VALE of GLAMORGAN

BRO MORGANNWG

Vale of Glamorgan
Customer Relations Strategy

Connecting with our Customers
2014-17

A Customer Service Organisation

CONTENTS

VALE of GLAMORGAN

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The Vale of Glamorgan Council - A Customer Service Organisation

1. Our Customer Service Vision

In October 2010 we set out our customer service vision for the Vale of Glamorgan Council in two documents; Customer Relations Strategy and Channel Strategy. While these strategies addressed the challenges of rapidly changing communications technology, customer expectations and budgets, our vision was expressed simply:

 "To be recognised and valued by our residents, partners and staff as an organisation focused on delivering services that meet the needs and preferences of all our customers in an efficient, cost effective way"

We continue to believe that high quality services and cost reduction are not contradictory objectives, and are intrinsically linked. Delivering the services our customers want in the way they want them will produce efficiencies by eliminating unnecessary delays and error and reducing the need for rework. To achieve our vision we set out objectives around 4 key themes:

o	Learn from our customers
o	Improve access to services
o	Change how we do things
o	Develop a customer service culture

We can point to significant progress in each of these themes. However, during the subsequent 3 years delivering local services has become no less complex and is now even more challenging. Budget and resource pressures on service delivery are increasing and customer preferences and expectations continue to change, driven in part by rapidly developing communications technologies.

Expansion in the range of communications devices and the availability of 3G, 4G and Wi Fi access means that mobile access to the internet is increasingly becoming the norm. Social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, is emerging as an important customer contact channel.

Average Handling Cost by Channel
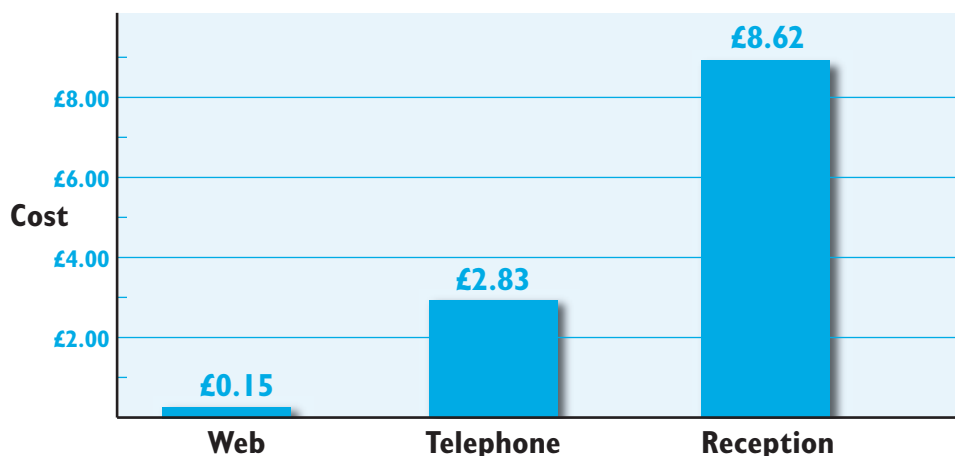
Many customers now expect to seamlessly change how they communicate with organisations, even during a single transaction, without loss of service quality. A trend that has been facilitated by the rapid rise in the ownership of multi-functional smart phones and tablet devices that allow the user to access services by phone, internet, email, mobile application, social media or SMS text depending on convenience and preference.

Customer expectations are rising at a time of unprecedented pressure on resources. Budgets have been reduced and further significant savings will be required in the short to medium term. The emergence of a clear customer trend towards accessing services digitally, coupled with the on-going need to deliver services more efficiently means that the adoption of a "digital first" approach to the access and delivery of services is a must. It will help us to maintain quality services and deliver cash savings. This approach is particularly appropriate for the Vale of Glamorgan with 89% of adults regularly using the internet compared to an average of 82.5% for Wales and 86% for the UK (ONS, May 2013)

This document sets out how the Vale of Glamorgan Council will respond to the challenges and exploit the opportunities that these trends present. In the future we will:

> When people are enabled to manage their own enquiries, or apply, book, pay for and receive them online without human intervention for processing and service delivery, considerable savings can be made. Call centre headcounts, and front and back office employee numbers can be cut, with further savings available from reduced accommodation and paper file storage. Resources freed up can be used for enquiries and services that really do need human intervention.
>
> SOCITM insight
> August 2012

