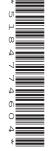# OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

To be opened on receipt

AS GCE APPLIED BUSINESS

F243/01/CS   The Impact of Customer Service

PRE-RELEASE CASE STUDY

JUNE 2017

INSTRUCTIONS TO TEACHERS

* This Case Study **must** be opened and given to candidates on receipt.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

* You **must** make yourself familiar with the Case Study before you sit the examination.
* You **must not** take notes into the examination.
* A clean copy of the Case Study will be given to you with the Question Paper.
* This document consists of **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Belltop Library

Background

Belltop Library is a small village library. It is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10.00 am to 6.00 pm. This is one of 30 libraries run by Witshire County Council. James, the Chief Librarian at *Belltop Library*, describes the library as 'the centre of the local community'. He says the library is especially important for families with young toddlers, retired residents, and migrant workers who have recently moved to the area to work in the county's thriving agricultural industry.   *5*

Despite increasing operating costs and budget cutbacks, *Belltop Library* has extended its service provision over the last year under James' management. James has introduced an Internet café where visitors are served food and drink while they use the Internet. In addition, throughout the school summer holidays the library now runs a daily 'read and art class' for toddlers and their parents. The library has only one other member of staff, Sisbinder, a fully trained librarian. Sisbinder, who works full-time, spends most of her time behind the book scanning desk, handling books being borrowed or returned. All other help is provided by over 20 volunteers, recently recruited by James from Belltop village. The volunteers are all very enthusiastic but difficult to organise and, as yet, not fully trained.   *10*

Complaints

Dean, the Head of Witshire Library Services at Witshire County Council, was given a folder of complaints. Half of all complaints about the county's libraries were from the users of *Belltop Library*. These complaints were worrying. One visitor wrote to say that he had tripped on books that had been left on the floor. Another visitor reported that volunteers could not help her log on to the computer and that the volunteers' levels of customer service were very inconsistent. She wrote, "Some volunteers know how to help you find a book, but none are as good as the trained staff". Others had complained of poor volunteer food hygiene practices in the Internet café, volunteers being rude, books being misfiled and long waiting times for computer access in the Internet café. One customer wrote to complain that the aisles between the book racks were not wide enough for his wheelchair and that the shelves were too high for him to reach.   *15*   *20*

Dean was very concerned that these complaints indicated that levels of customer service may be slipping across the county's libraries. He wondered whether *Belltop Library's* volunteers, in particular, needed more training. He also thought that it would help to have a county-wide 'Customer Service Policy' to promote high quality customer service across Witshire Library Services.   *25*

Immediate action

Dean telephoned James to discuss the complaints. James apologised and said that this was the first time he had heard of any problems. James suggested many of the complaints were due to not having a staff/volunteer comment book in the staffroom or a customer comment box at the book scanning desk. Dean was not sure that these suggestions would help. James said that one volunteer had mentioned that an online booking system for the Internet café would be a good idea. However, James favoured a paper-based system for people to come in and book a time slot instead. Dean was not sure that either idea had been thought through properly.   *30*   *35*

Dean thought training was probably a greater issue for *Belltop Library*. James confirmed that volunteers were not trained at the moment, but that he and Sisbinder were keen to put whatever training and systems were needed into place. Dean thanked James for his enthusiasm and asked him to come up with a proposal for training the volunteers. He also asked for a list of suggestions which might improve customer service at *Belltop Library*.   *40*

Reflection

Dean put the telephone down and reflected on his conversation with James. Although much work had been done by James to raise the visitor numbers at *Belltop Library*, there still seemed to be a number of problems there. Perhaps too many problems! He wondered whether he could improve customer service by closing the *Belltop Library* and replacing it with a mobile library *45* service to the village. He thought that this may even help to meet the council's greatly reduced budget. Dean had read a very good report about a new type of mobile library. It said they were converted single-decker buses with wheelchair-friendly access, purpose-built wide aisles for shelves and even a small area for local community displays and notices. The mobile library would visit a small village like Belltop once a fortnight for half a day (see **Appendix A**). *50*

Dean decided to write an action plan (see **Appendix B**).

Appendix A

> **Extract from 'Mobile Library Report'**
>
> Mobile Library
>
> Benefits include disabled access and a wheelchair-height computer desk with Internet provision for one library visitor. In addition, books are displayed on wheelchair-accessible shelves. The mobile library is staffed by only one member of staff, a driver/librarian, trained for all duties and briefed on current legislation. No volunteers or additional staff are necessary.

Appendix B

> **Dean's action plan for *Belltop Library***
>
> 1   Personally visit *Belltop Library* and, through observation, assess the training needs of volunteers.
>
> 2   Meet with James and look at his training proposal to develop customer service at *Belltop Library*.
>
> 3   Commission a market research agency to research and monitor the levels of customer service across the county at all 30 libraries.
>
> 4   Request a cost/benefit analysis for closing the existing *Belltop Library* and replacing it with a mobile library service which would visit the village once a fortnight for half a day.
>
> 5   At the next Council Management Meeting, suggest a county-wide 'Customer Service Policy' for Witshire Library Services.