

Service area	Customer Services
Date of assessment	December 2010
Name of strategy / policy / function / service to be assessed	Proposals to reduce customer service provision in St Ives, Ramsey and Yaxley
Is this a new or existing strategy / policy / function / service?	The service exists, but there are proposals to reduce the service level provided
Name of manager responsible for strategy / policy / function / service	
Names of people conducting the assessment	
Step 1 - Description of strategy / policy / function / service.	
Describe the aims; objectives and purpose of the strategy / policy / function / service (include how it fits in to wider aims or strategic objectives).	<p>The council is facing severe financial constraints. As a result, service reductions are being considered for the satellite customer service centres in Ramsey, Yaxley and St Ives.</p> <p>Information gathered as part of the budget process, including providing details to Overview & Scrutiny panels in January 2011, shows that the bulk of services accessed at these offices is easily available either elsewhere in the town, on the internet or by phone to the Call Centre.</p> <p>The main areas to be more adversely affected are Housing and Housing benefits, which will still be dependent upon contact direct with the council.</p>
Are there any (existing) equality objectives of the strategy / policy	Yes – see EIA dated January 2009. This EIA was developed

<p>or function / service?</p>	<p>before the financial problems were apparent.</p>
<p>Who is intended to benefit from the strategy / policy / function / service and in what way?</p>	<p>Customers will be affected by the reduction in services at the offices in Ramsey, St Ives and Yaxley.</p> <p>Staff will be affected, whether through redundancy or redeployment. All the staff affected are female.</p>
<p>What are the intended outcomes of this strategy / policy / function / service?</p>	<p>To save money, whilst keeping a minimal service operating, especially by enabling partners to continue to use our facilities (whilst the leases endure).</p>
<p>Step 2 – Data.</p>	
<p>What baseline quantitative data (statistics) do you have about the strategy / policy / function / service relating to equalities groups (e.g. monitoring data on proportions of service users compared to proportions in the population), relevant to this policy?</p>	<p>A lot of data has been gathered about the type of services used by customers at these offices. In addition, modelling has taken place to show how various service users will be impacted by the changes, and efforts that can be made to minimise the inconvenience experienced by these people.</p> <p>This data was presented at O&S in January 2010, and to the Executive Councillor for Finance prior to a final decision being taken. The feedback following these meetings was positive. All members are appreciative of the service offered by our front line staff.</p> <p>The majority of services provided by HDC at these offices will still continue just on a reduced scale. For example access to seeing a benefit assessment officer will still be available weekly at St Ives and fortnightly at Ramsey & Yaxley.</p>



Access arrangements for customers to hand deliver their housing and benefits documents is being investigated with Peterborough City Council and CCC library services. It is likely that joint partner working arrangements will be introduced to be able to continue to offer this service from these locations.

Payments, streetscene and council tax information can all be processed by the call centre. A dedicated free phone is being installed into the library in Ramsey which will increase the level of service available as the call centres opening times are longer. Improvements have been made to the on-line forms to make reporting/changing details this way easier for all our customers.

CAB surgeries will still be operational at Ramsey & Yaxley although the CAB have reduced the level of service provided to these offices over the last 6 months by half. Learning services provided by CCC will continue at the libraries in Ramsey & Yaxley. Access to the internet (public access pc) will still be available at Ramsey & Yaxley via CCC at the libraries, this service hasn't been available at St Ives but is available in the library in St Ives.

Access to transport services (mainly bus passes) is being passed over to CCC from 1.4.11 so will still be available in Ramsey, Yaxley & St Ives from the library services.

Luminus will still have access to the offices at Ramsey & Yaxley to be able to provide an advice surgery for their tenants. This service isn't currently available in St Ives so will not impact here.