1. Adopt a "digital first" access to services strategy
2. Develop social media as a key customer contact channel
3. Ensure that issues of digital exclusion are addressed
4. Ensure there is a single view of the customer so that quality of service is seamless irrespective of contact channel
5. Maximise the number of enquires that can be resolved at the first point of contact
6. Continue to take opportunities to listen to and learn from our customers
7. Work with partners to develop shared services that improve outcomes for customers and reduce cost of delivery
8. Develop the customer service skills of all our staff

A "digital first" approach will require us to:

• Maximise the number of services that can be accessed via our website, focussing on those services which generate high enquiry volumes across other access channels
• Deliver mobile access to digital services
• Address issues of digital exclusion to ensure fair and equal access to services for all
• Ensure that processes and procedures are designed so that services work on digital platforms
• Develop ways to integrate digital services with legacy ICT systems to ensure that service delivery is seamless and efficient.

The approach reflects the UK Government's Digital by Default programme and the Welsh Government's Digital Wales programme, both of which set public sector organisations the challenge of maximising access to services via digital channels.

We do not advocate a 'digital by default' approach. We will maintain the ability to respond to customer demand and deliver excellent service across other contact channels, reflecting the emerging multi-channel pattern of customer contact. However, we believe that the trend towards customers accessing services online is one that will strengthen. Maximising the number of services that are accessed online without further staff intervention will help us to retain resilient services while delivering the savings required of us.

This strategy builds on previous initiatives that have been already improved our customer service and reflects our core principles of Customer Focus, Integrity, Continuous Improvement, Involvement and Fairness.

2. Strategic Context

> "Digital First is about delivering public services that are focused on the needs of the citizen. We want to make it much easier for people to find and use public services - at any time on any device. This will remove barriers, create choice and make life simpler for people"
>
> Minister for the Economy,
> Edwina Hart MBE, OStJ AM
> March 2013.

Our vision for customer services in the Vale of Glamorgan remains ambitious and aligned to national, regional and local strategies.

The Welsh Government agenda has moved on from 'Making the Connections' towards a 'Digital First' strategy. As a result of emerging trends in customer behaviour, developments in ICT and economic realities a subtle change in emphasis has emerged from "ensure that citizens can choose methods of access to services" to "Making the fullest possible use of opportunities digital offers will help us be more efficient, cut the cost of delivery, and make the public sector a better place to work".

Importantly this strategy builds on what has already been achieved via the transformational OneVale Programme and the previous Customer Relations Strategy 2010-13 and Channel Strategy. Equally, the strategy reflects the real challenges and opportunities presented by the changing context of customer expectations, preferences and behaviours as well as developments in communications technologies.

3. What have we achieved?

The Customer Relations and Channel strategies, agreed 2010, set out an ambitious programme of work to move the organisation closer to its customer service vision. We have accomplished much which has improved the customer experience of accessing our services and put in place processes to capture and use customer experience and views to develop and improve our services.

3.1 Learning from our customers

We promised to listen and learn from our customers to understand what they need from us and redesign our services accordingly when needed. We are capturing more information than ever before about how our services are delivering for our customers. We have developed the 'Learning from Complaints' policy which requires all departments to review, learn from and report on customer complaints. Continuous customer satisfaction surveys have been implemented to identify what our

Customer Satisfaction 2013-14
98.1% of customers are satisfied or extremely satisfied with service received at Contact One Vale
1273 post call surveys completed

customers really think about the experience of accessing services via at our corporate contact centre; Contact OneVale. We have developed and implemented a Tell Us Once process to support bereaved customers and put in place information sharing protocols between departments and partner organisations to facilitate service improvements..

We continue to consult with our customers via the Vale Viewpoint customer panel and the Public Opinion Survey as well as many service specific consultation exercises.

Telephone remains the most popular channel for customers transacting with the council services:

Telephone	80%
Face to Face	5%
Email	6%
Web	5%
Text	0.2%

Based on Customer Service contact

These on-going activities are providing a wealth of valuable information from our customers, which we are using to ensure that our services are fit for purpose and the experience of interacting with the council is a consistently positive one.

3.2 Improving access to services

We promised to improve access to services and we have. While the telephone remains the most popular channel more of our customers are using digital options to access services. In order to achieve our objective to "make the internet the channel of choice" we have redesigned our website to promote transactional opportunities and make these easier to find and use. This is reflected in the number of online payments made which has increased by 101%.

