
Urgency Committee

3rd August 2007

Report of the Easy@york Programme Director

Executive Summary

Easy@york Progress report and options for Phase 2

Summary

1. This report provides a high level view of the main reasons why we need to undertake a second phase of easy@york. The full business case is set out in the main report but this summary will help to guide members to the key points.

Background

2. The first phase of easy@york is not yet finished but already it is widely regarded throughout the organisation as a major success and an exemplar of how significant improvements can be made to the way in which the Council delivers services to customers, more efficiently and more effectively.
3. When the Programme was agreed there was always the assumption that further phases would be needed in order to cover the majority of our customer contact and essentially to be able to move to Hungate. The main report sets this out in more detail.

Benefits of the easy@york approach

4. The Programme has already delivered significant customer benefits –
 - Faster end to end processing of customer requests
 - Better quality services resulting in high levels of customer satisfaction (99%)
 - Efficient processes already yielding savings, with £307k of potential savings being identified after only 5 months and with only half of the first phase actually implemented.
 - Released capacity to deal with increased demand for services
 - Introduction

Imperatives

5. Without a further phase of easy@york the move to Hungate will not be possible as: -
 - The size and layout of the building is predicated upon a single customer contact point. Without establishing a single customer service, more space would be needed to create separate receptions for each service.
 - Easy@york will create new processes for handling customer requests using electronic workflow and document management. Without this, there will still be a reliance upon paper and a need for staff to be located in close proximity to share paper documents. This will mean that Hungate will not be big enough to contain either the number of staff (no home working) or the volume of paper we will need to store to continue working as we are.
 - The Hungate project would need to be reviewed and significant additional cost and delay would inevitably ensue.
6. Government are starting to mandate the approach we are taking, building in measures into the inspection regime for Comprehensive Area Agreements that measure self service (web) customer transactions and transactions delivered in one contact, which can only be measured and delivered by use of CRM and contact centre solutions like easy@york.
7. The approach being recommended for easy@york is being widely adopted elsewhere by other authorities. Research of other authorities has shown that significant savings can be made (over £1m p.a. of savings have been made by other authorities on services included within phase 2). These authorities have also improved the customer experience.
8. Customers are very satisfied with the service they are receiving from the York Customer Centre with 99% very or fairly satisfied with the overall service received. Further improvements are being made to bed the service in. A telephone menu will be introduced in August to increase the effectiveness of the YCC staff in handling customer calls.
9. Our Customer Services need to move with the times and easy is the only mechanism we have of meeting these changing demands. In future, customers will: -
 - Demand more joined up approaches from us
 - Expect to be able to access the Council self-service over the internet
 - Expect to deal with the Council when they want to, often out of normal hours.
 - Expect much clearer indications of when we will deliver their service requests
 - Expect much better feedback on work in progress

Recommendations

10. Members are asked to agree funding for a second phase of easy (Option 3) to cover Housing Management, Social Services, Warden Call, Parking, electoral registration, Licensing, Flexible Working, Income Collection, recruitment and internal processes to facilitate the move to Hungate. This will cost approx £2m - £2.5. A further report will be brought back to Executive before Christmas to refine the exact scope, timing and delivery mechanisms for the next phase,

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Report Approved**Date** 31/7/07**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all***All**

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