Subject:	Customer Focus Programme Update
Date:	22 March 2019
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Customer Focus Programme Director

Restricted Reports				
Is this report restricted?	**Yes**		**No**	x

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision	
After Council Decision	
Some time in the future	
Never	

Call-in				
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	**Yes**	X	**No**	

1.0	**Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**
1.1	Following the completion of an Outline Business Case (OBC) and Customer Focus Discovery phase the Strategic Policy & Resources committee agreed a blueprint for Customer Focus **(Appendix 1)** and the design principles **(Appendix 2)** that are required to deliver this major transformation programme.
1.2	The Strategic Policy & Resources committee also agreed the recruitment of the post of Strategic Programme Director which has now been successfully filled on a 3 year interim basis.
1.3	Governance for the Customer Focus programme of work has been established to oversee the implementation of this key programme of work through the creation of a Customer Focus Programme board reporting to CMT and SP&R **(Appendix 3)**. Members of the board include: • Director of Finance & Resources (Chair and SRO), • Director of City & Neighbourhood Services,

	- Director of City & Organisational Strategy, - Customer Focus Programme Director, - Head of Marketing & Communications, - Head of Digital Services, - Continuous Improvement Manager - Business representation as required.
1.4	It was agreed that a detailed plan would be created and presented to committee. This report outlines the implementation approach **(Appendix 4)**, key milestones of the detailed plan **(Appendix 5)**, the programme workstreams **(Appendix 6)** and the resource requirements **(Appendix 7)** that will be necessary to successfully take forward the Customer Focus programme of work.
1.5	One of the products of the Customer Focus Programme will be a redesigned website. To ensure its effectiveness, a set of principles for a new domain name strategy has been defined **(Appendix 8).**
1.6	Finally, Communication and engagement will be critical to delivering service improvement effectively. A communications plan for the programme can be found at **(Appendix 9)**.
2.0	**Recommendations**
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve: 1. The Customer Focus Programme approach to implementation, programme plan and workstreams outlined in the report. 2. The alignment of the Continuous Improvement Programme review of Business Support and continuing engagement with Trade Unions. 3. The procurement of a 'Strategic Delivery Partner'. 4. Recruitment of a new Customer Hub Manager. 5. Recruitment of a new Operational Director for CNS on a permanent basis. 6. Agree the principles for a new Domain Name Strategy **(Appendix 8 – Domain Name Policy)** and to put on hold development of new websites until completion of the Web workstream.

	7. That a pilot implementation of a Video Relay Service for sign language will be undertaken for a period of one year from April 2019.
3.0	**Main report**
3.1	<u>Detailed Planning Phase</u> The Customer Focus programme has been broken down into a number of key workstreams. The key milestones for the programme can be found in (**Appendix 5)** and the detailed scope of each workstream can be found in (**Appendix 6)**. The workstreams are: 1 **Customer Hub workstream** – Design and operation of a corporate 'Customer Hub' which will deal with customer contact for all departments and services, across all channels (online, mobile, telephone, face-to-face, email…) and which will oversee the introduction of a single telephone number for the Council. A key focus in the design of the Customer Hub will be a streamlined process to proactively manage the information requirements of elected members. The Customer Hub Manager role is integral to managing the service of the new Customer Hub. It is an important role to recruit early in the programme to bring user experience skills and capacity to the programme and to influence the design and establishment of the Customer Hub. 2 **Website workstream** – Website design and creation of a new Council website which will include a new design, navigation, citizen logon and customer portal for online transactions. 3 **Corporate Relationship Management (CRM) workstream –** Design and implementation of a new corporate CRM which will be used to manage and analyse all customer interactions and data, with the goal of improving customer service relationships. 4 **Integration workstream** – Implementation of a new approach to integration between critical line of business systems, website and the new corporate CRM. 5 **Service Design and Implementation workstream** – Overseeing key business change elements such as user centred design, communications, training and Organisational Design (OD). A user centred approach will be developed by the Strategic Hub to ensure that the design of the Council's services are focused upon who will use those services, aiming to achieve improvements in user experience (UX) and making services more cost effective to deliver. The OD element will include a review of roles/responsibilities, job descriptions, contractual changes and recruitment. 6 **Emerging opportunities workstream** – This workstream will focus on the introduction of newly designed services based on the new user centred design

approach. The first area where the approach will be used is within Cleansing and Waste services, initially focussing on the design of an online 'Bulky Waste' service.

| 3.2 | Implementation Approach |

A 'wide and thin' approach to service delivery will enable a cultural change in Customer Focus to take place across all of the Council's customer facing services, this will also enable the fast deployment of customer services into the Customer Hub. Having successfully developed customer services to a shallow level across all services, deeper integration to the back office will digitally enable, and deliver more efficient and user focussed services. The programme will be prioritised on a service by service basis, beginning with Cleansing and Waste services and focussing on self-service booking of Bulky Waste collections to begin with. A schematic of the Wide and Thin approach can be found at (**Appendix 4).**