<p>What qualitative data (opinions etc) do you have on different groups (e.g. comments from previous consumer satisfaction surveys / consultation, feedback exercises, or evidence from other authorities undertaking similar work), relevant to this strategy / policy / function / service?</p>	<p>The council has received a letter from Farcet parish council and a petition from Yaxley residents. The petition was presented to Council on 18 December, and was considered by Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) in January 2011.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction surveys for the past year show a good response of customer satisfaction for all offices and Ramsey & Yaxley have obtained customer service excellence.</p> <p>It is not possible to analyse the responses from Ramsey/Yaxley/St Ives budget surveys, and after further investigation into the information on the place surveys it is also not possible to obtain this.</p>
<p>Step 3 - Policy impact.</p>	
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy / policy / function / service could have a differential impact on different racial groups?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>No evidence to suggest differential impact.</p> <p>There were some issues last year around Gypsy/Traveller issues in Yaxley but this was related to a specific consultation exercise undertaken by the Planning Department. however the work around Gypsy/Traveller sites is currently on hold.</p> <p>There are no specific issues relating to racial groups in Ramsey, St Ives or Yaxley.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy / policy / function / service could have a differential impact on gender, including transgender people and pregnant women?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>No evidence to suggest differential impact.</p> <p>Reducing services in these areas will impact equally on people, regardless of their gender. Staff are female but would be offered redeployment in the customer service centre in Huntingdon, St</p>

	<p>Neets or the call centre. The potential difference in grades will mean that affected staff will be on a protected salary for 12 months. Recent vacancies at both the CSC and the CC have been filled by temporary posts on 6 month contracts.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy / policy / function / service could have a differential impact on disabled?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>No evidence to suggest differential impact.</p> <p>We don't have any data on how many of our customers are disabled. However, the reduction in services is bound to affect some disabled people. Enabling some provision in respect of HDC services as detailed above should minimise the impact on all our customers.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy / policy /function / service could have a differential impact on lesbian, gay, or bisexual people compared with heterosexual people?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>No evidence to suggest differential impact.</p> <p>We don't have any data on how many of our customers are lesbian, gay or bisexual. All changes to the service provided will affect all our customers equally.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy / policy / function / service could have a differential impact on younger or older people?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Ramsey and Yaxley currently record services offered for younger and older people. These include help with finding work, writing CV's, learning services, bus and rail passes, general issues around services offered by other organisations (e.g. age concern, pensions, other benefits, etc)</p> <p>The younger customers will still be able to access these services via the libraries and with the neighbourhood management services. Older customers are often less mobile and may not be able to use their free bus pass to travel into Huntingdon. They will be able to use the free phone from Ramsey to contact the call centre or will be able to access the CAB for other general</p>



	<p>queries. They will have to wait longer to get their queries answered in a face to face location in Ramsey & Yaxley.</p> <p>Additional training will be researched and if available offered to the call centre team on call handling for hard to reach groups.</p> <p>No data is collected on the ages of customers to these offices with the exception of Ramsey & Yaxley recording visits around younger/older queries. These numbers are very low in comparison to the annual customers. Ramsey approx 8% of customers captured in this group and Yaxley approx 7%</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy / policy / function / service could have a differential impact on grounds of religion or belief?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>No evidence to suggest differential impact.</p>
<p>Other queries raised</p>	<p>Neighbourhood management will continue to be in the Ramsey office (moving to the new library) and will be focussing on the needs of the community. The new library team have worked alongside the neighbourhood management team and the volunteers to develop a local community volunteers group. The neighbourhood team were only based in Ramsey and therefore will continue to support and develop the needs for the town. With regards to a central meeting place for the community. The offices at Ramsey & Yaxley will still be available for those partner groups and district/parish councillors to hold monthly surgeries if required.</p>

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Objective	Action	Target/Timetable for completion of
Communicating the changes to all customers	1 – approve advertising the changes to the services available 2 – agree the methods of promoting the changes 3 – agree monitoring of the level of service offered to customers by alternative methods (eg libraries & Peterborough City Council)	Unable to insert dates until final decisions have been reached. The CSC management team agreed that discussions on how to promote the changes would happen prior to the changes taking effect.
Obtain costs for travelling into Huntingdon from other areas	1 – Ramsey – Huntingdon bus routes and frequency 2 – Yaxley – Huntingdon bus routes and frequency – include Peterborough routes also 3 – St Ives – Huntingdon bus routes and frequency	
Obtaining telephone line in Ramsey library	Ensure campaign line 2 number is used from Ramsey library.	