

# Customer Service Strategy



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# Introduction

As an organisation our core purpose is to 'Develop and sustain a society that looks after its most vulnerable members, delivers appropriate, quality services at the right time, and seeks opportunities for economic growth and innovation'.

Our Customer Service Strategy explains how we are transforming the services we provide to the people of Warwickshire. It outlines our ambition for the quality and experience we want our customers to have.

We want our customers to have the best possible experience when they use our services at a time when demand is increasing and the resources available for us to meet these reducing. In very simple terms we cannot continue to deliver services in the way we have so must find new delivery methods that meet both the demands and efficiencies required of us.

In achieving this there is no compromise in our commitment to understanding our customers and their needs. We aim to increase our customers control over their experience with us whilst utilising digital channels as a way of delivering services in the most efficient way. We will ask those customers who are able to self-serve through an online account to do so, build our capacity using local ambassadors to provide support to help those who are less confident in doing this, or do not have access to technology, and utilise our most expensive methods of support for the most vulnerable. We will listen to our customers about their experiences with us and use their feedback to make real differences to our services. We want our services to be valued by those who use them. Customers should experience seamless services where they are able to access everything they need from us and our partners in one place.

We are committed to providing services that are:

- Easily accessible
- Simple to use
- Streamlined
- Convenient
- Cost effective
- Reliable

Our future service delivery must be focused on simplifying the way customers access our services, understanding their journey with us, giving them control over the services they use, listening to and responding to their feedback. Services which can be delivered digitally will be, allowing expensive resources to be focused on those services which cannot be delivered digitally and focus on our most vulnerable customers.



**Cllr Kam Kaur**  
**Cabinet Portfolio**  
**Holder for Customer**  
**Service**



**David Carter,**  
**Strategic Director**  
**for Resources**



**Kushal Birla,**  
**Head of**  
**Customer Service**

# The Customer Vision

Information is accessed by customers through multiple channels and demand for Council services is effectively managed.

The customer experience will be a positive one and is outlined below from a customer perspective:

**I want...** information, advice, service and help

**I get...** a quick response and not be passed around lots of people

**I know...** the information that you give me will be correct  
the service provided will be value for money

**I trust...** you to make things simple so that I can understand  
you to treat my information confidentially

**I feel...** that I have been understood  
you want to help me and that you care  
that my enquiry matters

We recognise that 'one size fits all' is not an appropriate response to our public service offer in Warwickshire.

We want improved, simplified, single affordable systems, buildings and staff that are customer focused and enable us to meet our customers' expectations. Key to this is the continued development of two key areas:

- **Single point of entry to services (One Front Door)**

- **Customer Journey**

The One Front Door is the different ways/methods that customers use to access our services. It includes face-to-face, telephone, email/letter, automated phone, mobile and digital routes. In the next year we will be adding online individual customer accounts where customers can access and manage their services themselves through their single account, online live chat where we are able to text talk to people as they are looking at services online so we can help them and email alerts so people can receive information that is important to them.

The Customer Journey is the experience a customer has with us in accessing a service. It includes how many contacts they have with staff and different parts of the organisation and what their experience was along the way.

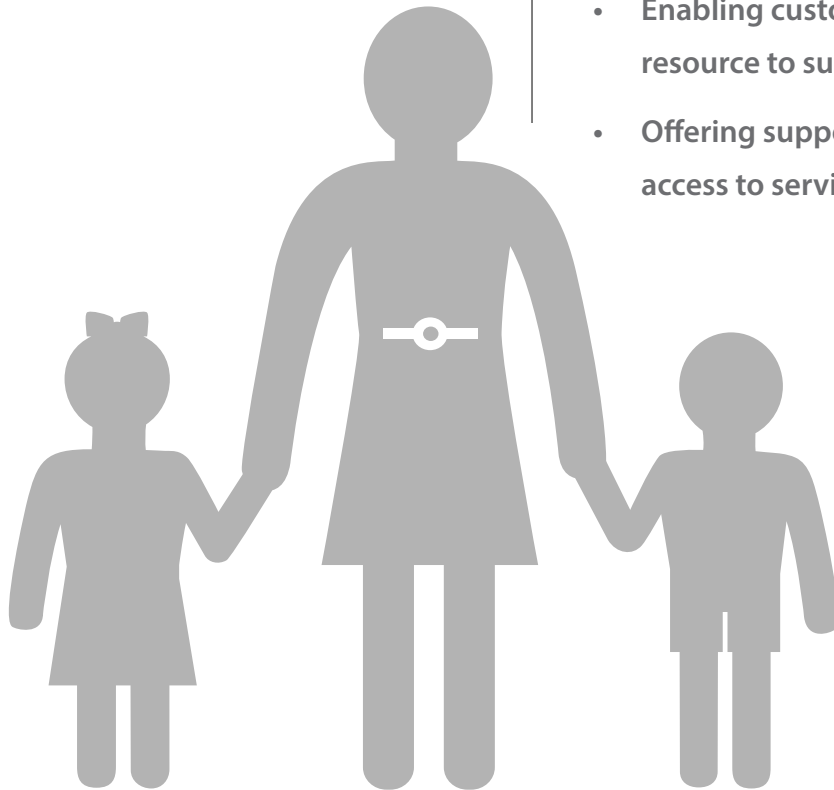
We are already changing services so these are delivered online allowing us to sustain relevant services whilst delivering savings, this will continue as we shape our services for the future. The development of our self-service channel, live chat and email alerts will enable our customers to have greater control of the services they use. This will allow us to focus our most expensive telephone and face-to-face support on the most vulnerable whilst reducing and eventually closing the ways in which some of our services are currently accessed by customers. Both the One Front Door and understanding the journeys our customers take will be critical to getting this right.

