

INFORMATION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	10 SEPTEMBER 2019	6
CUSTOMER CHANNEL MIGRATION – SOCIAL MEDIA			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

This report provides the committee with an update on recent development of the council's social media platforms as part of the initiative to migrate customer contact from traditional resource intensive time consuming methods to digital means. The report highlights the recent success of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and outlines the ongoing campaign to meet the increased demand for digital contact as well as offer existing customers the benefits of alternative media.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Online customer engagement through [Fylde Facebook](#) account and [Fylde Twitter](#) account.

There are also Twitter accounts for [Discover Fylde](#), The [Ranger Service](#) and the [Chief Executive](#).

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

This information has been provided as an update to the social media strategy originally approved by the council in March 2013.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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1. For many years local government has been playing catch up with digital means of communication both online through websites and recently through mobile devices with more and more customers expecting to be able to engage with the council 'on the go' 24/7. We have had contact from customers whilst they have been in Italy, Australia and the USA. Customer expectation is shifting and it is not just the younger generation, Fylde has a high percentage of 'Silver Surfers', digitally active users over the age of 60.
2. Even without the growing demand for online service provision research has proven time and again that online contact is far more resource (cost and time) effective than traditional means of contact such as face to face or the telephone. The original demand for online contact was through email or an online interactive form on the website, the council responded to this demand making it easy to contact online with listening@fylde.gov.uk and online transactions, including payments, becoming more popular than the phone line.
3. In recent years the demand for face to face contact has declined significantly whilst using the phone and email have levelled off. Customer engagement has now switched to social media, primarily Facebook and Twitter, the volume of people interacting on these platforms is increasing rapidly and the council will need to

respond by making it easy for customers to contact at any time using the preferred social media from mobile devices.

4. The customer service team has always operated as the first point of contact for all enquiries regardless of how the contact is made. The shift to social media channels expands the number of ways that the customer can engage with the council; fax has died; the written letter is rare; face to face is minimal; phone calls and emails have reduced over recent months; but social media has expanded significantly and shows no sign of slowing.
5. More resources are still deployed to phones and face to face contact because more resource is required per contact. Local government research revealed the average cost of dealing with a face to face customer is £9.40; web chat £6.80; phone call £4.80; email £2.50; and online self-service 50p – for the same transaction. Social media contact is similar to email, there is a requirement to have a customer service operative provide a response at some point. However, social media engagement is almost a quarter of the cost of face to face and half the cost of a phone call.
6. The added benefit of social media channels is that they act as a means of gathering views, opinions and information that can be used to inform service deliver, the volume of messages is significant enough to identify trends or themes whilst excluding extreme or isolated comments. The data below is for July 2019 and shows that for both Facebook and Twitter the number of contacts is increasing with a reach of 214,100 users on Facebook and 975,800 on Twitter. Every category of engagement on social media platforms is experiencing an increase month on month as demand as well as awareness, that Fylde now offer this means of 24/7 contact, increase.
7. The system that provides the social media analytics below has recently been implemented at Fylde and will be used to monitor, evaluate and promote social media engagement as part of a campaign to increase awareness of the benefits amongst customers currently using traditional methods (phone and face to face) in a bid to save the customer time and the tax payers money.

Facebook Analytics for Fylde - July 2019



Twitter Analytics for Fylde – July 2019

