Very Low E			1,2,3, 4,6, 8	9
Almost Impossible F				

Risk No.	Description
1	Failure of IT provisions for Elections
2	Recruitment and retention of key staff Failure to retain and recruit suitably skilled staff.
3	Reputation management .Failure maintain positive media coverage
4	Staff capacity,morale, skills to undertake new ways of working
5	Corporate risk 52 Lack of corpora resources to fulfil the corporate vision over next 3 years Significant/critical
6	Lack of resources in customer services to meet increased dem ands.
7	Continued increase in demand fo customer services.
8	Delay in implementation of web s

SECTION

6 Performance Management

In order to be able to measure the progress that is being made in providing better quality services and real value for money a number of performance indicators have been established and targets set for the service:

The Service has included a number of performance Indicators that will inform how well the service is performing. (Please see inserts).

Contextual indicators

Contextual indicators describe the background against which the service is delivered.

List those indicators that provide the baseline situation, and are those which the service is intended to assist – i.e. number of unemployed, homeless, houses required, council tax raised etc

Output indicators

Output indicators assess the performance of the service.

List those indicators that provide information on what the service has delivered and how well it has performed – i.e. number of people housed, application processing stats, income secured etc

Elections
Electoral Commission Performance Standards for Returning Officers – These standards were reissued in December 2012 and will be used to monitor any major elections.

Electoral Registration
Electoral Commission Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officer – There are 10 Standards and presently we are above Standard on 6 of them and meeting the Standard on the other 4. These are monitored on an annual basis.

Customer Services
To improve service to customers by getting things right first time and providing more services on line thus reducing call volume by 5%.

To acknowledge corporate emails within one working day of receipt and to reply within 2 working days.

To process benefit claims within 48 working hours **on receipt of all the relevant documentation.**

To deal with 80% of all customer queries at the first point of contact.

Human Resources

1. Staff Turnover
Previous years

2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9

14%	14%	12%	12%

Target for 2012/13 - 12%

2. Sickness days per employees

Previous years

2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9
6.54	4.58 days	5.67 days	6.34 days

Target for 2012/13 -   5 days

3. % of employees who answer yes to having a disability

Previous years

2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9
3%	3%	4%	3%

Target of 2012/13 – 5%

Note: based on census 2001 figure, number with a limited long term illness = 6,959 of these 780 are receiving incapacity or similar benefit. Total in community = 47,866 therefore 13% of community may consider themselves to have a disability and able to work. ONS labour force survey 2011 indicates number of 16 – 64 yr old in East Midlands who are DDA disabled =19.6%

4. A flexible workforce that can respond to changing customer demands:

Goal 1

To have the right people in the right place with the right skills at the right time. Ability to recruit people to posts with required skills**.** Where applicable to have generic skills that are easily transferrable.

Metrics

Number/ percentage of posts not filled following recruitment process**.**

Actual posts not filled 2011/12 = 2

Target for 2012/13 – 1

Goal 2

Excluding posts that must be specialist due to nature, the number/ percentage of roles with generic job descriptions.

Target for 2012/13 – 20%

Goal 3

Number of compulsory redundancies.

Actual number of compulsory redundancies 2011/12 = 0

Target for 2012/13 – 0

11111

INDICATOR	Indicator description/Link to priorities	Frequency	Type	Average for all District Councils 2008/09	Performance 2008/09	Target 2010/11	Performance 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Target 2012/13	Target 2013/14	Comments
National/ Local Indicators (NI)											