We have already been consulting with our customers to understand what impact service transformation is having on them. We know that some customers do not have the skills, knowledge or confidence to use online services or access to equipment and the internet to make this possible. We will need to plan how they are supported to build their skills and confidence through a network of local facilities. We are confident the work we have started and our plan for the future will enable us to improve access to our services whilst also improving our customers' experience.

# Delivering the Vision

We will deliver our customer vision and improve our customer's experience by:

- Ensuring consistency in customers experience through our One Front Door so their enquiry is resolved the first time
- Using customer insight so we understand what customers want and need
- Ensuring the customer is in control, making it easy for customers to access the right advice and information at times and in places that are right for them
- Listening and responding to customer feedback on all of our services
- Enabling customers to access services flexibly through digital channels, freeing up resource to support our most vulnerable customers
- Offering support to help people be online and working with our partners to improve local access to services



The following are the key workstreams which we will focus on to ensure we deliver our vision.



## 1. Consistency (One Front Door)

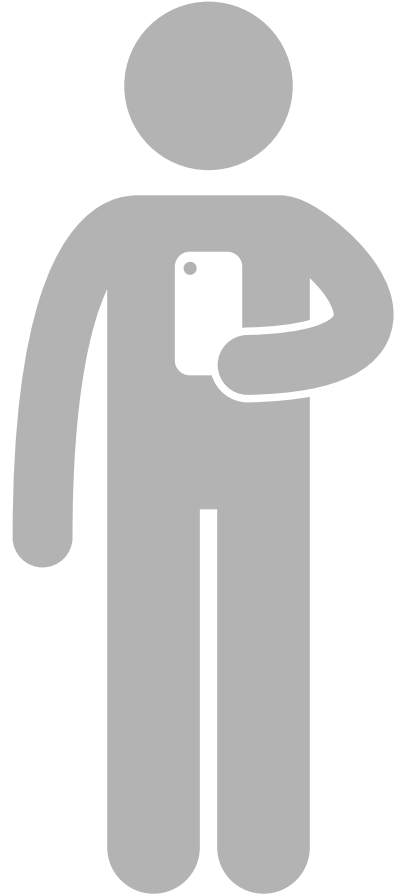
A 'One Front Door' approach is where we ensure customers receive consistent advice, information and access to services through a number of identified managed ways of contacting us. We still have too many ways customers can access us, often resulting in confusion for our customers and a poor customer experience. We will simplify the number of ways a customer can contact us ensuring they get to the right service the first time.

Through all of these different routes the service a customer receives will be consistent regardless of whether this is through online self-serve, telephone or face-to-face. One Front Door already enables customers to access a number of services in the one place and we will increase this.

Our staff will need the right skills to support our vision, we will develop a framework that allows us to make sure they are equipped to support digital services.

Ensuring the consistency of customer experience through One Front Door requires us to have accurate, up-to-date and relevant advice and information held within a single and comprehensive knowledge management system.

This means customers have a positive experience enabling them to access the right services, at the right time through a single point of contact. We in turn are able to improve the different ways we provide this whilst delivering the efficiencies required of us.



