

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 1
Report Originator	Julie Trahern Head of Income and Debt	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i> A14/006	
Wards Affected	All	16 th July 2014	
Title	CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE		

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Christopher Lamb

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of Kettering Borough Council's successful re-accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence standard.

2. INFORMATION

2.1 Kettering Borough Council has been accredited against the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard since 2006. The CSE standard is awarded for a period of three years, with annual reviews, to ensure compliance, taking place.

2.2 It is a rigorous standard testing, the very best in service delivery, and the assessment is undertaken by independent external assessors.

2.3 The CSE standard requires:

- ◆ Submission of evidence against 57 individual elements - an on-site inspection visit
- ◆ The inspector interviewing representatives from staff, partner organisations and members of the public

2.4 Below is detailed the outcome of the scoring:

- ◆ *To achieve the Standard an organisation may not have any non-compliances*
- ◆ *To achieve the Standard organisations must demonstrate compliance with each of the criteria. To do so the organisation must achieve full compliance or Compliance plus in at least 80% of the elements contained in each of the criteria*
- ◆ *The maximum number of partial compliances allowed within each criterion is shown in the table below:*

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 2
------------------	-----------	------------	--------

<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Number of elements</i>	<i>Maximum number of partial compliances</i>	<i>Actual number of partial compliances</i>	<i>Actual number of major non-compliance</i>
<i>Customer Insight</i>	11	2	0	0
<i>The Culture of the Organisation</i>	11	2	0	0
<i>Information and Access</i>	12	2	0	0
<i>Delivery</i>	13	3	0	0
<i>Timeliness and Quality of Service</i>	10	2	0	0

2.5 As can be seen from the table above, there were no partial compliances.

2.6 The inspector's report commended Kettering Borough Council:

'This is a significant achievement, given the challenging financial circumstances that all Council's continue to face. It was clear that not only has the service continued to meet the standard, it has continued to improve provision in many ways'

2.7 The assessor also welcomed our Partnership working which continues to develop, and provide customers with coordinated and effective access to complimentary services on one site, and the 'passion and desire' of staff to deliver what customers need in the best way possible.

2.8 The Kettering Borough Council approach of challenging the traditional ways of working and developing a 'one team' approach were also noted as all staff were able to give examples of how they often 'go the extra mile' in order to meet customer needs – providing the evidence that frontline staff are truly empowered to deliver what customers need.

2.9 Four areas of particular strength were scored as 'compliant plus', the highest level possible. These are as the result of two key developments. The web chat facility is a new and innovative development which offers customers an additional means of accessing services and which meets the needs and expectations of a wider demographic – feedback from customers is so far very positive. The second area is the development of a 'Tenant's Passport' which

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 3
------------------	-----------	------------	--------

helps those with a poor credit history to access appropriate housing more easily. The compliant plus elements achieved are detailed below:

<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Number of elements</i>	<i>Maximum number of partial compliances</i>	<i>Actual number of partial compliances</i>	<i>Actual number of compliance plus elements</i>
<i>Customer Insight</i>	11	2	0	1
<i>The Culture of the Organisation</i>	11	2	0	0
<i>Information and Access</i>	12	2	0	3
<i>Delivery</i>	13	3	0	0
<i>Timeliness and Quality of Service</i>	10	2	0	0

- ◆ Our particular effort to identify hard to reach and disadvantaged groups and individuals and develop services in response to their needs
- ◆ Making information about the full range of services we provide available to our customers
- ◆ Providing our customers with the information they need in ways which meet their needs and preferences
- ◆ Making our services easily accessible to all customers through provision of a range of alternative channels



BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 4
------------------	-----------	------------	--------



3. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The CSE framework is used to check new policies and procedures to ensure that they remain customer focussed and ensure a consistent approach is used across the service.

4. **CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

- 4.1 Staff, partners and members of the public are consulted through the process. In terms of customer impact the CSE standard has acted as an additional discipline and an appropriate reminder about the importance of the customer in all areas of work.

5. **FINANCIAL RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

6. **HR IMPLICATIONS**

None.

7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 That Members note the report and commend the accreditation of the Customer Service Excellence standard.
- 8.2 All those concerned be commended for not only preserving but enhancing customer care against a back-cloth of rising demand and financial constraints.

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 5
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Background Papers:

Title of Document:
Date: 3rd July 2014
Contact Officer: Julie Trahern

Previous Reports/Minutes:

N/A