

Social Inclusion Working Group - 24 September 2009

Feedback on the proposed New Council Headquarters

What You Said	Our Response
<p>Staff and Communication</p> <p>1. There should be “Meet and Greet” Staff in the customer centre.</p>	<p>Provision of “meet and greeter” / floorwalkers (first point of contacts) are in the customer centre access requirements specification.</p>
<p>2. The frontline contacts should ensure that customers get access to the correct department</p>	<p>The first points of contacts will signpost customers to the correct department, service or area of the customer centre.</p>
<p>3. Interpreters should be available for deaf and hard of hearing and for people for whom English is not their first language</p>	<p>The timely provision of British Sign Language interpreters has been identified in the customer services EIA, and the corporate accessible information EIA.</p>
<p>4. There should be all types of signage (including Makaton, BSL and board widgets)</p>	<p>The need for different types of signage has been identified in the EIAs for customer services and corporate accessible information (which covers documents, communication, signposting, interpretation, translation, website, intranet, etc). Suggestions for improvements will be taken forward in further consultation during the final design stage of the project.</p>
<p>5. Information provided should be accessible – York People First can advise on this.</p>	<p>Through ongoing consultation with SIWG and the Communication EIA. Any advice offered will be taken on board through the SIWG consultation process.</p>
<p>6. Staff should receive Disability Equality Training.</p>	<p>There is an existing Equalities Awareness Training course provided through the Training</p>

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	<p>and Development Centre that all staff are entitled to attend. The customer services project has also identified the need to include more in-depth equalities training for frontline staff (this will cover all strands). Staff should apply for training through their directorates.</p>
<p>7. City of York Council should become a lead employer – it should follow through EIA issues to staff and not only customers</p>	<p>The EIA process has covered all issues identified by both staff and customers across the four EIAs currently in place for the accommodation project.</p>
<p>Design and Facilities</p> <p>8. Make sure people don't feel threatened by the mix of people in the customer centre (for example some older people may feel intimidated if there were young offenders present). The centre should be welcoming for all ages and everyone should feel safe.</p>	<p>The design and layout of the customer centre continues to be worked on taking account of ongoing customer and staff comments and feedback.</p> <p>At this stage in the project, we have identified the need to provide safe and secure environments for both customers and staff in the EIAs for both FM stream and Customer Services.</p>
<p>9. The building must be energy efficient</p>	<p>The building is being designed to BREEAM Excellent standards and will have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of 28 - equivalent to the top grade A – No other existing building in the council meets this level presently.</p>

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<p>10. Try to avoid having screens between staff and customers</p>	<p>The customer centre design has taken account of not putting barriers in place that are not needed for security and confidentiality needs. Sight lines are being designed to give an open and friendly customer environment.</p>
<p>11. Must be autism friendly</p>	<p>The design and layout of the customer centre continues to be worked on taking account of ongoing customer and staff comments and feedback. Customer services staff will be trained in “equalities awareness” including multiple needs to ensure we can provide support to customers with a range of different needs.</p>
<p>12. Feng Shui (spiritually uplifting)</p>	<p>We will not be investing in Feng Shui consultation.</p>
<p>13. A prayer room</p>	<p>Advice is that this is now referred to as the ‘Contemplation Room’. How it will be used in practice will need to be consulted on further through SERG and SIWG – however the need for this type of space in the building for both customers/staff to use has been identified and allocated in the initial plans. It may be that, dependent on advice through consultation, numerous rooms may be suitable.</p>
<p>14. Computers available for customers to use (could be loaded for the City of York Council website). Screens</p>	<p>The design of the customer centre includes the requirement for a “self service zone” which will include access to computers</p>

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<p>should be suitable for people with epilepsy</p>	<p>for customers to either self-serve, or be supported by staff to use. These will be made accessible for all users e.g. at different heights. The need for suitable screens, computer equipment etc will be within the IT strategy for the new HQ.</p>
<p>15. Leeds have “The Information Store” and have to share it with other councils for free.</p>	<p>We will contact them at the appropriate stage of the project.</p>
<p>16. Gender neutral toilets and gender specific ones too (for staff and customers). Appropriate changing facilities.</p>	<p>Design team to respond. Shower and changing facilities will be provided in a specific area as part of the design brief for staff.</p>
<p>17. Provision should be made for young children going into the building with their parents/carers and also childcare facilities for staff (for example a crèche, drop-in and play area)</p>	<p>There is no crèche in the design brief for the new building for staff to use. In the customer centre there will be provision made for ensuring that young children are occupied.</p>
<p>18. There should be provision for guide dogs and hearing dogs</p>	<p>The customer centre design includes the need for dog facilities within the external environment (this includes fixed leads, water and excrement disposal units).</p>
<p>19. No scary glass lifts</p>	<p>There will be no glass lifts. “Evacuation” lifts to current standards will be provided.</p>
<p>20. Should be available out of office hours to make use of the space but must be secure. Should be available for meetings for example SIWG meetings</p>	<p>This is being addressed through flexible working policies discussions which will determine the operational hours of the building and what spaces within it can be accessed by non-</p>

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	council staff / groups within agreed parameters.
Location	
21. Will a central location attract more traffic into the city centre? – Need to get public transport right to prevent this from happening.	The chosen site is near to all public transport links and will be signposted within the streetscape to direct people to the new HQ building.
22. The building should be on a bus route for every area of York	The new HQ building has proximity to public transports links.
23. For some people having access to services locally is important	The customer services project is exploring access to customer services in the community through existing buildings, e.g. Libraries and also sharing spaces with partners e.g. DWP, HMRC etc
Consultation	
24. When more detailed information is available about the building it will be easier to comment. More consultation should take place then.	Ongoing consultation will be undertaken throughout the project life using a variety of different methods and formats.
25. Consult the voluntary sector and other services with particular areas of expertise	Ongoing consultation will be done with all stakeholders.

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<p>26. If there are problems when the building opens – the Council needs to respond and make changes. Contingencies should be in place.</p>	<p>There will be phased transfer from existing buildings and testing as part of the Property Exit Strategy, which is being developed. This will allow issues to be picked up gradually that may require some change management by directorates.</p>
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