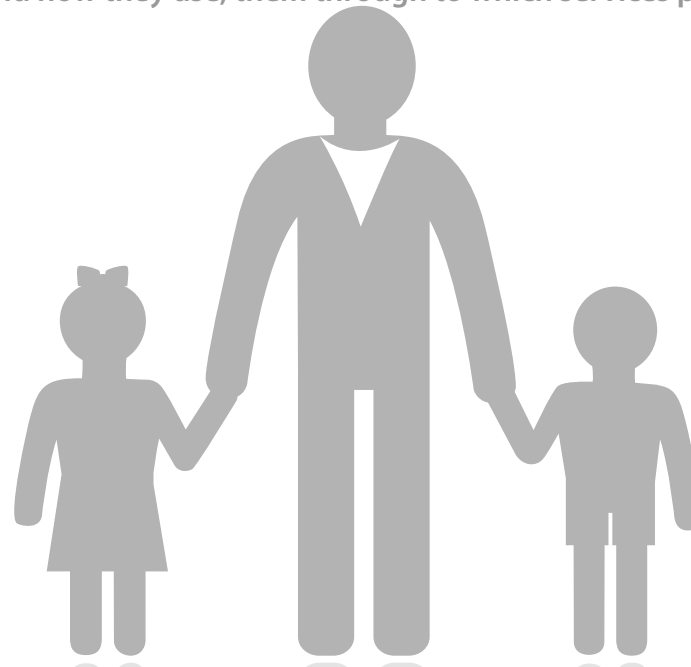
## 2. Getting it right (Customer Insight)

Customer insight is described 'as a deep truth about the customer, based on their behaviour, experiences, beliefs, needs or desires that is relevant to the tasks or issues and rings bells with target people'.

We will improve the way we collect, collate and use this information to understand our customers and their behaviours better to inform the changes we will be making.

We will use the information to shape the future delivery of our services, which services we deliver and in which ways through our One Front Door. As we redesign services we will do so from the start to the end so that the customer gets a seamless service.

Through the delivery of all our services we collect data about our customers. From where they live, what services they use, and how they use, them through to which services people use the most or the least.





### **3. Customer choice (Customer in control)**

We will ensure the way information and services are made available allows our customers to always be in control.

Through the development of customer self-serve we will ensure we have single customer accounts where everything for a customer is available and recorded in one place. Customers will be able to see every contact they have had with us and how we have responded, they will also be able to see other services that may be of interest to them and request new services. They will manage their existing services creating an individual account that is personalised by and for them. We will also seek to maximise customers' ability to pay for our services electronically.

Introducing email sign-ups will also allow customers to decide when and on what subjects they would like to receive information from us. The customer will be in control of their choices and we will then send out to them information or advice that relates to these. This means we can be proactive in responding to the subjects our customers are interested in ensuring they get timely and relevant information for them.

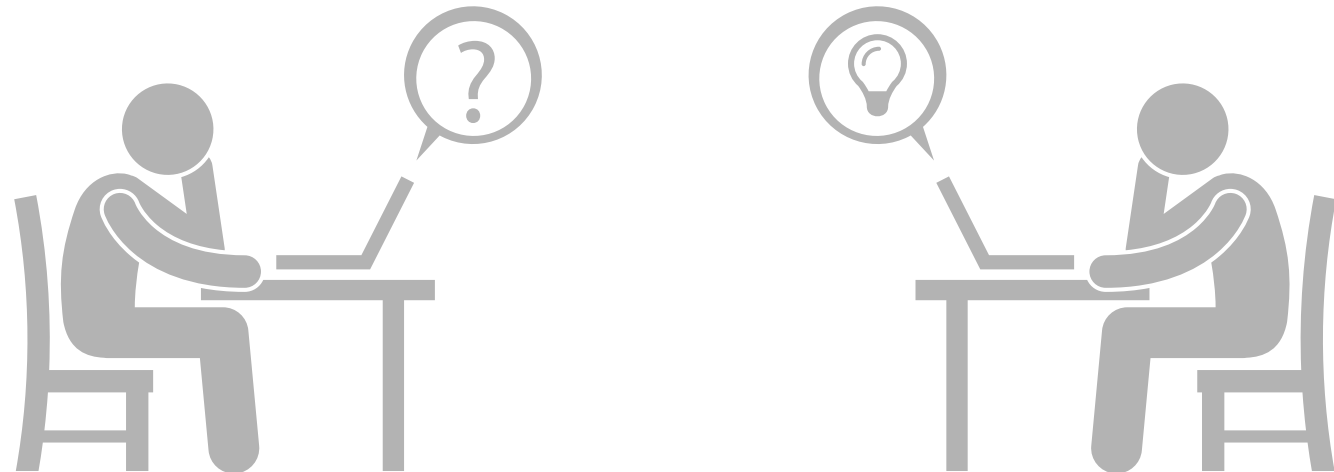


## 4. Improving what we do (Customer Feedback)

Customer feedback helps us know what customers think we are doing well, identify customers who aren't happy with our services, stop recurring problems and helping us increase our overall customer satisfaction.

