

# Customer Service Strategy:

## Communication & Consultation Framework

## **Customer Service Strategy Communication and Consultation Framework**

The Communication and Consultation Framework supports the delivery of the key elements of the Council's Customer Service Strategy and contributes to the overall aim to provide responsive, quality and accessible services to our communities.

The overall aims of the Customer Service Communication and Consultation Framework are to:

- **Develop a 'User – Led' Strategy:**  
In developing the Customer Service Strategy we will seek the views of customers and key stakeholders to shape the way we deliver services in the future and ensure that 'Customer Service' is a 'user – led' strategy.
- **Monitor Performance:**  
As we implement the key elements of the strategy we will keep all stakeholders regularly involved in monitoring quality and performance and continually gain feedback to ensure we meet their needs and expectations of our customers.
- **Communication and Promotion :**  
In order to encourage new and continued use of our centres we will communicate and promote our services and facilities and the ways in which they can be accessed.
- **Demonstrate Continuous Improvement:**  
To maintain high standards and quality and to respond to changing needs of our customers, regular feedback will be sought and acted upon to identify areas of improvement.

The framework for communication and consultation will generate an efficient and cost effective mechanism to validate the Customer Service Strategy as well as meet the key principles of the strategy to:

- Be open, honest and communicative
- Work in a collaborative way
- Focus on delivery
- Value diversity
- Be progressive

**Be open, honest and communicative**

We will be open and honest with our customers and staff by keeping them fully informed of new developments and progress. We will highlight successes and raise weak areas that need to be tackled.

**Work in a collaborative way**

Staff and customers will be involved in influencing requirements, design and frequency of communication and promotion in enforcing the framework.

Opportunities for joint communication and promotion with other organisations will be maximised where an effective and cost efficient benefit can be realised.

**Focus on delivery**

We will use action planning to ensure that suggestions made through consultation are acted upon, ensuring that those participating can see that the process is meaningful.

We will inform customers as to when suggestions have been implemented or wherever possible communicate reasons as to why certain ideas are not achievable.

