1. **Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on local and national progress made by Customer Services for the period April 2008 to March 2009 in delivering the:
- customer services strategy;
- information management strategy; and
- geographic information services strategy

2. **Background**

2.1 The report is submitted on behalf of the corporate Customer Services Development Working Group (CSDWG). The CSDWG provides a council wide strategic forum for the development of customer services across the organisation and its key partners. The group is chaired by the Head of Efficient Government and Service Development, supported by the Customer Services Manager with representation from all service areas at senior officer level. Directly reporting to the CSDWG is the Information Management Working Group (IMWG) and the corporate GIS strategy group.

2.2 The customer services strategy sets the overall strategic direction for all three strategies and it has four key inter-dependent themes designed to enable and take forward our drive towards excellent customer service. These themes are:
- Theme 1: Connecting with our Customers
- Theme 2: Empowered and effective staff
- Theme 3: Working with our partners
- Theme 4: Enabling business Improvement

2.3 The delivery of these four themes is directly underpinned by the information management strategy which recognises that information is a corporate resource for the delivery of corporate and service objectives and for meeting the needs of our customers. We are therefore building our capabilities and realising the value of the information we are responsible for by:
- investing in our staff by educating them in the principles and benefits of information management;
- creating policies to support the implementation of new working practices;
- introducing new technologies to maximise the value in our information;
- making quality data available and improving collaborative working process; and
- using information in strategic and business decision making.

2.4 In addition, the geographic information services (GIS) strategy seeks to provide a mechanism for setting the long-term direction for the deployment of GIS services across the Council while looking at the potential for the development of business applications. This includes the development of a common data framework with effective
management of geographic information in accordance with agreed standards; the
development of a technical framework within which all GIS services will be developed
and operated; and the creation of a user and skills framework to ensure that GIS users
have the knowledge, skills and experience to ensure a return on our investment.

2.5 The focus of Customer Services is to create a professional and consistent approach,
making contact with the council as convenient as possible for our customers by
providing a range of ways in which they can access services i.e. through the web, over
the phone or face to face.

3. Progress to date

3.1 Theme 1: Connecting with our Customers
Using customer and property information to shape service delivery around our
customers needs so that they are delivered responsively, accurately and cost
effectively.

• National Address Gazetteer: The NAG Programme establishes a single property
information source that adheres to common agreed standards and, together with
the national citizen's account, is being used to improve service delivery within
Scottish Councils and throughout the Scottish public sector by ensuring that
properties are uniquely and correctly identified, removing duplication. Corporate
Address Gazetteers (CAGs) held by all 32 Councils are linked to the national
address gazetteer.

The creation of the national gazetteer which contains addresses for all properties
(as well as some land and other assets relating to council business) within
Scotland is now complete and regular updates are being provided by NLC to the
national database. At a local level the corporate Geographic Information System
(GIS) repository has also now been created with assistance from ESRI (UK). This
is being used to store, manage and maintain data for our web, mobile and desktop
systems ensuring that they all have access to the latest information and that it is
provided in a consistent way no matter how it is accessed.

• National Citizen Account: The National Citizens Account is a single record (held
at the national level) containing personal details as well as information on
entitlement to services and citizen authentication information. The national citizen
account is now live and has in excess of 1.3 million records on the system.

NLC is represented on the National Group delivering the Citizen Account and we
have now created a link with the national system to ensure that all updates
provided by them can be downloaded in an efficient way and reflected in our local
Customer Relationship Management system. The link was successfully
demonstrated to several Scottish councils at a user group hosted by NLC on the
5th June 2009.

• Local Citizen Account: The Local Citizens Account holds basic ‘common data’
such as name, address, date of birth about our customers which will allow us to
reference data held within our back office systems. This helps us to provide easier
access to services for our customers, make it easier for our staff to deal with
customer enquiries and provides us with greater assurance in complying with
legislation.

The project has successfully established a “Single View” of our customer by
ensuring that the same consistent ‘common data’ is held on a number of our
systems. This work is still underway for the remaining systems.

• Web site: Our new website went live in June 2009 and provides our customers
with an excellent on-line channel to obtain services from NLC. This new website
offers the state-of-the-art functionality our users expect and provides us with a
launch pad to expand the services we can make available (e.g. GIS based services).

