

# Customer Experience Strategy

## Consultation Proposal



The consultation will run from 2 November 2022 – 14 December 2022, and is open to residents, businesses and key stakeholders. All returns will be considered along with our existing information to form our Customer Experience Strategy.

### Introduction

The way customers access services from both the public and private sector has been changing rapidly for many years and this change has only been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

More and more customers prefer to engage by digital means with face-to-face contact dropping as a result. The demand for more advanced and improved digital services is growing but there continues to be some demand – often from the most vulnerable in our borough – to offer face-to-face support.

Prior to the pandemic, face-to-face Customer Services in Oadby & Wigston was based at our Customer Service Centre in Bell Street, Wigston. This offered a reactive drop-in service handling all types of council enquiries but has now closed as operating it became unsustainable.

Since the pandemic our service has transferred to telephony/online channels.

In spring 2023, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council will relocate its primary offices to Brocks Hill Country Park, Oadby. The borough council sees this as an ideal opportunity to re-evaluate our customer service offering and develop a new Customer Experience Strategy, which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

We are driven to find to the correct balance between encouraging and advancing our digital customer service offer while also ensuring those that are unable to contact us in this way have direct access to the support they need.

The proposals below capture this, presenting a balanced approach that also fits in with the financial challenges all councils are currently facing.

### Proposals

#### **Element 1 – Establishing a well-balanced, high-quality digital, phone and face-to-face customer service offer.**

We are proposing to undertake a review of our face-to-face Customer Service provision.

The proposed service model focuses on the council's digital approach but also makes significant allowance for those customers - who are often the most vulnerable in our borough - that require more direct support, including face-to-face contact.

Our main proposals are:

- To promote, encourage and support a digital-first model in acknowledgement that most customers prefer to self-serve using the council's digital offer – such as the website.
- To continue to provide an excellent supported service offer by telephone, email, virtual video appointment and similar.
- To increase our face-to-face offering, considering appointment hubs, home visits, and a reception facility at our new head office.



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As our primary council offices will be moving to Brocks Hill County Park, we could consider making this a base for an appointment hub in Oadby. If appointment hubs are a popular approach, we could consider additional hubs in Wigston and South Wigston. Customers would need to pre-book appointments by telephone.

Under consideration and pending the outcomes of this consultation there is the potential that the reception area in Brocks Hill will also be staffed by an officer. It is envisaged that customers could drop in to get help with quick/basic council enquiries such as:

- Booking the customer an appointment (if needed)
- Accepting dropped off forms/documentation
- Signposting customers to help/advice services

### Element 2 – Enhancing and maximising our digital customer service offer

Customers now more than ever are looking for quick and easy ways to get answers to their enquiries. The council is committed to being ‘digital by default’ and it is important that we explore better ways of using technology to serve the customers that prefer to use digital channels.

If there is a need, we plan to introduce a web chat offer that will allow customers to ‘chat’ directly to our customer services team through our website.

We also plan to enhance and improve our online forms.

### Have your say

We want to hear your views on the future of our customer services, gathering information and opinions on how you prefer to access these services. To have your say, please complete our survey:

- On our website at: [www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/consultations)
- By completing a paper form. Please ring the Customer Service Team on 0116 288 8961 to request one.

If assistance is required in completing the questionnaire please call our Customer Service Team who can complete this form over the telephone with you.

### Access to services statement

*The council values the diversity of the community and visitors to the borough and wants its services to be accessible to all. In doing so the council will strive to ensure fair and equal treatment by seeking to ensure that the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity underpin all its policies, procedures and practices.*