We will make it easy for customers to give us feedback on our services and we will listen to what customers say. We will use customer surveys through our website, telephone and face-to-face services and will make these simple, focused and quick, the results will be used to make improvements.

As we change the way we deliver services, we will ask customers to test them for us, listen to what customers say on social media, look at how people use our website and talk to people using online live chat. We will look at what customers say and will use this to make improvements so that our online services are so good people will prefer to use them.





## **5. Offering flexibility (Digital Channels)**

We will do the hard work in joining up services. We will use digital channels to enable customers to have 24/7 access to services at times and places that work for them. This allows us to reduce transactional costs for those people able to help themselves and enables us to target our more expensive methods of service delivery to the most vulnerable.

We will develop web self-serve, through a simple user-friendly website, to ensure we have single customer accounts and our customers can access all the services they need to from a single place. This allows us to join up our services and also those of our partners.

We will make sure that all services delivered online are computer, tablet and smartphone friendly allowing access from all digital devices and providing a consistent customer experience.

To make this as effective as possible for customers we will make sure that our single customer accounts link up with the systems used by individual services, creating a smooth and seamless service to our customers.

## 6. Supporting those who need it (Digital Inclusion)

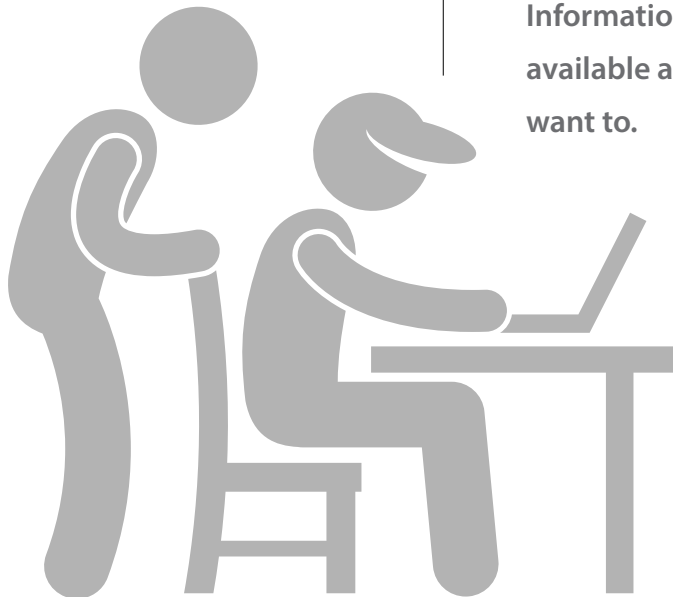
Increasing customers use of online services will help support those who are isolated. It will help develop skills and increase access to services as digital delivery becomes the way most organisations prefer to deliver their services. Our staff will be trained to support those who need it.

As we develop our digital services those who use them will have greater choice, control and access to our services and the information they would like to receive.

We recognise that not everyone has the skills, access to the internet or equipment to take advantage of this or the knowledge of what the internet can offer. We also understand that for some people they simply do not wish to access services in this way.

We understand that we need to work with our communities so we can increase the confidence of those who are digitally excluded and increase their ability to use online services.

Information on what can be done online and the benefits of doing this will be made as widely available as possible raising customers' awareness of what they can do online as and when they want to.



