

Appendix 1 - Customer care action plan update 2022/23

Key: 😊 - Action achieved, 😐 - Action started but not achieved, 😞 - Action not yet started.

Theme	2022/23 actions update.	Status
<p>Introduce a refreshed set of customer care standards</p>	<p>1. Promote the council’s customer care standards.</p>	
	<p>a) Deliver a Staff Briefing to refresh all staff on the importance of delivering our customer service standards.</p> <p>A staff briefing was not delivered this year due to additional demands on the team, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business grants - Energy relief grants - Food vouchers <p>These additional schemes added a further 2000 queries on top of the team’s usual activities. A briefing is being planned for later in 2023.</p>	<p>😞</p>
	<p>b) Operational managers to ensure standards are promoted through team meetings, appraisals and 1-2-1 meetings.</p> <p>The Customer Care Standards were presented at an Operational Managers’ meeting in January 2023. Further presentations were offered to all team meetings to help embed the standards. Several managers have booked in a further presentation to be delivered to their services, including economic development, licensing and development management.</p>	<p>😊</p>
	<p>2. Consult with customers to understand if they are satisfied with our standards.</p>	
	<p>a) Investigate the option of introducing automated customer services satisfaction surveys following phone calls to services.</p> <p>The restrictions on our current phone system means this action has not been delivered but gathering customer feedback will be an important consideration when procuring the new phone system in 2023/24.</p>	<p>😞</p>
<p>b) As part of the website review, consider options to capture satisfaction online.</p> <p>The requirement to capture satisfaction online has been fed into the corporate website review. The new website is expected to go live in June 2023. In addition, through our 4Cs approach, customers can now log complaints, comments, concerns, and compliments through our new digital platform. By adding comments and concerns as feedback options, we have significantly reduced the number of formal complaints we received.</p> <p>There is also a feedback option at the end of each website page of our current site enabling customers to give their opinion on the page content.</p>	<p>😐</p>	

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<p>Make it easier, simpler, and more convenient for customers to interact with us when requiring our services.</p>	<p>3. Work with parish councils and other partners to provide access to our services across the borough</p>	
	<p>a) Review the advice and information centres (AICs) with the aim of ensuring customers get a service that is available at more convenient times.</p> <p>During the pandemic our AICs were run by the parish councils in each location – Brockworth, Bishop’s Cleeve, Winchcombe and Churchdown. Footfall was low, and the requests were straightforward including caddy collections and photocopying documents.</p> <p>Following discussions with Brockworth Parish Council, a new permanent arrangement was agreed which means customers are now dealt with by a member of the parish council team. This set up means our customers now have a service available throughout the week rather than on the one morning that our team was able to visit. It has also meant that a member of our team no longer needs to drive to the parish council offices once a week – providing resilience on the phones.</p> <p>Supporting the arrangement, training was provided to the clerks alongside a detailed training guide on council services and useful contacts for each service. Regular contact with the clerks has confirmed the new arrangement is working well, and customers are happy with the wider and more accessible opening times.</p> <p>An action for 2023 is to look to roll a similar approach out across the other AICs. Initial contact has been positive with the clerks at Churchdown and Bishops Cleeve, with Bishop’s Cleeve offering to take on the service delivery as soon as possible.</p>	
	<p>4. Review the customer services team structure to ensure it delivers excellent customer care.</p>	
	<p>a) Identify the impact of moving key customer services queries online – e.g. garden waste and bulky waste.</p> <p>Our garden waste customers (approx. 20,000) are given the option to renew their subscriptions online – and 85% choose to do so. They are also able to check queries with frequently asked questions and order their bins online. This approach has reduced the number of calls coming into the customer services team, ensuing advisors are available for customers needing help and other queries.</p> <p>Following the review of the bulky waste service, online bulky waste bookings can now be made too. The online booking option roll out was staggered initially so the system could be tested to ensure its usability. Between January 2022 and December 2022, we have had 1498 collections booked through the customer services team, and 1692 bookings made by customers using the online booking service – indicating that this service is likely to reflect the success of our online garden waste service.</p>	