There are a number of enabling projects at corporate level that will impact on our Business Support functions including the HR and Finance reviews. Work is also underway to improve the corporate support network for Strategic Directors and the Chief Executive's office. As we work through the customer programme there will be further impacts on Business Support particularly where they provide front facing customer technical support. To ensure that this is undertaken in an aligned manner and that staff/TUs messages are handled correctly, Continuous Improvement will, in tandem with the customer programme, undertake a service design review of our Business Support function. This will be a long term piece of work to dovetail with the enabling projects and customer programme. Communication and engagement will be critical to delivering service improvement effectively. A communications plan for the programme can be found at (**Appendix 9)**.

| 3.3 | Resource Requirements |

As part of the work to define each workstream, a detailed estimate of the resources required to deliver the Customer Focus programme has been carried out (**Appendix 7**). The majority of the roles needed can be realigned and prioritised from within existing internal services. Resources will be used from:

- Digital Services (technical)
- Continuous Improvement (service design)
- Finance & Resources (programme management)
- Marketing and Communications (website and change management)

| 3.4 | Rose Crozier has been appointed as the Programme Director. This has created a vacancy in C&NS at operational director level. This post was recently advertised on a fixed term but did not lead to an appointment. For this reason approval is now sought to recruit the post on a permanent basis. It should be noted that the appointment of this post will not exceed the |

approved establishment for the organisation, since the Customer Focus Programme Director is a fixed term appointment for approximately 3 years.

3.5	Strategic Delivery Partner

To fast track implementation, we are seeking to procure a strategic delivery partner to assist with the design and implementation of a corporate approach to Customer Management including the creation of a Customer Hub and modernisation of the Council's website. The Council needs to make savings, increase efficiency and also meet the expectations of the city's citizens in delivering services which are centred on their needs. We wish to take an agile service design approach to transformation in order to make significant and accelerated progress to meet these key aims. The role of the delivery partner will include:

1. Design and implementation of a Multi-Channel Customer Hub, taking a 'wide and thin' approach to managing customer services.
2. Delivering a business process review of Cleansing and Waste services to facilitate a 'digital first' approach to agile user-centred service design.
3. Transfer of knowledge to allow the Council to continue service design in other areas.
4. Programme oversight to ensure projects align with established design principles ensuring seamless UX (User Experience) design and integration.

3.6	Domain Name Policy (**Appendix 8**)

It is proposed that a revised domain name policy should be put in place to ensure that the development of any new website or mobile app is aligned with the principles and resource requirements of the Customer Focus programme. Governance responsibility for new business cases will be overseen by the Customer Focus Programme Board.

3.7	Pilot of Video Relay Service

A Language Strategy was launched in April 2018 to increase access, promote diversity and inclusion and this includes the development and implementation of five language strands; Sign Languages, Irish Language, Ulster-Scots language, new communities' languages; and languages and communications for disabled people.

Belfast City Council has identified the need to support Sign Language users; British Sign Language and Irish Sign Language in accessing their services. We recognise the barriers in telephone communication and face to face communication with council staff for Sign Language users and we are committed to removing these barriers through the provision of a Video Relay Service and Video Remote Interpreting service. This will pave the way in ensuring Sign Language users can communicate effectively with Council staff via Registered Sign Language Interpreters.

	We estimate approximately 3,500 British Sign Language users in Northern Ireland either reside or commute to the City of Belfast on a daily basis.

A pilot for a period of 12 months from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 to provide a Video Relay Service and Video Remote Interpreting service for British Sign Language users. We want to be in a position to monitor the effectiveness of the service within a pilot timeframe before rolling it out on a long term contract. |
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.8	SP&R agreed in November 2017 to fund the Customer Programme on a non-recurrent basis and established a specified reserve with an initial balance of £500k. This reserve will be used to fund the Strategic Delivery Partner (£200 - £250k).
3.9	The full-time permanent Customer Hub Manager will be initially financed from the Council's existing invest-to-save budget.
3.10	Capital and revenue costs for staff, technology and external support will need to be worked up as part of the year-end finance report and 2020/21 estimates process.
3.11	The Video Relay Pilot has been included within existing budgets.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications
3.12	The Equality and Diversity Officer has indicated that an EQIA will be required to support the Customer Focus Programme.
4.0	**Appendices – Documents Attached**
	Appendix 1 – Customer Focus Blueprint
Appendix 2 – Customer Focus Design Principles
Appendix 3 – Customer Focus Governance
Appendix 4 – Customer Focus Implementation Approach
Appendix 5 – Customer Focus Plan Key Milestones
Appendix 6 – Customer Focus Workstreams
Appendix 7 – Customer Focus Resource Requirements
Appendix 8 – Domain Name Policy
Appendix 9 – Communications Plan