We have improved our web content by participating in and implementing national initiatives such as the Electronic Service Delivery Toolkit, Scottish Navigation List, Frequently Asked Questions the Scottish Services A-Z and Knowledge base. As a result our customers will be able to find information more easily and more quickly and they will experience a consistent ‘look and feel’ across the web sites of Scottish councils. We have also established a cross service pool of well-trained web champions, and a forum to ensure that web content is kept professional, accurate and up-to-date.

- **LocalView:** This is a Geographic Information System that provides access to corporate map based information both within the organisation via our intranet and for our external customers via the web. It allows both staff and customers to search for information very easily just by clicking on a map. In this way searches can be undertaken to identify services in your area or to ‘find my nearest’ library, school, swimming pool etc.

- **ePlanning:** The Council is a partner in this national programme designed to provide an end-to-end ePlanning service for all users of the planning system across Scotland, moving planning away from paper processes towards electronic ways of working. The ePlanning programme utilises the corporate address gazetteer for address and location searching while corporate GIS provides access to Ordnance Survey background mapping and other key geographic information.

  The first two modules in this national programme are now live:
  - Online Applications and Appeals – allowing planning applications to be submitted electronically; and
  - Online Planning Information System – allows customers to track the progress of their application on line.

- **Geographic Land and Property System (gLAPS)** – This system has been developed for the Planning and Development Service for the purposes of maintaining land and property data within North Lanarkshire Council, to produce the required returns to the Scottish Government and external agencies, and to retrieve information for ad-hoc enquiries made by other services and external agencies.

  The first two gLAPS modules covering Vacant & Derelict land and Housing Land have been completed. The accurate and timely recording of data on land available for housing and industrial development and on vacant and derelict land provides key information for strategic and local planning. The data provides the foundation for policies which serve corporate and community planning themes.

  For example, there are approximately 350 Housing land sites located within NLC and Environmental Services annually survey the land to identify new sites and the status of existing sites to ensure that there is an appropriate Housing Land Supply. The results of the Housing Land Audit will be issued annually to Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee, Homes for Scotland and the Scottish Government

- **OneScotland Mapping Agreement** – The Council is a signatory to this new Agreement between the Scottish Government and Ordnance Survey which covers 73 organisations within Central and Local Government, as well as some Scottish NHS organisations. This agreement provides easy access to a range of Ordnance Survey products to help deliver public services.

  The One Scotland Mapping Agreement is the first time that all public sector organisations in Scotland have licensed Ordnance Survey products under a single agreement. The four year partnership replaces the local government Mapping
Services Agreement and the Pan Government Agreement for central government and provides common terms for all the member organisations therefore ensuring much greater opportunities for data sharing between those organisations who increasingly work in partnership with one another. It will also result in savings across Scotland’s public sector.

The One Scotland agreement includes a broad range of Ordnance Survey products supporting a diverse range of services including land registration, grant and subsidy management, environmental protection, habitat mapping, emergency planning and response, community development initiatives, the digital television switch over and the provision of health and social care services.

- **Deaf Connections:** This provides an on-line interpreting service to our deaf customers and has been created in full consultation with the North Lanarkshire deaf forum and deaf connections. A pilot commenced in Motherwell and Airdrie First Stop Shop in May 2008 and feedback from the deaf community has been very positive. This service is a first for a Scottish local authority and NLC are continuing to promote the service to ensure we are engaging with all deaf people in the area. Funding has been secured to expand the service at two other FSS’s in the next financial year.

- **One LAN’s:** These screens are located within First Stop Shops, Libraries and in other council reception areas and are used to provide our customers with clear, consistent and useful information about our services.

Work has started on developing information for the One Lan units, with a combination of video clips and service information being shown. We are also using the units to advertise a number of leaflets available at this council. This work is ongoing. Further service information will be produced to promote the full range of services and initiatives available to our customers in the next financial year.

3.2 **Theme 2: Empowered and effective staff**

The creation of a customer services function supporting a customer focussed culture throughout North Lanarkshire Council.

- **Creation of integrated teams of front line staff:** It was agreed by committee in September 2008 to create integrated teams of front line staff in the ten First Stop Shops to deliver an increasing range of face to face customer services. Using multi-skilling and generic working across the customer contact centre, the FSS’s and other customer contact points, we are working to release staff to focus on the delivery of services while improving the standard and consistency of service provided to our customers.

