

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

2 December 2009

Report of the Central Services Director

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 ENHANCING ACCESS TO SERVICES

Executive Summary

Tanya Oliver, Director of Strategic Development & Public Access at Kent County Council, will give a presentation giving the overview to a county wide, multi-agency agency partnership approach to enhancing customer access to public services.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Members will be familiar with the concept of Tonbridge Gateway which provides face-to-face access to a wide range of public services. The aim being to provide customers with easier "joined-up" access to services from a range of providers.

1.1.2 The Gateway concept is now being developed in relation to other forms of access channels including telephone and web access. This programme will be the subject of the presentation at the meeting. A background paper is attached at Annex 1.

1.1.3 This is a partnership project across agencies, which aims to focus on the customer dimensions. Parties engaged in the development of this project include district and county councils, PCTs, Kent Fire and Rescue, voluntary sector, Kent Police and business agencies.

1.1.4 The project is in development and is overseen by the Gateway Programme Advisory Board, on which the Chief Executive, David Hughes, sits.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 Nil at this stage. Legal implications may need to be considered within individual work streams as they progress.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 Nil at this stage.

1.4 Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 Members have adopted a Customer Service Strategy which supports the need for easily accessible services, customer choice and high quality customer service. These principles are in line with the enhanced Gateway concept.
- 1.4.2 Good customer relations are at the heart of the Council's relationship with our local communities and as such it is vital that we engage in those activities which will help strengthen our standards of customer service. This principle is the key platform underpinning our participation in this programme.

1.5 Policy Considerations

- 1.5.1 Asset Management – Enhanced use of the Council's asset at Tonbridge Castle
- 1.5.2 Communications – Potential to improve our communications with customers
- 1.5.3 Community – Providing enhanced access to services by local communities.
- 1.5.4 Customer Contact – Potential to improve ease of customer access to services offered by a range of providers.
- 1.5.5 Equalities/Diversity – Increasing choice in the access channels available to all customers
- 1.5.6 Human Resources – to make best use of our resources to provide improved customer service.

1.6 Recommendations

- 1.6.1 It is Recommended that
- 1) the contents of the presentation and the enhanced Gateway programme be noted, and
 - 2) progress be reported to future meetings of this Board as appropriate.

The Central Services Director confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Julie Beilby

Nil

Julie Beilby
Central Service Director