



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 28 March 2023	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Customer Experience Strategy & Action Plan (2023-26)**

Report Author(s): **Trish Hatton (Head of Customer Service & Transformation)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to ask Members to approve the Council's Customer Experience Strategy and Action Plan for the next three years covering 2023 – 2026.
Report Summary:	This report and the accompanying appendices outline how the Council intends to deliver its Customer Experience Strategy, indicating the framework it intends to follow and the actions it intends to undertake.
Recommendation(s):	That the Council's Customer Experience Strategy and Action Plan for 2023-26 (at set out at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3) be approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Philippa Fisher (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2677 philippa.fisher@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Trish Hatton (Head of Customer Services & Transformation) (0116) 257 2700 trish.hatton@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Accountability (V1) Respect (V2) Teamwork (V3) Innovation (V4) Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 4.3 of this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Organisational / Transformational Change (CR8)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. Full EA Assessment completed
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	

Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	A consultation was carried out with customers, staff, Members and other key stakeholders between 2 November and 23 December 2022.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation Results 2. Customer Experience Strategy (2023-26) 3. Customer Experience Strategy Action Plan (2023- 26)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Customer Experience Strategy has been developed as part of the Council commitment to customer excellence and continuous improvement.
- 1.2 Work towards achieving the nationally accredited Customer Service Excellence award has helped to develop the Council's customer-focused culture and put the customer at the heart of everything we do. The Customer Experience Strategy will help to embed this further to make customer experience part of the council's DNA.
- 1.3 The Customer Experience Strategy is a way for the Council to set out plans to deliver services, ensuring we meet the needs of all customer groups.

2. Background

- 2.1 Keeping customers at the heart of what we do is integral to the way that the Council delivers its services. This strategy sets out how the Council intends to develop its customer service offering over the next three years to meet the changing needs of our customers. Delivering a positive customer experience is the responsibility of every officer and stakeholder across the Council, with each interaction providing the opportunity to develop productive relationships with our customers. The Strategy outlines how we will adapt to the changing needs of our customers and reinforces our commitment to providing fair and open access to our services.
- 2.2 The pace of digital change is fast and getting faster, both in everyday lives, and in the way the council works. As a result, the expectations of residents and businesses around how they find information, or interact with the Council, has changed.
- 2.3 The increasing financial pressures continue as well as pressure coming from changing population and changes in legislation. However, our desire to provide high quality services to our residents remains the same. With these new challenges will come new opportunity to use technology to enable the Council to achieve efficiencies while maintaining and improving service delivery standards.
- 2.4 The Council needs to develop more cost-effective ways for our customers to contact us, but equally find the right balance between digital, online and face-to-face customer service.
- 2.5 The Council needs to manage demand for our services, supporting our customers to self-serve wherever possible by embracing digital solutions when they can and thereby enabling

the Council to provide more tailored/value added services for those who need it.

- 2.6 An extensive consultation was carried out with customers, staff, Members and other key stakeholders between 2nd November 2022 and 23rd December 2022, with great efforts made to get the views of digitally excluded customers in the borough.
- 2.7 343 responses were received and feedback from these customers has directly impacted the strategy. Full details can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.8 One element of the consultation feedback showed that some customers missed face to face contact and wanted to see this increased. The strategy outlines plans to increase our face to face access channels, by introducing appointment hubs in each town centre and a reception point at the new Council Offices at Brocks Hill.
- 2.9 The consultation feedback also highlighted some improvements needed on our website and the desire for the Council to improve our digital channels.

3 Customer Experience Strategy

- 3.1 The Customer Experience strategy sets out the Council's vision to achieve the best possible experience for our customers, whoever they are (residents, businesses, partners) and whenever they deal with the Council.
- 3.2 The Strategy (**Appendix 2**) is a detailed document which has been made available to read in full.
- 3.3 The strategy sets out four key objectives.
 1. Organising ourselves around customer need
 2. Using data and intelligence to improve customer experience
 3. Growing a 'customer first' continuous improvement culture
 4. Digital by design
- 3.4 This strategy will help the Council to provide responsive, high quality services and continually improve standards of customer service across the Council, whilst being informed by customer engagement and feedback.
- 3.5 Customer insight data will be used to drive improvement and lead to better understanding of customer expectations and needs.

4 Action Plan

- 4.1 The Action Plan (**Appendix 3**) draws together the themes, aims and direction of the Strategy to create a detailed set of targets and action for completion.
- 4.2 The actions set out in this plan are designed to be targeted and measurable so that results can be analysed and evidenced.
- 4.3 Activities 1.1 and 1.2 in the action plan will have unbudgeted costs associated with them. It is estimated the net cost to be circa £15K. Once the costs are finalised, they will be included as supplementary budgets in the quarter 1 2023/24 monitoring report.

5 Flexibility in our Customer Experience Strategy

- 5.1 Customer demand and expectation changes quickly and digital methods of contact are evolving at speed, so it is proposed that both the strategy and action plan are reviewed on annual basis.
- 5.2 It is our intention to involve a focus group of Members in the annual review process of these documents.