# Outcomes

We will know we have been successful in placing the customer at the heart of our transformation programme when the customer:

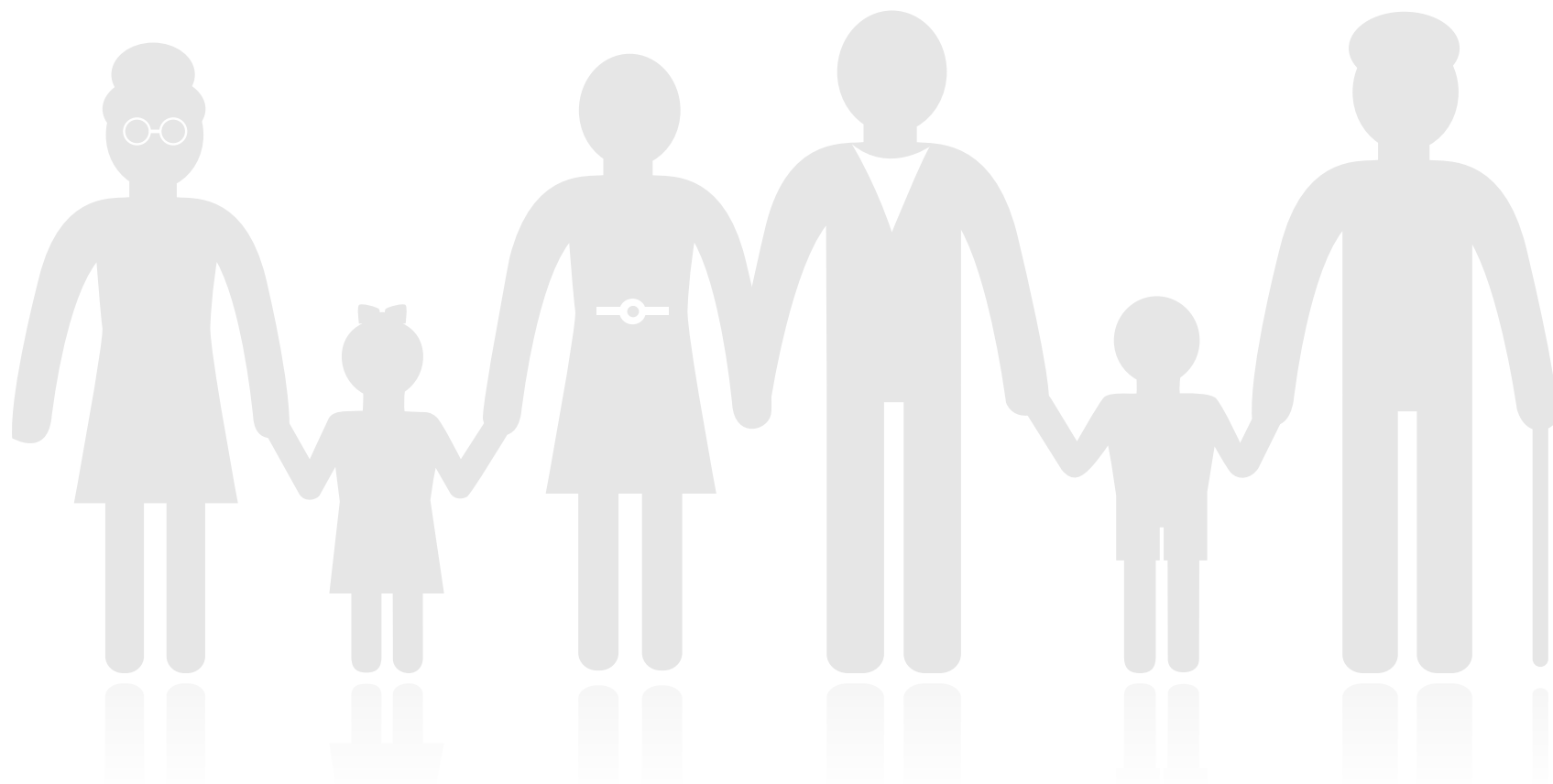
- Finds it easy to access our services and information
- Gets the service they need first time
- Is offered complementary services by us without them having to work it out for themselves
- Can access services and view their contact history in one place
- Is satisfied or very satisfied with the service/information they receive

# Conclusion

**Delivering the vision in this Strategy will transform our customers' experience, they will have greater choice, control and access to our services through a simple and easy to use website. They will be able to see all the services they use from us through a single account, alongside those of other agencies where we work together to support customers.**

**They will receive regular updates on service areas which interest them with information pointing to where they can see more. We will have a workforce with the right skills for the future and a comprehensive information and advice system which allows us to inform and guide our customers to the right services for them.**

**We will be working closely with our communities to increase access and support to our services and will have strong partnerships in place that allow us to have local ambassadors to support local people. Success is exceptional customer service and services which are fit for purpose and able to evolve as our customers' needs change.**



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Division: Customer Service  
Directorate: Resources Group  
Telephone: 01926 412013  
E-mail: [kushalbirla@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:kushalbirla@warwickshire.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

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