

Appendix 1- Customer care action plan update 2023/24

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

Themes	2023/24 actions update	Status
Introduce a refreshed set of customer service standards.	1. Review the customer care standards.	
	<p>a) Carry out a review of the customer care standards to ensure they reflect best practice and put the customers' experience first.</p> <p>A review of the customer care standards will feed into the rollout of the council's new omnichannel contact centre, as described in 4b. The new standards will introduce performance indicators and ensure consistency in performance to the council's approach to customer care.</p>	☹️
	<p>b) Review the way in which the customer care standards are embedded in service delivery across the organisation.</p> <p>The approach each team takes to adopting the customer care standards is being reviewed as part of the rollout of the new omnichannel contact centre (as described in 4b). Feedback as part of the omnichannel project has been clear that some aspects of the standards – such as responding to voicemails – are not used consistently. New standards will be developed and consulted upon. Each team will be invited to sessions where new standards will be explained, and the performance indicators made clear. Performance on the indicators will be reported to leadership team on a quarterly basis, which will also help to indicate how well the standards are embedded in service delivery.</p>	😊
Make it easier, simpler and more convenient for customers to interact with us when requiring a service.	2. Engage more with our Residents' Panel to get feedback on emerging services and policies.	
	<p>a) Review the membership of the panel and communicate with them to establish if they would like to remain on it.</p> <p>The Citizens' Panel currently has 234 members. A review of the panel has not yet taken place but will be delivered by the end of April 2024 with members being asked to confirm they would like to remain on it, and that the data we hold for them is accurate.</p>	☹️
	b) Develop a programme of issues/policies/surveys that the panel could input into for 23/24.	😊

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	<p>The Citizens' Panel was consulted on the following throughout 23/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Plan and new name. - New website. - Planning application tracker. 	
	3. Work with parish councils and other partners to provide access to our services across the borough.	
	<p>a) Work with the parish councils in each of the AIC areas to establish if a similar approach to the Brockworth arrangement could be adopted.</p> <p>Visitors to the Brockworth AIC are encouraged to access the borough council's services via a PC that has been installed on-site. The parish council provide support where needed to those that require assistance navigating online services and refer more complex queries to the borough council via telephone.</p> <p>In January 2023, given the very low footfall, it was decided that a similar approach could work well at Bishop's Cleeve AIC. Advisors at Bishops Cleeve Library (where the AIC was located) continue to refer visitors to our online services or to the Customer Services team where required.</p> <p>We continue to attend Winchcombe and Churchdown AICs weekly, but footfall remains very low with 13 visitors to Churchdown and 63 visitors to Winchcombe between April 2023 and March 2024. The advisor that attends the AICs will play a dual role and answer calls through the switchboard too. Consideration will be given to our AIC approach in the development of a new strategy.</p>	😊
	<p>b) Review the Brockworth approach to understand if the new arrangement is an improvement.</p> <p>Feedback from the Brockworth AIC is that they see around two to three residents per week, with seasonal peaks during garden waste renewal time. Those residents who visit don't tend to use the self-serve PC that is available but are supported by Brockworth Parish Council to report issues online where needed.</p>	😊

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Make sure our staff are equipped with the skills to deliver a high-quality customer care service.	4. Review the customer services team structure to ensure it delivers excellent customer care.	
	<p>a) Carry out a service review to establish if the current customer services team structure is fit for purpose, reflects best practice and provides a good customer experience.</p> <p>A new structure for the customer services team was introduced in April 2023, which introduced a new communications and customer experience manager and the replacement of a customer services team leader post with a senior customer services advisor post. The new structure is working well, with examples such as our flooding response and garden waste renewal period highlighting the benefits of having a single manager overseeing the two teams and ensuring information is shared – both to and from our customers – in a timely way. Our senior customer services advisor is having a significant positive impact on the customer services team, including their warm and welcoming approach, team morale and performance.</p>	😊
	<p>b) As part of the service review, consider the impact of a new phone system and corporate customer contact portal.</p> <p>The council has invested in a new omnichannel contact centre that allows us to use multiple channels to interact with customers, such as live chat, automated chat bots for straight forward enquiries, Facebook messenger, and SMS.</p> <p>This system and our approach will completely reinvent the way we interact with customers, helping us to work more efficiently and to improve our service.</p> <p>Called Converse and Connect, it will work alongside Teams. It will open new possibilities for service areas to speak with residents, and provide the functionality to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See caller queues and volume, to help us manage and answer calls more efficiently. • Offer customers a call back service. 	😊

