
ACCESS TO SERVICES STRATEGY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report contains the Council's Access to Services Strategy.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Standards Committee on 5 July 2007, in response to the recommendation in the Ethical Health Check that the Access to Services Review should ensure minority groups are engaged and needs addressed, an action point was agreed that the "Standards Committee consider the outcomes of the Access to Services Review and make recommendations as appropriate to the Executive Board".

3 DISCUSSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Executive Board considered the Access to Services Strategy at its meeting on 11 December 2007, and the report and Strategy submitted to the Board is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The Executive Board agreed:
1. That the overall direction of the Access to Services Strategy be agreed, subject to the production of a detailed business case for the centralisation of the management of the frontline customer service and to recognition that, in view of customer preference, a review of opening hours for face to face services aiming to extend the hours would be an appropriate aspiration.
 2. That the following "quick wins" be implemented –
 - Content for the intranet on customer insight (to share knowledge and understanding amongst staff of our communities and their specific needs and preferences).
 - SMS text pilots (for young people, people with hearing impairments, antisocial behaviour hotline and feasibility on parking fine payments).
 - Feasibility studies of working with partners to develop services in Hullbridge, Great Wakering and Hockley.
 - Expansion of customer services at Rayleigh.
 - Early business process re-engineering to optimise the frontline customer service for the new refuse and recycling contracts.

- Development of the business case to separate the switchboard function from the reception function to improve customer service at the Rochford offices.
3. That a detailed action plan be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive Board.
- 3.3 There is now an opportunity for this Committee to consider the impact of the strategy on the ethical agenda and provide comment, if any, to the Executive Board on practical aspects of its implementation.
- 4 RECOMMENDATION**
- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to note the Access to Services Strategy.

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Background Papers:-

None

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