We have made it easier for customers to find local services and information by introducing location based information via the 'In Your Neighbourhood' service. In addition, we are proactively providing information to customers about services that they are specifically interested in via our email based Vale Connect service, which has circa 10,000 registered users. At the same time more services are now accessible from Contact OneVale via telephone, email and SMS text with a 68% of all enquiries being resolved at the point of contact.

We have made access to services in person easier and more convenient by utilising existing Library resources. Customers are now able to access more services locally avoiding unnecessary travel, cost and inconvenience.

Review of Disabled Parking Badge and Concessionary Travel Pass processing: • Improves service • Reduces cost
Moving administrative processes to be completed overnight has **delivered a faster response** for customers, created **increased call handling resource** during core business hours and delivered **1.5 FTE of savings.**

3.3 Changing how we do things

We promised to change how we do things to ensure that the customer experience of the end to end service from initial contact to service delivery is positive. Re-engineering of services and processes has been continuous and is delivering service improvements and savings.

We are working with partner organisations to help deliver efficient public services. The Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's Communications Hub has co-located with Contact OneVale. This has delivered significantly reduced set up costs for the health board, allowed for improvements to GP Out of Hours services for Vale of Glamorgan residents and created opportunities to integrate health and social care services to benefit our customers.

With developments in technology generating opportunities to improve services and make savings the process of reviewing and re-engineering our services will be a continuing theme for the foreseeable future.

Customer Ratings	Customer Service Representatives		(1273 post call surveys)	
Are Knowledgeable	97.7%	Listen and Understand	98.3%
Are Helpful	97.1%	Resolved My Issue	77.8%
Are Polite	91.3%		

3.4 Develop a customer service culture

We promised that we would develop a customer service culture and improve the customer service skills of our staff. We recognise that the most important ingredient in delivering excellent customer services is the attitude and skills of our staff. Front line staff continue to be recruited and performance managed on the basis of their customer service skills. This is reflected in our customer's view of their experience of using Contact OneVale.

The very fact that we have a corporate customer service strategy gives a clear message to staff that our customers are highly valued by the organisation.

Similarly, the customer service values of an organisation striving to learn from customer complaints in order to improve the services delivered to those customers is clear.

The most important indicator of the strength of our customer service ethos is the view of our customers. Outcomes of our last public opinion survey indicate that our customers are satisfied with their experience of contacting the council and with how services are delivered.

We have gone a long way to fulfilling the promises and objectives outlined in the Customer Relations Strategy 2010-13 and Channel Strategy. However, as indicated previously the nature of both the challenges we face in achieving our vision and the opportunities being created are changing and increasing.

A clear plan is required to address the challenges that lie ahead, ensure that progress continues to be made, our services continue to meet the needs of our customers and our vision for customer services is achieved.

4. What we will do next

The four key themes set out in the Customer Relations Strategy 2010-13 remain valid and will be carried forward. However, as already discussed the nature of the challenges within these themes has changed and a new action plan (Appendix A) has been drawn up to address this.

- o   Learn from our customers
- o   Improve access to services
- o   Change how we do things
- o   Develop a customer service culture

4.1   Learning from our customers

As customer needs, preferences and expectations become more complex and resources ever more scarce, the ability to listen to and learn from our customers is an increasingly important corporate competency. If we are unable to shape our services to meet the needs of our customers, not only is it likely that our customers will become dissatisfied but our services risk becoming inefficient and costly to deliver.

> **What we will do:**
> - Continue to monitor complaints and how services are changing based on customer feedback
> - Measure customer satisfaction across all contact channels
> - Identify and gain feedback from customer groups with specific service requirements, especially in relation to access to digital services
> - Continue to develop protocols for sharing information with partner's organisations to create joined up, effective and efficient services.

4.2   Improving access to services

Our overall objective continues to be for customers to use the lowest cost and most appropriate contact channel for their enquiry. In practice this means encouraging customers to access service digitally, online.

The ways in which customers are choosing to interact with organisations are changing. In the Vale of Glamorgan SMS text messaging continued to be very rarely used to contact the council while email and social media contacts, primarily Facebook and Twitter, have increased in usage over the past 3 years. Telephony continues to be by far the most popular way for customers to access services, calls to Contact OneVale average 5,000 per week.

As discussed previously more and more customers are finding it easy and convenient to access services digitally. In August 2013 the Office of National Statistics stated that **86% of adults in the UK had accessed services via the internet.** In Wales 79% had accessed the internet at home and 86% of businesses used the internet to interact with public sector bodies.

