

## TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **153/2005**

Title: **Torbay Council Customer Services Strategy**

To: Executive on 14th June 2005

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### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To consider Torbay Council's draft Customer Service Strategy "Its all about you" which sets out how customers can access Council services and what they can expect when they do.

### **2. Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

#### **2.1 Core Values – Customer focus**

- We are committed to putting the customer at the centre of all of our services
  - We will seek the views of the people of Torbay so that we can better meet their needs
  - We will celebrate diversity and promote equal opportunities in our service delivery, our employment practices and through our partnerships
  - We will ensure that we are transparent in our decision making
- Service delivery**
- We will aim to continuously improve our services, particularly those which are our priorities, and seek to be more efficient
  - We will work with all of our partners to deliver better quality services to Torbay
  - We will value the contribution that staff make to services and ensure that they are well trained and effective in their jobs

- 2.2 The strategy underpins all of the Council's priorities.

### **3. Recommendation(s)**

- 3.1 That the Torbay Council Customer Services Strategy "Its all about you" set out at Appendix 1 to this Report be approved.

### **4. Reason for Recommendation(s)**

- 4.1 One of the issues arising from the Customer Focus Best Value review was a lack of strategy and hence clarity about customer access and the customer focus core group was tasked with strategy development as one strand of the pilot/pathfinder exercise.
- 4.2 The attached document has been approved by Customer Focus Steering Group that consists of Members, external challenge and officers plus Strategic Directors Management Team.

### **5. Key Risks associated with the Recommendation(s)**

- 5.1 To continue to have no strategy does not meet transparency in decision-making as outlined in the corporate plan or provide a clear statement for customers, service users, partners and clients.

Likelihood	6	6	12	18	24
	5	5	10	15	20
	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	x	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		Impact			

Low risk
  Intermediate risk
  High risk

The "x" in the above matrix denotes where the author has assessed the level of final risk to fall

**6. Alternative Options (if any)**

6.1 To decide not to approve the Strategy, this option is not recommended.

**7. Background**

7.1 The Customer focus core team has consulted with other councils, considered our service users and referred the attached strategy to Steering Group for comment and approval. This version takes account of all of their views.

**Richard Thorpe**  
**Director of Finance**

Contact Officer: Trish Webster  
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## **IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND OTHER INFORMATION**

### Part 1

These sections may have been completed by the Report author but must have been agreed by the named officers in the Legal, Finance, Human Resources, Estates and Property and Procurement.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues? If "Yes" - give details. <i>delete as appropriate</i>		Name of responsible officer
Legal	No	Bill Norman
Financial – Revenue	No	Martin Phillips
Financial – Capital Plan	No	Martin Phillips
Human resources	Yes – employees, partners and stakeholders need to be briefed on the strategy prior to its launch	Geoff Williams
Property	No	Sam Partridge
Procurement and Efficiency	Yes – Communications team need to participate in publicising the strategy	Lorna Shearman

### Part 2

The author of the report must complete these sections.

Could this proposal realistically be achieved in a manner that would more effectively: <i>delete as appropriate</i>		
(i)	promote environmental sustainability?	No
(ii)	reduce crime and disorder?	No
(iii)	promote good community relations?	No
(iv)	promote equality of opportunity on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief?	No
(v)	reduce (or eliminate) unlawful discrimination (including indirect discrimination)?	No

If the answer to any of the above questions is "Yes" the author must have addressed the relevant issue/s in the main report and have included a full justification and, where appropriate, an impact assessment.

### Part 3

The author of the report must complete this section.

	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes", give details
Does the proposal have implications for any other Business Units?	Yes	All business units need to be aware of the councils principles for customer access so that the strategy can be incorporated into individual service standards

#### Part 4

Is this proposal in accordance with (i.e. not contrary to) the Council's budget or its Policy Framework?		<i>delete as appropriate</i>
		Yes
1.	If "No" - give details of the nature and extent of consultation with stakeholders and the relevant overview and scrutiny body.	
2.	If "Yes" - details and outcome of consultation, if appropriate.	

#### Part 5

Is the proposal a Key Decision?	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes" - give Reference Number
	No	

#### Part 6

##### **Wards**

All Wards

##### **Appendices**

Appendix 1                      Torbay Council Customer Services Strategy

##### **Documents available in Members' Room**

Customer Focus Best Value Review report

##### **Background Papers:**

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

Best Value Review report  
Job Centre Plus Access Strategy  
Best practice examples from other councils

## “IT’S ALL ABOUT YOU” TORBAY COUNCIL’S CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY

“Providing accessible, convenient, responsive and high quality services to you.”

### **Accessible and convenient services**

#### **We will ...**

- make our services simple to use and give you freedom of choice in the way in which you deal with the council;
- offer our services to you at convenient times;
- ensure our offices are in convenient locations, easily accessible, attractive, welcoming and comfortable;
- provide our services direct into your own home or workplace;
- work with other organisations and individuals to provide a wider range of services to you;
- ensure we are fair and equal in the way we deliver services; and
- avoid the use of jargon or “council speak”

### **Responsive and high quality services**

#### **We will...**

- tell you what you can expect from us and be clear about what we expect from you;
- listen to you and monitor our performance;
- let you know what to do if you feel unsatisfied (see our comments, compliments and complaints Feedback forms, web site [www.torbay.gov.uk/feedback](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/feedback) or telephone 01803 201201);
- get things right first time so our services are efficient and good value for money;
- say sorry when we do make a mistake but ensure we put things right;
- learn from others to improve our service to you; and
- provide our employees with the necessary training and support to give excellent and professional customer service to you.

“Our aim is to resolve 80% of all enquiries at first point of contact.”