**Value Diversity:**

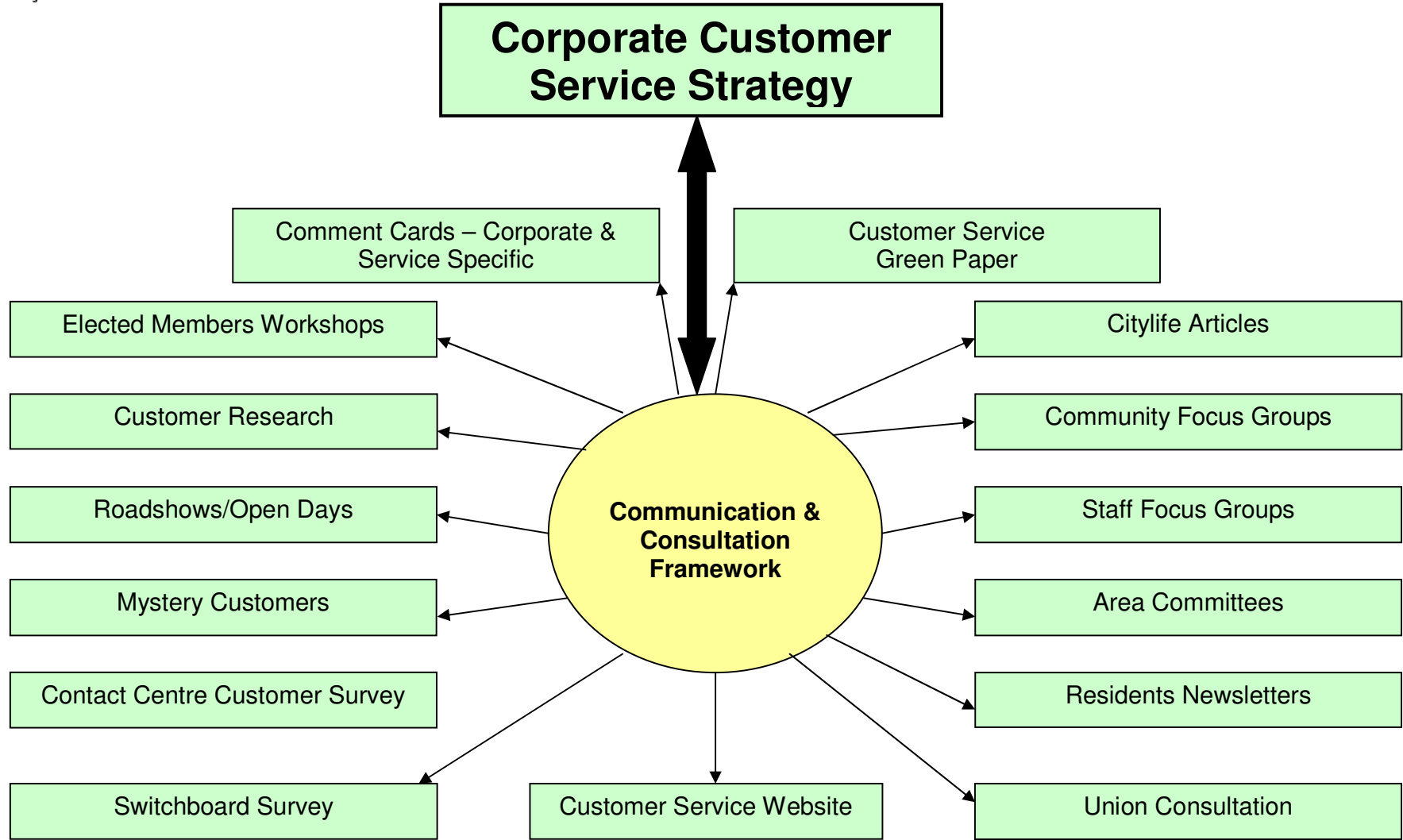
We will ensure consultation/communication models adopted are inclusive and provide opportunity for representation from all sections of the communities we serve (including 'non-service' users that provide information as to why they do not use the services provided).

**Be progressive:**

We will use a wide choice of approaches and techniques in terms of communicating and consulting with communities as well as utilising new methods made possible through technology.

The Communication and Consultation Framework has been developed in compliance with the Corporate Consultation Guidelines in ensuring that all consultation carried out is structured, inclusive and therefore meaningful.

The framework is also in line with the Newcastle Plan which aims to encourage customer participation in shaping the way we deliver services in the future.



## CUSTOMER SERVICES

### Communication & Consultation Framework

<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>TARGET AUDIENCE</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<b>LITERATURE / PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS</b>			
CSC/CC Specific Leaflet	All existing and potential users - to be displayed in all CSCs and other Council outlets	To provide information on key services and facilities available at a CSC/CC	On opening and updated when necessary
CSC Exhibition Stand	All existing and potential CSC users	To provide information on key services and facilities available at any CSC	Updated as and when necessary
Community Bulletin Boards	Users of a CSC	To provide information on topical/new information relevant to a CSC	On opening and updated when necessary
CSC/CC Specific FAQs	All existing and potential CSC/CC users	To provide answers to frequently asked questions specific to a CSC/CC	On opening and updated when necessary
Service Specific Literature	All existing and potential CSC users	To provide regular and relevant information on services available at a CSC	As and when required
Joint literature with partners and stakeholders	All existing and potential CSC/CC users	To provide information on joint working initiatives	As and when required
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>			
CSC/CC Opening Campaign	All potential CSC/CC users	To promote and raise awareness of the opening of a new CSC/CC and to	Before, during and immediately after the opening of a new CSC/CC

