

Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee  
15 June 2015

Report by the Corporate Planning  
and Performance Manager

## CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD

### REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members will be aware that the Customer Service Excellence Award (CSE), originally achieved in 2009, is re-certified on an annual basis subject to passing a compliance audit. The award covers a three year period therefore 2015 marked the start of the re-certification process. It is based on five criteria:

1. Customer Insight;
2. The Culture of the Organisation;
3. Information and Access;
4. Delivery and Timeliness;
5. Quality of Service.

The re-certification audit for 2015 took place on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February; it is pleasing to report that the award has been successfully retained for a further twelve months.

The Assessor noted five areas of good practice and three potential opportunities for improvement during the audit.

The partial compliance from last year's assessment has now been closed following improvements made with our Customer Feedback process. This year's report does not contain any areas of either non or partial compliance, a first for our Service.

The Assessment Report is available in Appendix 1.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Members acknowledge the retention of the Award and take assurance from our ongoing commitment to Customer Service Excellence.

## BACKGROUND

2. The Customer Service Excellence Award tests in great depth those areas that research has indicated are a priority for customers, with particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. There is also an emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.
3. During the audit all criteria were reviewed, with a particular focus on criterion one, Customer Insight, along with a review of an outstanding partial compliance from last year's audit. The Assessors itinerary allowed him to meet with several customers and partners as well as key members of staff.
4. Following the assessment, Humberside Fire & Rescue Service was found to have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Customer Service Excellence. The commitment was displayed from senior management levels through to operations and front line staff.
5. The following extracts have been taken from the formal report:

### Areas of Good Practice

- Your partnership working is impressive. Not only in the range and quality of your networks but in the systematic and robust protocols you have arranged with them.
- You make significant efforts to identify, and provide for the needs of hard to reach and vulnerable customers.
- Your focus on Community Safety and preventing risk rather than only responding to incidents speaks of your concern for your customers.
- You have a culture of learning and continuous improvement, and a forward-looking attitude to the significant challenges you face. A good example of this is your work supporting Yorkshire Ambulance Service through your network of stations.
- You have impressive customer insight, based on continuous collection and analysis of data and feedback which enables you to target your services effectively. Your plans and strategies, systems and procedures are all focused on your customers and directed to providing them with excellent service (i.e. saving lives and avoiding injury).

### Areas for Improvement

- The service website is clear and easy to navigate, with a wealth of information about the service, much of it essential to fulfil its remit and inform stakeholders (plans, strategies, performance data). I suggest that a link be developed to direct users (particularly customers of the service) to a less formal set of pages with condensed performance data, customer feedback, and anonymised case- studies to demonstrate the success of the service, together with key messages on safety and security. I think that HFRS undersells its successes.

- Your feedback is well designed and easy to use. I suggest you check carefully on the current accepted terminology of ethnic groups, in your monitoring section, to avoid potentially giving offence to people of certain ethnic origins.

In addition your feedback form should be periodically amended to introduce new questions arising from previous feedback and any new customer insight.

- You should continue to provide information on the level of customer satisfaction across your service. I suggest that you publish a % figure as well as a numerical total, as this will enable you to set an annual % target, driving improvement towards your aspirational target of 100% satisfaction.

6. The areas for improvement have been noted by Corporate Communication for potential improvements to the Service website and Community Safety are reviewing the Customer Service Feedback form in light of the assessor's comments.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

7. The Customer Service Excellence Award contributes to our self awareness and continuous improvement.

#### FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

8. None arising directly.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. None arising directly.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

10. None arising directly.

#### CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

11. None arising directly.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12. None arising directly.

#### COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

13. The Customer Service Excellence Report will be published on the HFRS Website.

#### DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

14. None arising directly.

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

15. Customer Service Excellence Assessment Report is available electronically alongside the agenda papers on the Fire Authority's website at [www.humbersidefire.gov.uk](http://www.humbersidefire.gov.uk).

RECOMMENDATION RESTATED

16. Members acknowledge the retention of the Award and take assurance from our ongoing commitment to Customer Service Excellence.

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