The trend towards digital services is reflected in consumer purchasing behaviour with **86% of Welsh internet users buying goods and services online.**

There has been an expansion in communications devices and channels. Traditional channels such as phones and face to face have been joined by social media, web chat and customer forums. Significant numbers of **customers have largely become channel agnostic.** They are happy to use whatever means of communication is convenient for them at the time, but **expect organisations to have the ability to seamlessly move between channels** without affecting quality of service.

These behaviours and expectations are being partly driven by a clear trend away from accessing the internet via PC's and laptops towards mobile web access. There were 32 million smart phones in the UK in 2011 and this is expected to increase to 62 million by 2015 (Capita, 2012). These multifunctional devices allow customers to use the contact channel that is most convenient to them from an individual device.

While recognising that some customers do not have the ability or skills to access services online, these trends together with the need to make significant operational savings make a **Digital First** approach to delivering services both appropriate and essential. In doing so, we recognise the need to provide adequate support to those who face digital exclusion, identified in four key groups, older people, unemployed and economically inactive, social housing tenants and disabled people.

It is for these reasons that Digital First approach and Digital Inclusion form two key elements in improving access to services in this strategy.

4.2.1 Digital First

We are committed to delivering a Digital First approach to maximise online transactions to meet customer expectations and drive savings

What we will do:
- Maximise the number of services that are available online and ensure that these are simple and easy to use.
- Develop access to services via mobile applications
- Redesign digital services and integrate with legacy systems to minimise human intervention and save costs
- Ensure that service and process reviews build in digital delivery as a default
- Measure and promote digital services to improve take up
- Explore opportunities to create effective customer authentication to allow customers to monitor their own interactions with the council
- Develop processes to inform customers when services ordered online have been delivered.

4.2.2 Digital Inclusion

While 89% of adults in the Vale of Glamorgan area have accessed the internet, in moving towards the expansion and promotion of digital services it is important to recognise that there are customer groups that either do not wish or are unable to access services in this way. The Welsh Government has identified four priority groups linked to age, income and disability.

Percentage of Priority Groups Not Using Internet (in Wales)
1. Older People - 45% of over 50s and 63% of over 65s
2. Unemployed and Economically Inactive - 20%
3. Social Housing Tenants - 45%
4. Disabled People - 40%

Although the barriers to access are diminishing with increasing computer ownership and internet connectivity and ever expanding smart phone ownership, we are committed to ensuring that all of our residents have access to digital services and are not disadvantaged by developments in customer services. Enabling digital inclusion for these priority groups will not only help them to interact more effectively with the Council, but will facilitate interaction with many other organisations.

We have already undertaken work to address issues of digital exclusion. Our local libraries already provide internet access and internet training is available. Free Wi-Fi access is available at many of our public buildings and our website works effectively on smart phones. We need to continue to promote these opportunities, especially to those hard to reach customer groups.

What we will do:
- Continue to promote internet access at libraries
- Promote the use of free Wi-Fi access in public spaces within council buildings
- Consult with representative groups to identify and engage hard to reach groups and develop a detailed plan to promote digital inclusion

4.2.3 Social Media

The past 2 years have seen the emergence of Social Media as an increasingly important customer contact channel. Many organisations see social media as a key way of managing their reputation and interacting with customers. Social Media is an excellent tool for getting information to many users quickly and efficiently and for promoting online services. As a council we have already recognised the increasingly important role that social media is playing with the adoption of a Social Media Strategy.

The use of social media brings it owns challenges however. The fact that any information and comments posted can very quickly reach hundreds or even thousands of users within seconds carries its own risks to council reputation if the information is inaccurate or comments inappropriate. While encouraging services to develop a social media presence to engage directly with customers it is important that this is achieved in a controlled and consistent way.

A key aspect of social media is the speed of response. Research shows that customers expect private sector organisations to respond to their Twitter posts within 15 minutes.

While it is uncertain that this level of expectation is replicated for public services, the requirement to respond to customers quickly presents a real challenge to services. Lack of a prompt response could result in reduced customer satisfaction and reputational damage even if the customer's enquiry is resolved.

To ensure that we realise the benefits that social media channels offer and mitigate the risks the Corporate Communication Team will authorise all new social media accounts, provide staff training and monitor usage.

