

Agenda item
g(b)(iii)

PORTFOLIO:

CORPORATE RESOURCES

Report of
Portfolio Holder:

**COUNCILLOR
JACQUELYNE GEDDES**

KEY DECISIONS

Non taken

NON-KEY DECISIONS

Non taken

Customer Contact

The Customer Contact Best Value Review is continuing on schedule. The following pieces of work are progressing :

- The consultation phase is almost complete, with only the return of the random customer survey and the mystery shopping exercise outstanding.
- A new draft Customer Contact Policy has been produced for comment by Overview and Scrutiny before wider circulation for consultation.
- A snapshot of the existing service has been produced. This is an important document which gives, for the first time, an overview of the scale of contact the customer has with the Council. It shows there are some 79,000 customer contacts each week – excluding Tullie House. This equates to some four million contacts a year. The detail behind this figure will help shape any new customer contact service.
- The important challenge element of the review is now underway and is entering a critical phase where different alternative models for delivery customer contact are being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is anticipated that they will select two preferred models for the project team to produce detailed reports on.

We have been informed that the Audit Commission, as part of their Annual Inspection Plan, are minded to conduct a full inspection of this particular review. They have been informed that the review would be completed by August, the most likely time for their inspection, but the recommendations are unlikely to have been implemented by then.

Training

Media training was arranged for staff on 8 February 2002, which I attended, as I was unable to attend the session arranged for Members on 5 March 2002. The Police Authority carried out the training; it was excellent and staff found it useful to be able to evaluate their own performances.

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

North West Local Authority Employers Organisation

The first formal round of pay negotiations took place on 6 February between the Employers Organisation and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. An offer of 2.5% that is over three times the current rate of inflation was offered and rejected. The Unions' claim is £1,750 or 6% whichever is the greater.

The next round of negotiations will take place on 28 February 2002.

Councillor Jacquelyne Geddes