Led by the First Stop Shop manager, a team of Customer Service Offices (CSO’s) has now been created and trained in core customer services skills. Feedback (based on 63 staff trained, see Appendix 1) from staff on the quality of the training has been excellent. Processes have also been created to allow support to be provided from the customer contact centre when required.

- **Accredited Training Qualification for Customer Services Professionals:** The Improvement Service has finalised the training and workshop material for the SQA accredited learning and development toolkit for customer services professionals. This nationally qualification was developed in partnership with several local authorities and represents real shared services in practice. This collaboration has resulted in lower development costs, lower candidate fees and the ability to measure both the effectiveness of the training and how the skill levels of our staff are increasing. Staff across the Council now have the opportunity steadily improve their skills in a consistent way and to develop a recognised career within customer service. The Customer Contact Centre is the pilot area for this qualification and staff training will begin in September 2009.
• **Common standard for customer satisfaction and experience measurement:** A collaborative approach to measuring customer satisfaction and experience is being developed by Scottish local authorities under the Customer First programme. The questions, which will map to Customer Service Excellence, the Public Sector Improvement Framework and the Social Work Inspection Agency reporting measures, are due to be road-tested with customers later this year, using a range of citizen and customer panels, to ensure that they are easy to understand and use 'customer friendly' language.

North Lanarkshire Council have now signed up to support the initiative and we will use the project to evaluate how our investment in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and the use of the Citizen Account has led to increased customer satisfaction levels.

• **Data Custodian:** The council has now appointed a corporate Data Custodian. This will allow us to begin fully co-ordinating our data usage (people and property) across the council. This will include data audits and supporting data cleansing exercises to ensure that:
  - Duplicated effort in maintaining people and address information held on multiple systems is minimised;
  - Consistency of data is improved;
  - Data held is accurate and complete; and
  - Data that is held across the council and other partner agencies is shared appropriately.

3.3 **Theme 3: Working with our partners**
Proactively seeking out opportunities to work collaboratively with our partners to continually improve the services provided to our customers.

• **Develop key customer services strategies:** It is essential that strategies created to deliver our customers vision are created in consultation with our partners and our customers. These strategies are
  - **Customer Services Strategy:** Created and approved, consultation complete, and implementation plan created.
  - **Geographic Information Services Strategy:** Created and approved; consultation complete and implementation plan created.
  - **Information Management Strategy:** Created and approved; consultation complete and implementation plan created.

• **National Entitlement Card (NEC):** This programme will deliver a national, voluntary Entitlement Card scheme and a single platform for the wider development of smartcard technology across Scotland. It is envisaged that once councils transfer other services onto the card, for example leisure or library membership, customers will only be required to carry one card.

The current focus is on increasing the take up of the NEC by young people. This is going extremely well at present with take up sitting at 85% (March 2009). This compares favourably with take up in August 2008 which was at 48%. In terms of taking the NEC work forward it was agreed at the Customer Services Development Working group (CSDWG) that:
  - A senior Officer from Environmental services has been appointed as NEC Champion;
  - This Champion will work with main contacts from each service; and
  - That these contacts, together with the NEC Champion, would begin to look at expanding the range of services available through the NEC.

• **Raising the Council's national profile:** NLC are now represented on key national forums to ensure that we are able to contribute to, and influence,
national initiatives where appropriate. This involvement includes representation on the:

- National Entitlement Card (NEC) Board
- National Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Board
- National ePlanning Board
- Lanarkshire Data Sharing Partnership
- Greater Glasgow Data Sharing Partnership
- Local Authority Planning Group
- National Infrastructure Technical Sub-group

### 3.4 Theme 4: Enabling business improvement

Ensuring that we are an efficient and effective council. One that continually reviews its processes and technological requirements to deliver cost efficient and quality services appropriate to our customers needs.

- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM):** A CRM system helps us to understand our customers and supports the provision of high quality, joined up and consistent services across a range of service delivery channels. North Lanarkshire Council is one of 15 local authorities signed up to the national CRM framework and to using the Lagan Frontline CRM system.

  The first live application based on Frontline is the Corporate Compliments and Complaints system. This is now live in Chief Executives, Finance & Customer Services and Corporate Services. Training has been rolled out to Protective Services, Housing Services and Learning and Leisure Services during July and August and Housing will be the next service to go live in early September.

