

CUSTOMER FIRST – RECRUITMENT & RETENTION STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONTACT CENTRE

The District Council is establishing a Contact Centre to improve the telephone-based services provided to our customers by:

- extending our opening hours
- employing customer contact service agents who can provide a wide range of information on a number of services to enable people to get the information straight away.

To do this the Council is committed to a recruitment and retention strategy that provides a high level of staff capability and morale. Training will be provided to enable our employees to have the skills and aptitude to do the job well and we will provide a Contact Centre which gives a positive working environment.

The Contact Centre will be open:

Monday to Friday – 08:00 to 18:00
Saturdays – 09:00 to 13:00

In terms of working patterns, we will recruit a mix of full and part time staff, who will work the hours that best balances call demand requirements and staff needs. The actual split will be decided through consultation between the project team, contact centre manager and Personnel. The actual shift patterns and individual hours will be determined by the contact centre management team and staff during the implementation period.

2. RECRUITMENT

We want the best people for the Contact Centre so we will:

- Advertise the posts internally and externally.
- Provide training opportunities for existing HDC staff so that if they want to apply they have every opportunity to do so and have the right skills.
- Provide support for existing staff whose jobs may change as part of the Contact Centre.

Communication of this Strategy to staff and an early communication concerning how roles will be affected will be key activities.

We need to recruit the Contact Centre Manager, Trainer, Business Support Manager, one team leader and 10 FTE agents for the opening of the contact centre. The Manager needs to be recruited soon to lead on the initial implementation of the centre. The other posts will be filled nearer the go live date. Further posts will then be required as subsequent transactions are introduced.

3. RETENTION

We will want to ensure that the working patterns in the Contact Centre are developed to suit a range of needs of both customers and staff, including flexible shifts and part time work.

We will ensure appropriate and on-going training and development for the staff, with clear and fair performance targets focusing on service quality and customer satisfaction. In particular we will:

- Adopt an inclusive management style through open communication, staff representative forums and increased one-to-one feedback.
- Focus on providing a quality service.
- Focus on training and employee development.
- Find out people's long-term ambitions and why they have applied for a job in a contact centre to make sure we recruit people who are less likely to get bored and move on.
- Organise the workload so that staff have a degree of job and task variety. The Transaction Delivery Project is already taking an approach to the phasing of services such that agents will be dealing with a range of transactions from across a number of services.
- Multi-skill staff in a wide range of services
- Potentially move staff between customer service roles (once we have a Customer Service Centre).
- Allow the new Contact Centre Team a big say in the development of their own working culture.