

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>15 July 2015</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>HKP Reception</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Wendy Jones, Contact Centre &amp; Customer Services Manager</b>		
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<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>None</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update following one year of the new HKP (Herbert, Kimberly and Phillpotts) reception design and processes.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that the contents of this report be noted.

### 3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 HKP reception was identified as being out dated and in need of modernising. The area was dark with odd and old furniture and did not give a very good first impression to customers.
- 3.2 Members will be aware of the previous limitations of the old reception mainly:-
- Limited seating area & booths for customers interviews.
  - Lack of private interview rooms big enough to take couples, a family or mobility vehicles.
  - Wasted space where the old cashiers unit was situated.
  - Out-dated systems including the ticketing machine and CCTV.
- 3.3 HKP reception closed in January 2014 for a complete redesign and a temporary reception was set up in the ground floor of North Warehouse.
- 3.4 HKP reception was successfully completed in April 2014 and the newly designed reception opened on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014.
- 3.5 The new reception created ten booths and five private interview rooms, two being PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984) compliant as well as having three

café style meeting areas where customers can wait or have a brief meeting with Officers away from the booths.

- 3.6 Security was improved by adding additional CCTV cameras, escape routes and panic alarms.
- 3.7 A new ticketing system was installed which has improved queue flow and waiting times.
- 3.8 New hard wood flooring, carpets and seating were introduced in lighter and brighter colours.
- 3.9 The traditional reception desk was removed and floor walkers now assist customers from a reception station if they need to make calls or book appointments for visitors.

#### **4.0 Progress**

- 4.1 The new ticketing and queue management is working well with average wait times reduced from approx 50 minutes prior to the new reception to approx 19 minutes now.
- 4.2 Several amendments to the ticketing system have been made following feedback from customers & the team to help customers select the correct service area. The system is working well with few customers taking the wrong ticket.
- 4.3 The introduction of a floor walker instead of a traditional reception is working well. The Officers are able to greet customers on entry to the reception area as well as moving freely between the ticketing & payment machines. The improved flexibility also means they are able to support customers on the self-serve cyber booths if required.
- 4.4 The number of self-service PC cyber booths have been increased so customers can go on line and register for Housing Benefit or HomeSeeker, they can also view the planning portal for planning applications and look on the City Council web site for information or to raise service requests.
- 4.5 The new reception area layout has also enabled some innovative partnership working with Green Square and Learn Direct who both have a regular allocation in the reception (Green Square on Monday & Friday and Learn Direct on Tuesdays) to help support customers with budgeting, on-line applications, PC skills and basic English & Maths courses etc. Further opportunities to engage with other partners through the use of the reception space and facilities are also being explored.
- 4.6 The feedback from the Gov Metric System regarding the reception area, ticketing and new way of working has been very positive with 72% of customers (2,849 customers) over the last year rating the service as good.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options Considered**

- 5.1 Not applicable as this report is an update on the changes that have taken place.

## **6.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 6.1 To update Members on the changes which have taken place and highlight the improvements that these changes have brought to our customers. The reception area is working well and it is regularly reviewed and changes made to improve the experience for our customers.
- 6.2 The reception area is now a bright and airy place to visit and work. Staff are now able to deliver a professional service in a nice environment.
- 6.3 The new ticketing system and CCTV monitoring means that the Service Manager can manage queues more efficiently and move resources between the contact centre and reception to meet demands.
- 6.4 Security has improved with new panic alarms and escape routes providing additional support for staff and customers.

## **7.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

- 7.1 The Customer Services team are constantly reviewing the performance of the reception area to ensure it meets the needs of our customers. With the PACE rooms no longer being used by Civica for fraud investigations there is scope to offer other organisations space within the reception area to offer their services to customers.
- 7.2 The large glass meeting room is underutilised so it will be promoted for use across the authority.
- 7.3 In conclusion, the new reception area and its facilities have been well received by customers, visitors and staff.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are some minor financial implications relating to changes to the interview booths and quotes are currently being obtained for cleaning the reception seating area which will have to be done on a regular basis.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 None directly arising from this report other than compliance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders as necessary.

## **10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

- 10.1 There are no risks associated with this report and opportunities for other organisations to utilise the reception space and improve services to our customers are picked up in the body of the report.

## **11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):**

11.1 A full PIA was undertaken at the time of the refurbishment works so there are no issues identified within this report that would impact on customers under PIA criteria.

## **12.0 Other Corporate Implications**

### 12.1 Community Safety

None identified.

### 12.2 Sustainability

None identified.

### 12.3 Staffing and Trade Union

None identified.

**Background Documents:** None