What we will do:
- Develop social media as a key customer contact channel
- Build on the councils existing social media presence
- Encourage individual services to develop social media presence to engage with customers and cross promote online services
- Use social media to engage and consult with our customers
- Make social media training available and improve staff skills in the use of social media.
- Create a Twitter account for customer service - @contactonevale - to address transactional requests from customers

4.2.4 Telephony

Telephony continues to be the most popular and important contact channel for customer enquiries. Call volumes have remained consistent over the past few years, averaging 5000 per week.

Our key objectives for this channel remains to maximise First Call Resolution, reduce avoidable contact and minimise cost.

While customer satisfaction with using this channel remains high more can be done to improve services and create opportunities to reduce costs.

First contact resolution rates are currently 68% against a target of 80%. There are two key reasons why this target is not being achieved:

1. Customer Service Representatives (CSR) at Contact OneVale do not have access to all the information and systems they need to resolve customer enquiries
2. CSRs are not mandated to resolve particular types of enquiry by client services

These issues mean that customers have to be transferred to other services to have their enquiry handled and CSR's are unable to handle follow up calls from customers. This not only drives up the cost of delivering services but also represents poor customer service by building in delays in delivering services

> **What we will do:**
> • Liaise with service operations to ascertain opportunities to maximise First Call Resolution at C1V.
> • Ensure contact handling service standards match customer expectations in order that C1V resource requirements and cost per call are minimised.
> • Simplify the agent desktop to minimise call handling times and improve efficiency.
> • Develop shared services with Cardiff and Vale UHB Communications Hub to deliver improved services and generate savings through economies of scale.

4.2.5 Email

Our key objectives for this channel remains to maximise First Call Resolution, reduce avoidable contact and minimise cost.

Email transactions will benefit from many of the objectives set out for the telephony contact channel. In addition we will standardise email responses through implementation of an automated acknowledgement message.

Vale Connect will be further developed as a means of minimising avoidable contact by proactively providing information to our customers.

We will develop the email contact channel as a principal channel of communication for the hearing impaired, together with text messaging and the web.

4.2.6 SMS Text Messaging

Although the use of text messaging represents a low cost way for customers to access services, its use is limited due to limitation on the length of messages that can be sent. However, we will continue to investigate opportunities to develop inbound and outbound text messaging services, particularly as a means of reducing 'avoidable contact' and for those customer groups who already use this communication channel widely such as young people and those with hearing impairment. Given the growth in ownership of smart devices it is likely that text messaging technology will be superseded by mobile web technology.

4.2.7 Reception / Face to Face Services

Key objectives for this channel:

- Maximise the range of services that can be resolved at first point of contact
- Ensure a consistent customer experience irrespective of service or reception facility accessed
- Improve management information available.

The customer experience of reception based service provision in the Vale of Glamorgan is variable. Many receptions deal with a small range of services, enquiries are not recorded and the level of customer service provided inconsistent.

> **What we will do**
> - Implement formal customer service performance management, including SMART objectives for staff, achieve consistent customer experience and maximise resource efficiencies. i.e. use combined resources to provide holiday and sickness cover
> - Wherever possible enquiries should be logged on CRM in order to maximise depth and quality of management information as well as improving transparency and increasing First Call Resolution.
> - Introduce self service facilities at reception areas and encourage its usage.
> - Identify value-added activities that can be undertaken by reception staff
> - Reduce footfall in reception areas
> - The full range of services offered using the face to face channel will accessible to all Vale residents.

4.3 Changing how we do things

We recognise that while making services easier and more convenient to access is important, it is the experience of the end to end process that is important for the customer. There is little value in improving access to services if the service delivery process fails to meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

The Business Process Reengineering team have already delivered end to end service improvements and cashable efficiency savings. We are committed to continuing this programme of work to ensure service transfer to Contact OneVale maximises service improvements and efficiency savings and takes into account the requirements of our key customer groups in different circumstances to maximise the efficiency in all corporate resources.

Future re-engineering of services will focus on maximising opportunities to deliver those services digitally.

> **What we will do:**
> • Reshape and develop our services to deliver services digitally
> • Integrate systems and data to facilitate the delivery of joined up services, improve first contact resolution and minimise costs.
> • Find ways to understand and remove the drivers of Avoidable Contact for each service.

