

TO: EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 21 December 2004

SUBJECT: DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT CENTRE LEARNING STAGE

FROM: CUSTOMER INFORMATION AND ADVICE DIRECTORATE

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Employment Committee regarding progress in relation to the Document Management Centre.
- 1.2 To seek approval for the 'learning stage' approach to this project.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purchasing and implementation of electronic document management and workflow is managed as one of the Council's Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Programme projects. This is an essential requirement for meeting our responsibilities under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.
- 2.2 The Best Value Customer Access Review identified a number of drivers to develop document management.
- 2.3 A review of Office Administration was completed in autumn 2003. This recommended a number of improvements to the way incoming and outgoing post is processed.
- 2.4 The closure of the Riverside House cash office in January 2005 forces a change to the way postal payments are processed.
- 2.5 The expansion of the Customer Services Centre creates a need to improve the way the follow up to telephone calls is dealt with – sometimes called customer fulfilment.

3 PROCESS TO DATE

- 3.1 In the autumn of 2003 Trinity Expert Systems were appointed as the Council's Document Management System supplier. It was agreed the work would begin in Planning and Housing.
- 3.2 In January 2004 agreement was reached with Trinity as to the Scope for their development of the document management system. It was also agreed that the outcome of the business analysis work with Planning would help to further define the details of the council's requirements.

3.3 In September 2004 CMT agreed to a six month 'Learning Stage' during which the new team would undertake the following:

- Process post (incoming and outgoing)
- Process postal payments
- Process applications (initially just Planning Applications)

3.4 The team will also explore the viability of a wider range of functions including record management.

4. PROPOSAL

4.1 The document management centre is run for a six month period as a 'learning stage'.

4.2 During the Learning Stage it will undertake the functions identified by CMT of:

- processing incoming and outgoing post
- processing postal payments
- processing applications (initially planning)

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation with unions is ongoing, regular updates take place at the Joint Communication Forum, GMB/MPO and UNISON representatives are invited to attend any of the weekly Customer Access Best Value Review Progress meetings.

5.2 Staff newsletter 'Improving Our Customer Focus' has been made available to all staff.

5.3 Reports in relation to the Customer Access Best Value Review and its Implementation Plan; and the proposals made by Trinity in relation to the Business Process Redesign for Planning and Housing have been made available to all staff via the CMT Agenda and briefed during the team meeting process.

6. EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

For the duration of the 'Learning Stage':

6.1 Staffing

- One of the Customer Services Team Leaders will take responsibility for leading the document management team
- two six month temporary posts will be funded by the IEG Programme
 - one of these has been offered to a member of staff whose post is redundant
 - the other is to be filled on a temporary basis.

6.2 Training

During the course of the learning stage it will be necessary for representatives from services transferring functions to work with Document Management Centre staff to facilitate the transfer of skills and knowledge necessary.

7. THE FUTURE

7.1 Subject to the outcomes of the Learning Stage document management will be rolled out across the Authority. The preferred supplier has started work and the full roll out of this technology will be heavily dependant on the findings from the pilot project about to commence in Planning. This will inform the way forward regarding any benefits of a centralised post function as opposed to the current system.

7.2 At the end of the 'Learning Stage' an evaluation will be presented to the Executive and Employment Committee.

7.3 These reports will make recommendations in relation to the future potential and human resource needs, of the Document Management Centre.

7.4 Any newly established posts will be evaluated and advertised. Should there be any members of staff at risk, at that time, they will be accorded their rights under the employment stability agreement.

8. POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK

8.1 These changes are taking place in order to support the on-going Customer Access Best Value Improvement Plan and the Council's Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Programme. This will help meet Government IEG targets for which there is a substantial financial incentive - £500,000 over 2 years.

8.2 The Capital costs for the learning stage (including the temporary staff costs) are being met from the sum allocated in the IEG Programme for Document Management of £560,000.

8.3 Future employment costs will need to be met by the movement of resource from Service Areas as a result of Business Process Redesign.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members of the Employment Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

9.2 The Employment Committee approves the learning stage approach to the document management project.

Chris Elliott, Strategic Director

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CMT – 9th July 2003 – Document Management and Workflow
Executive 10th May 2004 – Customer Access Best Value Review
CMT -13th October

Areas in District Affected: **All**
Key Decision: **Yes**
Included in Forward Plan: **Yes**

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