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	<p>b) Review the impact of increasing service support to areas such as planning and licensing.</p> <p>The customer services team is now the first point of contact for licensing and planning queries enabling them to answer frequently asked questions at the first point of contact and ensuring both teams can deal with more complex queries. This has proved successful and provided much-needed support to the teams. The team also provided support with business and household grants and the food voucher scheme.</p> <p>c) Identify a team structure that fits with the current demand.</p> <p>This has not been delivered but will be moved across the 2023/24 action list. Monitoring of phone activity has provided information on busy periods, quiet times, call times, and busy areas so the team can be better managed to suit demand.</p>	<p>😊</p> <p>😞</p>
<p>In line with the recommendation from the Peer Challenge, investigate the option of running a meaningful residents' satisfaction survey.</p>	<p>5. Implement improvements as a result of the residents' satisfaction survey.</p> <p>a) Develop a corporate-wide action plan following feedback from the recent residents' satisfaction survey. Gra can you add a sentence here please?</p>	
<p>Make sure our staff are equipped with the skills to deliver high quality customer service.</p>	<p>6. Support the Development Management review's commitment to customer care.</p> <p>a) Carry out a customer care session for all DM staff to highlight the importance of good customer service.</p> <p>External training provider Rich Wills provided tailored customer care sessions for the entire DM team. The feedback was positive, and Rich felt that the team is aware of the importance of customer care and the work being done on improving processes through the DM review will further support them to deliver an improved customer experience.</p> <p>7. Ensure all CS advisors achieve NVQ level 3 in customer services.</p> <p>a) As part of PPD process, invite all members of the customer services team to complete an NVQ in customer services.</p>	<p>😊</p> <p>😐</p>

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	<p>Half of the customer services team now have an NVQ customer service qualification, with new staff encouraged to enrol on the course to ensure our customers receive a high level of service.</p> <p>Additional training needs are identified during individual 1-2-1 meetings, PPDs and general monitoring.</p> <p>To ensure the team maintains required skills for digital services, regular training is provided to the team when new services are added to the digital platform.</p> <p>The team has also received training from licensing and planning to support its approach to answer queries at the first point of contact, enabling our advisors provide a better service to our customers.</p>	
	<p>b) Regularly contribute a customer care article to News4U to raise the importance of putting the customer first.</p> <p>Articles are provided through News4U advising staff on simple steps they can take to improve customer care for all our customers.</p> <p>The articles featured tips on setting up voice messages on hunt groups during peak times to ensure the customer was aware the phones were busy and tips on how to encourage customers to go online rather than wait on the phone. The customer standards were also included to enable staff to raise awareness and remind teams of what is expected.</p>	😊
<p>Promote channel shift and support those customers who need the more traditional methods of communication.</p>	<p>8. Promote the council's online services to all customers.</p> <p>a) Customer services team to ensure all customers are aware of the council's online services, including paperless billing, bulky waste, and garden waste.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the customer services team advises all customers of our online services on each call and will continue to do so.</p> <p>Phone messages are now added during particularly busy times, such as the garden waste renewal period, encouraging customers to go online.</p>	😊

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	<p>b) <i>Customer services to ensure email addresses are taken when dealing with all customer enquiries.</i></p> <p>The team takes email addresses during each call, where possible, to try and encourage future updates on cases to be delivered via email or automatically. This helps to ensure the customer services team is available to deal with those customers who do not have online access or have more complex requirements.</p> <p>Last year, 62% of calls resulted in capturing an email for the customer.</p>	😊
	<p>c) <i>Customer services to be a key critical friend for the Business Transformation Team – providing feedback on where customers would benefit from online service improvements.</i></p> <p>The customer services team works closely with the business transformation team to improve services to our customers and can offer an important insight from the customers’ point of view.</p> <p>The team gets involved in the implementation of services going online. For example, before the bulky waste service went live the team was able to advise on most frequently asked queries, the types of items requested, and any issues that provided a negative experience for the customer. This was then reflected in the online booking form.</p>	😊
<p>Ensure our reception service meets the needs of partners in the Public Services Centre.</p>	<p>9. Ensure customers continue to experience excellent customer care as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>	
	<p>a) <i>Work with partners to provide relevant and up-to-date content for the digital screen in the Public Services Centre.</i></p> <p>Signage using consistent branding was created and displayed around the building requesting customers to follow the safety measures in place.</p>	😊
	<p>b) <i>Improve the Public Services Centre’s signage.</i></p> <p>Signage advising customers of the opening hours for the council and partners has been updated to include all contact information on one sign, making it look more presentable and easier for customers to view.</p> <p>Further improvements need to be explored in 2023 around the signage outside of the building to better promote what services are provided.</p>	😊

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	<p>c) Introduce a customer experience improvements section to the Landlords and Tenants meetings.</p> <p>As a member of the landlord and tenant liaison group, the customer services team leader can make recommendations to our partners on how they can improve their service to our customers visiting the offices. This is often based on feedback from the customer services team following issues experienced whilst covering the reception desk.</p> <p>Council reception staff also provide cover for the Police reception due to their staff shortages or cover for illness or holidays. This improves the service to customers visiting the offices to report a crime, attend meetings or collect personal items. Police staff will provide support from the back office.</p>	<p>😊</p>