4.4   Developing a Customer Service Culture

The implementation of new technology, collection of customer information and Business Process Reengineering of processes will not deliver excellent customer service on their own. If our staff do not believe in the process and do not have the skills to utilise these technologies and developments correctly our investment may be wasted. Investing in the customer service and business improvement skills of our staff is critical, without it we will fail to deliver excellent, cost effective services that meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

We recognise the need for appropriate controls to be in place to ensure that corporate resources and customers, especially the vulnerable, are protected. However, the functional nature of the organisation structure and bureaucracy involved in delivering services can prevent front line staff in providing timely and appropriate solutions for our customers. The provision of customer service skills and competencies to staff must be accompanied by a process of mandating front line staff wherever possible to implement appropriate solutions for our customers.

We are committed to developing all our staff to understand their customer service role and obligations in the delivery of services. We believe that in doing so we must also provide the opportunity for our staff to contribute to the development of their own and associated services for the benefit of the customer and the organisation

> **What we will do**
> • Establish a project team to create and implement a plan to improve our corporate customer service competency.
> • Develop an internal communications plan to ensure staff understand customer service as a corporate priority and their role in delivering excellent customer service.
> • Frontline staff will be mandated to deliver appropriate solutions for our customers, removing unnecessary escalation for authority and approval, while maintaining control of risk.
> • Listen to what our staff members have to say about the ways we can improve service delivery.

5. Governance

The strategy outlined in this document requires a set of projects to undertake the actions that will deliver the corporate objectives. The successes already achieved have been under the formal project structures within the OneVale Programme and these will continue.

Governance Structure

The corporate sponsor for the delivery of customer services is the Managing Director with the Corporate Management Team acting as programme board.

The Customer Relations Project Board will retain specific responsibility for the monitoring of Customer Service projects.

The Customer Service Implementation Group (formerly Channel Strategy Task Group) has main responsibility for the delivery of the action plan associated with strategy

6. Conclusion

This strategy outlines our vision for the future of our council and the actions required to deliver it. We have already achieved significant improvements in customer service, in particular in the accessibility and delivery of digital services. We have established a firm foundation but have also set ourselves a stretching and challenging agenda. It is clear, especially in the light of public sector resourcing issues, that this strategy is essential in delivering the efficiencies required, putting the customer at the heart of our organisation and facilitating the use of the most cost effective contact channels. Achieving our aspiration will require clear leadership and the contribution of all staff.

Appendix A – Customer Service and Channel Strategy 2013-16 Action Plan Review

Learning from customers

Ref.	During 2013-16 we plan to:	Outcomes we'll achieve from this action	High, medium or low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start Date	Finish Date	How will the work be resourced?
CS01 / LC01	Measure customer satisfaction across all contact channels	Understanding what customers value when accessing services and shaping services accordingly to improve effectiveness and efficiency	Medium	Tony Curliss Eira Carrol	01/04/13	31/3/16	Directorates will allocate a resource to produce six monthly Learning from Complaints reports to identify service improvements. The Customer Complaints Officer will monitor progress corporately
CS01 / LC02	Identify and gain feedback from customer groups with specific service requirements, especially in relation to access to digital services	Understanding what customers value when accessing services and shaping services accordingly to improve effectiveness and efficiency	High	Tony Curliss Bev Noon	01/04/13	31/3/16	Equalities Team will identify how to contact hard to reach groups. Customer Service Implementation Group will implement outcomes from consultation

Improving access to services

Ref.	During 2013-16 we plan to:	Outcomes we'll achieve from this action	High, medium or low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start Date	Finish Date	How will the work be resourced?
CS02 / AS01	Maximise the number of service enquiries that can be resolved at first point of contact by transfer of service responsibilities to Contact OneVale	Improved access to services, reduced failure demand and realisation of operational efficiencies	High	Tony Curliss	01/01/14	31/3/16	Corporately through Customer Service Implementation Group (CSIG) and Service Support Officer at Contact OneVale
CS02 / AS02	Work with partners to develop shared services and utilise existing resources	Simplify access to public services, improve service delivery and realise efficiency savings	High	Tony Curliss	01/03/13	31/3/16	Dedicated project manager will work to integrated health services at the Shared Service Centre
CS02 / AS03	Maximise the number of services that are available online and ensure that these are simple and easy to use	Make access to services simpler and more convenient. Reduce cost of delivering services.	High	Tony Curliss Nick Wheeler	01/11/13	31/3/16	CSIG will work with the BPR, Web Development teams and services
CS02 / AS04	Develop access to services via mobile devices	Make access to services simpler and more convenient. Reduce cost of delivering services	High	Nick Wheeler	01/01/14	31/12/14	Web Development team will develop options and implement approved solutions
CS02 / AS05	Redesign digital services and integrate with legacy systems to minimise human intervention and save costs	Reduce cost of service delivery. Improve first contact resolution and reduce error	High	Tony Curliss Nick Wheeler	01/11/13	31/03/14	ICT Web and Oracle Development teams in conjunction with service resources
CS02 / AS06	Ensure that service and process reviews build in digital delivery as a default	Service delivery meets the needs of the customer and are cost efficient	High	Tom Bowring	01/04/13	31/03/16	Utilising resources identified to undertake service reviews