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage time efficiency with a 'wrap up' prompt. • Check the status of colleagues to whom calls are being transferred. • Access wide reporting options, to help us learn and get better. <p>The system will be rolled out from May to July on a phased basis to ensure teams are fully supported and lessons are captured. Once the teams have the tools to interact in different ways and are comfortable using the system, we will start rolling out the other features such as webchat, emails and social media.</p>	
	<p>c) Customer services to continue to work with the Business Transformation Team to feed into the development of online services.</p> <p>The customer services team worked collaboratively with business transformation to deliver Phase 1 of in-cab technology for waste and recycling services. The solution has transformed the way we interact digitally, providing real time online reporting to our customers. Both teams are now involved in scoping and process mapping for Phase 2 of the project for streets and grounds. The solution will use spacial data to provide an enhanced online offering.</p> <p>The teams worked together to implement an improved process for monitoring bin deliveries, involving implementation of photographs within Liberty Create to evidence completion.</p> <p>Members of the customer services team are actively involved in the Converse and Connect project and attend bi-weekly project meetings inputting to the design to ensure it meets the needs of our customers.</p> <p>The Business Transformation Team developed a solution for customer services to deliver the food voucher scheme as part of the Household Support Fund. This included the ability for customers to apply for vouchers online and an agent interface for customer services to monitor uptake and progress of applications.</p>	😊

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Promote channel shift and support those customers who need the more traditional methods of communication.	5. Promote the council's online services to all customers.	
	<p>a) Encourage every caller to carry out their request online.</p> <p>Where appropriate, callers are advised of our online service offering.</p> <p>Recently, the customer services team have played an important role in promoting and signposting residents to the Citizens Access Portal for council tax related self-serve.</p> <p>The customer services team ensure that full contact details, including an email address, are taken with every call. For garden waste customers, this results in communication via digital channels, encouraging a shift to online transacting.</p> <p>Links to online services are provided when responding to enquiries by email.</p>	😊
	<p>b) Consider including an administration cost to bookings made over the phone, such as garden waste and bulky waste.</p> <p>This was not progressed during 2023/24 due to resource limitations but will be considered as part of a wider approach to delivering paid-for digital services, being mindful of the impact on residents who do not have access to online services.</p>	☹️
	<p>c) Ensure a new phone system promotes the council's online services.</p> <p>This will be an important part of the council's new omni-channel contact centre.</p> <p>Customisable "comfort messages" will be implemented during wait times. These will be used to promote and direct towards online services.</p>	😊

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Ensure our reception service meets the needs of partners in the Public Services Centre.	6. Ensure customers continue to experience excellent customer care when visiting us.	
	<p>a) Review the reception service and explore digital options to improve it.</p> <p>A suggestions/feedback iPad, mounted in reception, is currently being explored. This will be in the emerging “Give us your feedback” area.</p> <p>A dashboard, accessible to the receptionist, has been implemented to provide an overview of Civic Suite meetings, onsite contacts and meeting requirements.</p> <p>A new method of recording visitors to reception has been introduced.</p> <p>Attendance at quarterly landlord meetings gives opportunities to discuss service improvements.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction of visitors to the Public Services Centre is discussed at regular meetings between the Customer Services team and other service areas.</p>	😊
	<p>b) As part of the office refurbishment, improve the Public Services Centre signage.</p> <p>The office refurbishment project was put on hold during 2023/24 but the Public Services Centre signage will be included when it progresses.</p>	☹️