



**POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
21ST APRIL 2009**

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER SERVICE PEER REVIEW

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform members of the outcome of the Customer Services Peer Review.

2. REPORT

2.1 During November 2008, a peer review was undertaken to review how Caerphilly County Borough Council delivers customer services. The review was undertaken by the Improvement and Development Agency as one of a series of Customer Service Peer Reviews in South East Wales.

2.2 The peer review was a subject-specific assessment of the Caerphilly County Borough Council's status and potential for improvement in delivering customer-centric services and to develop sustainable and consistent processes and procedures to ensure effective and efficient services for all their customers. The review is part of the 'Customer Services – Principles to Practice' project which is sponsored by the Welsh Assembly and supported by the Welsh LGA. The lead authority is Torfaen and the programme is delivered in partnership with the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

2.3 The peer review's aim was to assess how well we meet the needs of our customers, as well as the processes and procedures implemented to ensure consistent standards of customer service across the authority. The review looked at how we deliver customer service across the authority, not just the Customer First service, and looked at all access channels. The Review team made their evaluation by using a standard framework that has been used across the UK.

2.4 The review team consisted of the Chief Executive of the Vale of Glamorgan, the Head of Resources and Improvement at Monmouthshire County Council, the Assistant Chief Executive for ICT and Transformational Services at Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and a Review Manager from the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

2.4 The Peer Review report was generally positive. The Review Team reported there were no significant problems with the way in which the authority is developing customer services but they made a number of recommendations that the authority may wish to consider. The situation was described as the authority "having all the pieces of the jigsaw but now needed to bring the picture together". The Review Report is attached as Appendix A.

2.5 A draft action plan has been developed to take forward the recommendations of the Peer Review. The action plan is attached as Appendix B. This plan has been considered by the Customer First Strategy Group who have accepted the workplan and have asked for it to be considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Customer First Strategy is a part of the Improving Services theme and is an identified priority in the Corporate Improvement Plan. The Customer First Strategy is a key part of the council's response to the WAG "Making the Connections" strategy particularly in relation to developing citizen centred services.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None directly from this report

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The action plan has been approved by the Customer First Strategy Group.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the Customer Service Peer Review action plan be approved and target dates for further reports noted

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To achieve objectives contained within the Corporate Improvement Plan.

9. STATUTORY POWER

- 9.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 1990

Author: David Titley, Corporate Customer Services Manager, 01443 864048,
davidtitley@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Customer First Strategy Group

Background Papers:

Customer Service Peer Review Guidance for Welsh Councils, available from the Corporate Customer Services Manager