Improving access to services (continued)							
Ref.	During 2013-16 we plan to:	Outcomes we'll achieve from this action	High, medium or low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start Date	Finish Date	How will the work be resourced?
CS02 / AS07	Measure and promote digital services to improve take up	Make access to services simpler and more convenient. Reduce cost of delivering services	High	Tony Curliss Nick Wheeler Alison Cummins	01/01/14	31/03/16	Business Support Manager will deliver MI on channel use to inform development and promotion actions
CS02 / AS08	Explore opportunities to create effective customer authentication to allow customers to monitor their own interactions with the council	Make access to services simpler and more convenient. Increased self service access and reduced cost of delivering services	Medium	Nick Wheeler	01/01/14	31/12/14	
CS02 / AS09	Develop processes to inform customers when services ordered online have been delivered	Improved customer satisfaction and reduced failure demand	High	Tony Curliss Nick Wheeler	01/01/14	31/12/14	Oracle Development Team and CSIG
CS02 / DI01	Promote internet access at libraries	Improved access to services and enhanced digital inclusion for priority groups	High	Tony Curliss Bev Noon Chris Edwards Alison Cummins	01/01/14	31/03/16	Corporate Communications Team will develop promotional activities and materials. Equalities team to identify how to access hard to reach groups and Libraries to actively promote opportunities
CS02 / DI02	Promote the use of free Wi-Fi access in public spaces within council buildings	Improved access to services and enhanced digital inclusion for priority groups		Tony Curliss Bev Noon Chris Edwards Alison Cummins	01/01/14	31/03/16	Corporate Communications Team will develop promotional activities and materials. Equalities team to identify how to access hard to reach groups and Libraries to actively promote opportunities
CS02 / DI03	Consult with representative groups to identify and engage hard to reach groups and develop a detailed plan to promote digital inclusion	Improved access to services and enhanced digital inclusion for priority groups		Tony Curliss Bev Noon Alison Cummins	01/01/14	31/03/16	Corporate Communications Team will develop promotional activities and materials. Equalities team to identify how to access hard to reach groups
CS02 / SM01	Develop social media as a key customer contact channel	Ensuring that access to services reflect trends in customer behaviour and expectations	Medium	Tony Curliss Alison Cummins	01/04./13	31/03/16	Communications manager will work with services to improve social media take up and content

	Improving access to services (continued)						
Ref.	During 2013-16 we plan to:	Outcomes we'll achieve from this action	High, medium or low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start Date	Finish Date	How will the work be resourced?
CS02 / SM02	Develop social media presence for individual services to engage with customers and cross promote online services	Ensuring that access to services reflect trends in customer behaviour and expectations	Medium	Alison Cummins Tony Curliss	01/04/13	31/03/16	Communications Manager will engage with individual services, review applications to create social media accounts and ensure that staff are trained in appropriate use.
CS02 / SM03	Make social media training available and improve staff skills in the use of social media	Ensuring that access to services reflect trends in customer behaviour and expectations	Medium	Alison Cummins	01/04/13	31/03/16	Communications Manager will ensure that staff are trained in appropriate use
CS02 / SM04	Create a Twitter account for customer service - @contactonevale - to address transactional requests from customers	Ensuring that access to services reflect trends in customer behaviour and expectations	Medium	Tony Curliss Alison Cummins	01/04/13	31/12/13	Supervisory staff in Customer Relations will monitor and respond to tweets
CS02 / TE01	Ensure contact handling service standards match customer expectations	C1V resource requirements and cost per call are minimised	Medium	Tony Curliss Tom Evans	01/04/13	31/03/16	Resource Planning activities will be undertaken as a operational activity by the Business Support Manager and Resource & Information Analyst
CS02 / TE02	Simplify the agent desktop to minimise call handling times and improve efficiency	Reduce time to competency for CSR's, maximise first contact resolution for customers, minimise failure demand and minimise cost per contact	High	Tony Curliss Dave Vining	01/04/13	31/03/16	A range of ICT resources are required to identify and appraise potential solution. The OM for Customer Relations will deliver functional requirements for the solution
CS02 / RE01	Implement formal customer service performance management, including SMART objectives for staff, achieve consistent customer experience and maximise resource efficiencies. i.e. use combined resources to provide holiday and sickness cover	Customers receive a consistently positive experience of using reception services	High	Tony Curliss Shelley Bellamy	01/04/14	31/03/16	Service Support Officer will lead the project and utilise service staff as required

