Customer Service

Project Sponsor Andrew Grant, Aylesbury Vale District Council
Lead Officer Lesley Yates, Aylesbury Vale District Council
Project Manager Laura Jones, Aylesbury Vale District Council

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1. **Recommendation**

That the Joint Improvement Board agree:

1.1 The objectives and scope of the project proposals

1.2 A budget of £32,000 to progress the project in phase 1

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2. **Project vision/objectives**

2.1 The objective of the project is to deliver an integrated approach to the design and delivery of customer services across Buckinghamshire and between county and district councils, and potentially other public service agencies. Through this approach to deliver financial savings <u>and</u> improvement of service for customers relevant to customer needs.

3. **Scope**

3.1 **Within scope**
- A review of the effectiveness of customer contact in all its forms e.g: face to face, telephone, electronic, written correspondence, considering:
  o Customer demand and expectations, identification of any gaps in service
  o Analysis of the customer contact data from each authority
  o Best practice and government guidance, such as the Varney review[1] which considers the opportunities for improving customer contact through information technology
- Potential for other public sector services to opt in, e.g. Health, Police, Fire and rescue service, and voluntary sector.

3.2 **Out of scope**
- Implementation
- Redevelopment of back office services

4. **Benefits**

4.1 **Financial**
As the Pathfinder submission did not specify the scale of savings for this project a key output will be to identify potential savings and cost efficiencies, which are anticipated from co-operative working and opportunities for integrating services.

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[1] Service transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer
Sir David Varney, December 2006

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4.2 Non financial

The non financial benefits of this project can be summarised as opportunities for greater customer engagement, ability to reflect local needs and diversity, and more effective and quicker resolution of customer requests or queries.

5. Deliverables

The first phase of this project will produce a business case which will set out a range of costed options for delivering vision.

Other deliverables beyond phase 1 of the project will become clearer upon production of the business case and subsequent decisions by the partners as to the preferred way forward.

6. Timescales and key milestones

6.1 Within Project

This proposal covers the first phase of the project to April 2008

Research of current provision and national best practice   Complete by End August 2007
Analysis of gaps between current provision and vision   Complete by End October 2007
Planning phase including customer survey and the evaluation
 of options for delivering vision   Complete November - End March 2008
Report options to JIB   April 2008
Implementation   Starts, subject to approval, after April 2008

6.2 Outside Project

- Elections / change of administration
- Partners internal development/transformation boards will impact, vie for resource and may impede ability to progress

7. Estimated costs

The project team has identified the following resource requirement:

£12,000 to procure project resource to support research and analysis. Although some of this work is being undertaken in-house, additional capacity is required to carryout the research and gap analysis within the timescale outlined in paragraph 6.1 above.

£20,000 to commission customer survey – which will be carried out following the analysis of existing information to test our findings with our customers.

8. Project Board

Project Sponsor/Executive: Andrew Grant
Lesley Yates, Laura Jones and Jackie Binning, Aylesbury Vale District Council
Paul Ricketts, Wycombe District Council
Steve Bramhill, Wycombe District Council
Laura Sawyer, South Bucks District Council
Sue Trotter, Chiltern District Council
Carl Welham, Buckinghamshire County Council

9. **Member involvement**
   Regular progress reports will be made to the Joint Improvement Board, and wider Member involvement will be addressed as part of the project's communications plan

10. **Related projects / Work streams**
    This project will link to those on Demand led transport and Support services.