  The second phase of CRM, to implement this technology within the Customer Contact Centre is now underway. This system will provide our front line staff with access to much better customer information which means they are better placed to provide a higher standard of service and, in addition, will give us the ability to measure the ‘end to end’ service we deliver from the point where a request is raised until it is actually fulfilled. Implementation is planned for the 3rd quarter of 2009.

- **Telephony:** A new telephony system (MacFarlane) has been procured for the Customer Contact Centre which will be fully integrated with the Customer Relationship Management system and the Citizen Account, ensuring customer information flows between the two systems removing the need for manual data input by staff.

- **CA/CRM Integration:** NLC are currently working jointly with East Dunbartonshire Council, the Improvement Service and 3rd party suppliers Lagan and Visionware to develop a standard integration solution that will allow the citizens account to be used to provide people information directly to the CRM. This will ensure that we are able to identify our customers when they contact us avoiding the need to repeatedly ask for their details. By working in this way and by delivering against a set of common, agreed goals that can be used by all Scottish councils NLC is now helping to provide key solutions at a national level. Development work is complete and testing is currently being carried out.

- **Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRMS):** This project will deliver an Electronic Document & Records Management system. The EDRMS will allow us to manage our documents through their lifecycle from creation, through use to their eventual destruction or retention as a record. This will ensure that we create documents and records only once and thereafter use them as a council wide resource as appropriate.

  Funding has been secured from the IT Capital Programme to implement the EDRMS in two distinct “model offices”:
- Archive and Records Management section, based at 10 Kelvin Road, Cumbernauld, which holds records on behalf of various NLC service areas; and
- Support for Learning (SfL) section, based in Learning & Leisure Services HQ at Kildonan Street

- **Building a core Customer Services capability:** It is essential that we provide efficient and effective service delivery across our core customer contact channels:

  **Customer Contact Centre:**
  Northline, the Council’s Customer Contact Centre, became operational in March 2003. It has a 100 seat capacity and provides access to a range of Council Services. The performance standards continue to exceed expectations due to the efforts of staff within the contact centre and improved resource planning. Abandoned calls have been reduced by 44.1% compared with the same period last year and the response time improved from 17 seconds to 9 seconds. Appendix 2 illustrates the consistently high performance achieved over the last year.

  The Customer Contact Centre also hosts several service teams including Saltire, MPC and the Housing repairs team. These teams, although not directly managed by Finance and Customer Services, complement the council’s customer service provision and link together through the Customer Contact Centre operating model agreed by committee in March 2008.

  **First Stop Shops**
  In total there are 10 First Stop Shops providing a presence in all of our major towns and in some less accessible locations. A wide range of services can be accessed through this Face to Face network.

  Work is progressing on the new facility in Coatbridge that will house the First Stop Shop, Registrars, Libraries, and NHS service provision. This will provide NLC with its first purpose built First Stop Shop.

  **Web**
  For the first time, the web site has been used for a focussed on line marketing campaign to support ‘Punch the Crunch’. This has proven to be very successful and paves the way for future online campaigns of this nature.

  **Customer Queue Management:** The Qmatic system will provide end to end measures on transactions, ensuring accurate and timely performance information on waiting times in our First Stop Shops.

  The system has been successfully installed in Wishaw and Moodiesburn First Stop Shops and provides a means of undertaking Customer Surveys, managing appointments and producing detailed management reports. Following this full assessment, it is now planned to roll the system out to all First Stop Shops.

4. **Moving Forward (highlights)**

4.1 **New Services in the Customer Contact Centre:**
- **Housing and Property Repairs:** Following the restructuring of the Housing Division it has been agreed that the front-line customer service staff who manage calls for Housing and Property Repairs, will transfer to the Customer Contact Centre in January 2010. This will ensure that high standards of service are maintained and that consistency is achieved across contact centre operations. Work has already started on developing the contact centre processes to ensure a seamless transfer and integration.
• **Council Switchboard:** Agreement has been reached as part of the Corporate Services: Support Services Review that the switchboard services currently provided at Civic Centre Motherwell, and Fleming House, Cumbernauld will be transferred to the Customer Contact Centre. This transfer will take place in the 3rd quarter of 2009.

• **Grounds Maintenance:** Agreement has been reached with Environmental services to transfer handing of Grounds maintenance calls. This will be implemented in the 3rd quarter of 2009.