Improving access to services (continued)						
Ref.	**During 2013-16 we plan to:**	**Outcomes we'll achieve from this action**	**High, medium or low priority**	**Officer responsible for achieving this action**	**Start Date**	**Finish Date**	**How will the work be resourced?**
CS02 / RE02	Wherever possible enquiries should be logged on CRM in order to maximise depth and quality of management information as well as improving transparency and increasing First Call Resolution	Management Information is available to understand the demand or services at reception areas. Processes can be put in place to promote alternative methods of access where appropriate, reducing contact costs and improving customer experience of accessing services at receptions by reducing queues	High	Tony Curliss	01/04/13	31/03/16	Service Support Officer will lead the project supported by C1V Team Leaders
CS02 / RE03	Introduce self service facilities at reception areas and encourage its usage	Improve customer experience of accessing services at reception by reducing queues and increase take up of self service delivering operational efficiencies	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/04/13	31/03/16	Service Support Officer will lead the project and utilise service staff as required
CS02 / RE04	Identify value-added activities that can be undertaken by reception staff	Improved staff productivity and service delivery	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/11/13	31/08/14	Service Support Officer will lead the project supported by C1V Team Leaders
CS02 / RE05	The full range of services offered using the face to face channel will accessible to all Vale residents	Improved access to services and customer experience	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/04/14	31/03/16	Service Support Officer will lead the project and utilise service staff as required
Changing how we do things						
CS03 / CH01	Reshape and develop our services to deliver services digitally	Improved access to services, meet customer expectations and deliver operational efficiencies	High	Tony Curliss Tom Bowring	01/04/13	31/03/16	Project will be led by Customer Relations utilising resources from the CSIG and the BPR Team
CS03 / CH02	Integrate systems and data	Delivery of joined up services, improve first contact resolution and minimise costs	High	Tony Curliss Nick Wheeler	01/01/14	31/03/15	Project will be led by Customer Relations utilising resources from the CSIG and Oracle Development Team
CS03 / CH03	Understand and remove the drivers of Avoidable Contact for each service	Improved access to services, meet customer expectations and deliver operational efficiencies	High	Tony Curliss	01/01/14	31/03/16	Business Support Manager will provide management information which will be acted upon by the CSIG

Developing a customer service culture							
Ref.	During 2013-16 we plan to:	Outcomes we'll achieve from this action	High, medium or low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start Date	Finish Date	How will the work be resourced?
CS04 / CU01	Establish a project team to create and implement a plan to improve our corporate customer service competency	Develop an enhanced customer service culture which delivers for our customers and in doing so creates efficiency savings	High	Reuben Bergman	01/01/14	31/03/16	Project will be led by HR with additional support provided through corporate training. Communications and Customer Relations
CS04 / CU02	Develop an internal communications plan to ensure staff understand customer service as a corporate priority and their role in delivering excellent customer service	Staff focused on delivering for the customer. Improving customer experience, reducing failure demand and reducing cost of service delivery	High	Tony Curliss Alison Cummins	01/01/14	31/03/15	Key messages will be agreed through CMT. Communications plan agreed between Customer Relations and Communications Team, who will develop and deliver promotional activities and materials
CS04 / CU03	Frontline staff will be mandated to deliver appropriate solutions for our customers, removing unnecessary escalation for authority and approval, while maintaining control of risk	Improved customer experience, increased first contact resolution reduced failure demand and reduced cost of service delivery	High	Tony Curliss	01/01/14	31/03/16	Project will be led by Customer Relations through CRPB. Services resources will be accessed as required
CS04 / CU04	Listen to what our staff members have to say about the ways we can improve service delivery	Improved customer experience and staff motivation. Increased first contact resolution reduced failure demand and reduced cost of service delivery	High	Alison Cummins Tony Curliss	01/04/14	31/03/15	Communications Manager will develop and deliver staff engagement plan. CSIG and Customer Relations Project Board will assess and implement appropriate suggestions