11. **Key Risks**
    The project's risk register is attached as Appendix 1

Customer Services Project – Risk Register

ID	Date Identified	Raised by	Description	Likelihood *	Impact *	Priority *	Owner	Advanced Actions	Status
Reputation									
9	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk of perceived failure because the project creates expectation and impact is we are viewed poorly by our customers and staff	M	H	H	AG	Ensure we consult customers, involve staff and communicate clearly to everyone	
Systems									
56	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk that joined-up wouldn't be efficient because we do not have common systems, impact would be reduced efficiency and inability to provide seamless service.	H	H	L		Plan early in project to assess compatibility of systems and correctly identify those systems that have the potential to 'meet' requirements. The preferred partnership arrangement for customer services may require significant investment in a technology solution.	
Service Standards									
Customer perception									
32	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk we damage customer satisfaction because what we are able to deliver is not what the customer wants but what LGOL wants, impact would be loss of reputation	H	H	H		We should all want the same - LGOL wants efficiencies and therefore we need to listen closely to what our customers want and concentrate on the services where we can drive out efficiencies and give our customers what they want.	
Project Governance									
3	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk members will not support recommendations if members' perceptions/desires are different to those of the project because they have a different view.	H	H	H		Ensure members are consulted on their views and that project objectives are communicated and approved at key stages.	

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ID	Date Identified	Raised by	Description	Likelihood *	Impact *	Priority *	Owner	Advanced Actions	Status
Communications									
15	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk to time and budget if communications between projects are not in place, the impact of this will be miscommunication, confusion and conflict.	H	H	H		Strong programme and support management communicating between all projects - Communications plan needs to be in place	
Partner Agreement									
13	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk we won't achieve perception of 'one council' because we won't abandon own identity for common good, the impact will be no improvement to customer 'journey' and ability to identify where service is	H	H	M		Leaders and Cadex will need to work together to agree 'shape' of new organisation and communicate message widely and frequently.	
5	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk to time, quality and budget - if all partners do not have same level of commitment due to resource, priority issues, etc	H	H	H		Identify these issues early on in projects and escalate through sponsor, programme mgt and cadex - swift resolution or workarounds must be found - buy in backfill resource or loan between partners.	
Buildings									
58	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk to operational aspect because project identifies changes to 'places' we deliver - impact would be delay due to build, change, communication to customer, etc	H	H	L		Project must be aware of impact of change in places/types of delivery - resourcing and piloting must be accounted for during these phases.	

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ID	Date Identified	Raised by	Description	Likelihood *	Impact *	Priority *	Owner	Advanced Actions	Status
Vision									
34	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk we do not achieve required outcome because we do not have a well described and agreed vision, impact will be inability to agree on way forward and or solutions.	H	H	H		Project Leader and manager have proposed a way forward. Need to agree this and communicate and agree within Project Board. Clear Identification of purpose is a must	In progress
Pathfinder/ LGOL									
21	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk we 'get it wrong' because government expectation of pathfinder is different to ours, the impact would be failure and increased pressure from government	H	H	H		Once pathfinder status is agreed we need to 'check' our objectives and proposals against their expectations to ensure we are on track - regular feedback/communication will be required - probably via programme management.	
48	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk that project is too long - change of goalposts/gov/legislation because imp phase too long, impact will be systems may change, be unavailable, staff/knowledge may be lost	H	H	M		Ensure project is broken down into manageable phases and where possible 'whole changes' made in one go to minimise impact. Ensure regular checks are made to cadex/Jib regarding currency.	
49	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk of legislation/change - because project so big this may impact heavily on outcome	M	H	M		ie, Change in government would impact heavily - programme management/comms to ensure project kept well informed of any changes.	
Staff/ Resource									
7	06/06/2007	Project Board	Risk is we fail to accurately evaluate the cost/benefit analysis - efficiencies, because we do not have the right skill set, the impact is we will not achieve planned efficiencies	H	H	M		Consider using external resource/skill at appropriate stage of project - so far we have not identified an appropriate costing model - research 'other authorities methods'	

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ID	Date Identified	Raised by	Description	Likelihood *	Impact *	Priority *	Owner	Advanced Actions	Status
60	06/06/2007	L Jones	Risk we lose key staff because they are successful/scarce resource, impact would be loss of knowledge, skills, etc	H	H	H		Identify key staff early on, start documenting key processes, areas where key skills exist and plan knowledge transfer to others to reduce risk.	
Financial									
	26/06/2007	Project Board	Risk to ability to identify savings where no steer has been given by CADEX/JIB on the level of savings to be targeted by the work stream.	H	H	H		Matter to be raised with CADEX/JIB as appropriate.	

*   High
          Medium
          Low