

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE			
PORTFOLIO AREA: Policy & Performance			
Date Meeting:	of	03/04/2003	
Public			
Key Decision:		Recorded in Forward Plan:	YES
Inside Policy Framework			

Title: Foyer Reception Service

Report of: Head Of Customer & Information Services

Report reference: CIS. 2/03

Summary:

This report gives an overview of the current changes to relocate existing reception areas within the Civic Centre to the ground floor foyer.

Recommendations:

That the Executive approve the virements to facilitate staffing arrangements for the new foyer reception.

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1.0 Background information

Following the best value customer contact report in November 2002 the council is implementing a two-stage approach to improving customer services. Work is progressing on the long-term project to create customer contact centres and call centres to deal with all council enquiries. The short-term, interim, project is to relocate all the existing reception points within the Civic Centre to the ground floor foyer.

It is recognised that this is an interim solution, and therefore will not achieve all of the council aims immediately. However the initial changes will provide a better service to customers as all services will be conveniently located on the ground floor.

The new reception service will be largely run from the former Conservative group office just inside the entrance to the Civic Centre.

Analysis of current transactions has been undertaken by customer services staff to facilitate and the transfer, and ground floor reception will replicate the layout of the current reception area on the seventh floor. The existing "reception" area staffed by the keepers and porters will remain, but the signage will be changed to indicate that service delivery is now inside the reception room.

2.0 Staffing arrangements

This change aims to replicate simply the existing operational arrangements, but with an improved reception facility. This means that the existing roles for most staff will not change, except that they will be servicing a reception on the ground floor rather than in its current location. In order to support the new reception arrangements it will be necessary to have three full-time receptionists to provide cover for lunchtimes, annual leave, and sickness. This level of staffing will allow the issuing of parking permits to personal callers to be included as a front office activity. All other existing back-office functions will continue to be run by unit managers, with the receptionists calling on the

back-office functions as required.

Existing full time reception staff will undertake the new duties after appropriate consultation; the two new FTE posts will be recruited on a temporary basis, the posts being advertised internally to existing staff as a development opportunity. This approach will allow the Council to build on the knowledge and experience of staff already undertaking these roles.

Unit managers have been asked to provide funding as set out in the table below. This will be sufficient to fund the additional reception staff.

Business Unit	FTE Contribution	Budget Value
Commercial & Technical Services	0.2	3,397
Customer and Information Services	0.5	8,494
Economic Development	0.2	3,397
Environmental Protection Services	0.2	3,397
Financial & Information Services	0.125	2,000
Legal & Democratic Services	(1 Support FTE)	
Leisure & Cultural Services	0.2	3,397
Member & Employee Services	0.2	3,397
Planning Services	0.2	3,397
Property Services	0.2	3,397
Revenues & Benefits Service	0.5 – For 1 year until R&B service is incorporated	8,494
Strategy & Performance Services	0.2	3,397

Total	2.525	46,164
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The roles of existing Keeper, Porter and Telephonist staff are not affected by this proposal.

3.0 Operational Changes

An officer project group is currently considering the further changes required to deliver this project successfully. Issues that are currently under development and review include, process reviews, IT changes, and further consultation with customers, staff, and unit managers.

4.0 Timetable

Building works are to start immediately and the reception service will be open from 28th April 2003. Initially dealing with Environmental services enquiries, the seventh floor reception will close down at the same time. The remaining receptions on the Fifth, First and second floors will transfer to the ground floor in that order at the start of each subsequent week. This phasing will allow management to troubleshoot any problem areas.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive approve the virements to facilitate staffing arrangements for the new foyer reception.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To allow the arrangements for the new Foyer Reception Service to proceed.