4.2 **ePlanning:** Work is moving forward to develop an Electronic Consultation module which will go live later this year. In addition our in house GIS team are developing an Online Local Development Plan module to allow our customers to review and comment on the Local Plan on line.

4.3 **Intranet (ConnectNL):** A major future phase of the Web site project will be to redevelop our intranet site to be based on the same platform as the website. This will introduce much greater functionality and capability.

4.4 **Disaster recovery and business continuity planning:** Work will shortly begin to look at options available to provide enhanced disaster recovery and business continuity options for the Customer Contact Centre.

4.5 **Local View:** Future versions of LocalView will allow customers to locate incidents on the map and submit reports directly to the Council over the internet.

4.6 **Geographic Land and Property System (GLAPS):** Development of a third module for Industrial Land is under way. There are also further plans to develop modules for Open Space and Commercial Floor space.

4.7 **Web Information:** We have introduced Google Analytics as part of the launch of the new web site. This software allows us to analyse how our website is being used by our customers and will help services to target their content.

5. **Recommendations**

5.1 The committee is invited to:-

- Note the content of the report.

Irene McKelvey  
Head of Efficient Government and Service Development

*For further information please contact Irene McKelvey, Head of E-Government & Service Development on 01698 302532*
Appendix 1: First Stop Shop training feedback

Question: How well did the course meet your expectations?

Example comments:

- Everything I thought might be covered was included. As well as things that I didn't expect
- Learning more than expected in an informal and practical manner
- Training delivered in a professional manner
- Much better than I expected it to be
- Very well explained in great detail
- Did not think I would enjoy it so much
- Was not confident I'd be able to understand all the training, but once it started I was able to understand
- Do not normally like to go on a course, but I felt very comfortable this week
- More enjoyable than I thought
- Felt course covered everything we will need to know
- Course was interesting and worked on a 1-1 basis
- Due to Campbell's vast training experience I found the course both interesting and challenging which meant you were motivated throughout
- The manner in which it was delivered by the trainer made it more enjoyable whilst covering scenarios and answering questions
- Benefited greatly from training being 1-1
- Felt course covered all aspects of which I would have expected in a reasonable depth and detail
Question: How would you rate your knowledge of the subject before the course (1= Poor, 10= excellent)?

Example comments:

- Had customers knowledge of Council Tax Procedures
- Previously employed as a CSA
- Knew a bit due to length of service
- Picked up info through working in cash section
- No housing background some small areas picked up during job as cashier
- Benefits was biggest unknown subject to me
- Knew a little about rents and council tax
- Had some basic knowledge of certain subjects
- Some knowledge, needed improvement
- Basic knowledge, not in depth

Question: How would you rate your knowledge of the subject at the end of the course (1= Poor, 10= excellent)?

Comments:

- With regards to outlines in delegates guide, as aspects were met
- New benefit procedures explained which have only came into effect recently
- Learned a lot the test will be putting into practice
- Picked up a lot
- Doer not a reader so need more experience or would put a 10
- Presentation was given in such a way you did not realise how much information you were taking in
- Learned more than expected
- Found course interesting and looking forward to using my skills in FSS
- Felt a lot was covered and by the end of course I had forgotten some things from earlier
- Good basic training to start in FSS
- Very confident of course subjects
- Again due to Campbell’s experience as a trainer in the private sector I felt I learned quickly and also retained the knowledge by the end of the session
- More intricate knowledge of benefits etc
- Good coverage of services
## Northline 2008-09

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<th>Total Incoming Calls</th>
<th>Incoming Calls Answered</th>
<th>Incoming Calls Abandoned</th>
<th>Abandon Rate</th>
<th>Other Incoming Call Results</th>
<th>Average Queue Time (seconds)</th>
<th>% within SLA</th>
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### Average Queue Time (seconds)

- **Q1**: Approximately 10 seconds
- **Q2**: Approximately 10 seconds
- **Q3**: Approximately 8 seconds
- **Q4**: Approximately 9 seconds

### Abandon Rate

- **Q1**: 1.92%
- **Q2**: 2.25%
- **Q3**: 2.08%
- **Q4**: 2.24%

### % within SLA

- **Q1**: 90.37%
- **Q2**: 90.81%
- **Q3**: 90.77%
- **Q4**: 90.09%

### Incoming Calls Answered

- **Q1**: 109075
- **Q2**: 106172
- **Q3**: 89786
- **Q4**: 91860