		encourage use and feedback	
Resident Newsletter	All residents served by a CSC	To promote and raise awareness of the opening of a new CSC and to encourage use and feedback	3 before opening and 1 after
Internal promotion of Customer Service Centres, Contact Centre Service Delivery & Customer Relationship Management Development IT System	All potential internal stakeholders and customers of Customer Service Centres, Contact Centre and Customer Relationship Management System	To promote and raise awareness of the potential business benefits & efficiencies achieved resulting from Customer Service Centre and Contact Centre service delivery & Customer Relationship Management approach	Ongoing as Customer Service Channels are developed
Customer Service Website	All existing and potential CSC/CC users and NCC employees	To provide useful, up to date and new information on all CSCs/CC with the opportunity to gain feedback and requests	To be continually updated
City Service Website	All existing and potential CSC/CC users and NCC employees	To provide an overview of the Customer Services division	To be continually updated
Press Releases & Citylife Articles	All City residents	To provide information on the delivery of the key elements of the Customer Service Strategy	As and when deemed necessary
Community Information Days	Residents within catchment area of CSC	To provide information on a CSC at prominent/widely used public venues to update residents and to	As and when deemed necessary

		answer queries	
Customer Services Newsletter/Communications Xtra	All council employees	To keep all staff informed and involved in the development of the Customer Service Strategy and to reinforce a Customer Service culture in the organisation	Quarterly
City Service Team Brief	All City Service employees	To keep all staff informed and involved in the development of the Customer Service Strategy and to reinforce a Customer Service culture in the organisation	Monthly
City Service Bulletin	All City Service employees	To keep all staff informed and involved in the development of the Customer Service Strategy and to reinforce a Customer Service culture in the organisation	Fortnightly
<b>CONSULTATION</b>			
Customer Service Green Paper	Random selection of Newcastle residents	To identify levels of customer satisfaction with aspects of the services provided by the City Council the CSC and Envirocall	March 2001
Area Committees	Diverse group of community residents/stakeholders & elected members	To be used for consulting purposes on all issues around new and continued development of a CSC/CC	To be utilised as and when required

		and customer requirements	
Public Meetings	Residents within catchment area of CSC	To provide information on a CSC to update residents and to involve them in the development of the centres	As and when deemed necessary
Resident Newsletter	All residents served by a CSC	To promote and raise awareness of the opening of a new CSC and to encourage use and feedback	3 before opening and 1 after
Community Focus Groups	Diverse group/panel of community residents/stakeholders (inc hard to reach groups) for each existing and new CSC/CC	To be used for consulting purposes on all issues around new and continued development of a CSC/CC and customer requirements	6 weekly during development and 6 monthly after opening
Comment Cards – Corporate and Service Specific	All CSC users	To measure customer satisfaction and to gain feedback	6 monthly
Customer Research	All CSC users, staff working within CSCs, external partners and non-users	To measure satisfaction and to gain feedback on performance and to identify areas for improvement	6 months after the opening of a new centre and twice yearly onwards
Mystery Customers	Random CSC staff	To measure quality of service and customer experience and to identify areas for improvement	2 per month planned
Contact Centre Research	Random selection of Newcastle residents	To gain an indication as to the potential usage of a new Contact Centre and to find out expectations and preferences regarding the	May 2004

		new centre	
Consultation with Internal Customers	All potential internal stakeholders and customers of Customer Service Centres, Contact Centre and Customer Relationship Management System	To promote and encourage directorate ownership and joint service delivery through Customer Service Centres and Contact Centre and back office development of Customer Relationship Management	Ongoing as Customer Service Channels are developed
Staff Focus Groups	Diverse group/panel of employees	To be used for consulting purposes on all issues around development of a CSC/CC	2 monthly
Union Updates	Diverse group of union representatives	To be used for updating on all issues around development of a CSC/CC	To be scheduled as and when required
Elected Members Workshops	Group of area/ward specific Elected Members	To keep Members informed and involved in the development of the Customer Service Strategy and the CSC programme	To be utilised as and when required as part of the CSC programme of consultation