

**Report to: Customer Transformation
Task and Finish Panel**

Date of Meeting: 14 October 2008



Subject: National Indicator 14 – Reducing Avoidable Contact 2008/09

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Recommendations:

That the Task and Finish Panel note current progress with the implementation of National Indicator 14.

1. (Deputy Chief Executive) At its last meeting, the Panel received a report in relation to the introduction of National Indicator (NI) 14, which aims to reduce 'avoidable contact' between the community and local authorities. Examples of 'avoidable contact' are usually of little value to either the citizen or the local authority, but can often represent a significant proportion of contact volumes, and the indicator therefore supports improved and more cost-effective service delivery.
2. Members will be aware that data collection for NI 14 is resource intensive in terms of staff time for those authorities such as the Council without a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Since the last meeting, a working party of senior officers has therefore been established to progress the implementation of NI 14 on a manual recording basis, across the specific service areas and functions prescribed by the indicator guidance.
3. In order to obtain meaningful data in relation to the indicator, it has been agreed that levels of avoidable contact will be collected across a four-week period in all relevant service areas, and this exercise has recently commenced within the Planning and Economic Development Directorate. Data collection within the remaining directorates will continue on a rolling programme throughout the remainder of 2008/09, and decisions will be made at the point of each contact as to whether that contact is avoidable or unavoidable. Details of the various 'types' of avoidable contact will be recorded and an overall corporate level of avoidable contact will be reported as a 2008/09 outturn in April/May 2009.
4. As the Panel is aware, no comparison or benchmarking of the Council's 'performance' against NI 14 will be undertaken by the Audit Commission in the first few years of its operation. Further progress reports on the implementation of NI 14 will be made to future meetings of the Panel as necessary.