

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Customer Experience Strategy Progress Report (Year 1)

9 March 2021

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Committee comment on progress on year one of the implementation of the Customer Experience Strategy.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Customer Experience Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 14 December 2019 and it sets out our commitment to enhancing the services we provide for our customers. It includes our vision to achieve a step change in the customer experience.
- 2.2 By aspiring to be as good as the best customer service organisations across the private, voluntary and community sector and public sectors, we will embed across the council, a more consistent customer experience based on a clear, simple customer promise.
- 2.3 To deliver the Strategy, an action plan was developed, and this report covers progress from January to December 2020. It should be recognised that the Council's COVID response has had a significant impact on the delivery of the plan.
- 2.4 Out of the 11 actions identified on the plan (see section 5 for details) 1 has been completed, 8 are in progress and will continue into 2021/22 and 1 has been delayed and will be picked up in year 2 of the action plan in 2021/22.
- 2.5 During 2020, a number of new service offers were launched to support members of the public as part of the organisation's response to COVID. These included:
- The Shielding Hub which provided over 10,000 food parcels to Warwickshire residents.
 - A freephone hotline which continues to operate seven days a week. In the initial response phase, the CSC took over 5,000 incoming calls for support with COVID related issues and made over 6,000 calls to customers ensuring they had the support they needed.
 - A distribution network which ensured PPE was provided to the essential service providers such as care homes.
 - A mass testing programme enabling residents in Warwickshire to

receive vital testing for COVID.

- A tracing service to trace sources of infection, where residents help us identify critical locations of infection.
- A service dedicated to supporting schools and Head Teachers in acknowledgement of the support and help our internal customers need in combating COVID.

2.6 The objectives and actions of the Customer Experience Strategy have not changed following COVID and the new services set up to support customers through COVID have all embraced the key objectives set out in the strategy:

- Deliver a Positive customer experience and outcomes.
- To enhance customer focus and engagement.
- Having a clear customer support service offer

2.7 It is evident from the work that has been delivered throughout the year supporting Warwickshire residents that staff have demonstrated their commitment through action to the customer promises especially in relation to COVID:

- Always take responsibility.
- Be open, honest and respectful.
- Be clear with you.
- Listen and learn.
- Look for solutions and make best use of everyone's time.
- Support you to use our online services.

2.8 In 2021/22 there will be refresh of the corporate performance framework to ensure we have a meaningful set of measures that tell us whether we're achieving purpose in customer terms, i.e. we understand failure demand and are designing it out.

2.9 Customer, digital and data have been bought together as a single programme, so that customer experience drives digital, and is informed by robust data. An example of this new approach is a review of the school's admissions system which will be a pathfinder for the wider programme by identifying failure demand and designing it out.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 None

4. Environmental Implications

4.1 None

5. Supporting Information

5.1 The following table summarises the activities from the Customer Experience Strategy Action Plan (Appendix 1) undertaken from January to December 2020. Included is a current status and comments relating to the various activities.

Please note that the service areas involved in progressing these actions have been and continue to be involved in the council's COVID response and recovery work and have therefore had to re-prioritise planned activities. There has however still been significant progress in actioning activities.

Action	Status	Comment
Outcome 1: Positive customer experience and outcomes		
Launch Customer Experience Strategy with each Directorate	Complete	Customer Experience Strategy and new Complaints Policy was launched with each Directorate Senior Management team.
Include in Induction Training for New Starters		'Induction Module - Customer Service in Warwickshire - IND Si012' revised and updated to include key elements of the Strategy including the Customer Promise.
Identify and map out the Customer pathways using WCC Website & Customer Service Centre for customers wanting to request services from Communities, Peoples & Resources Directorate.	In progress and will continue into year 2.	Exercise undertaken during the summer to look at all ways a customer could request a service via WCC Website. This information is now being used as part of the Catalyst review project into the replacement Customer Relationship Management System (CRM). Discovery phase of the catalyst project is now complete.
Review the provision of information & advice through all channels including arrangements for keeping it up to date	In progress and will continue into year 2.	New Information and Advice Platform and replacement of the Warwickshire Directory of Services planned for delivery 01/07/2021

Review and refine our customer feedback process	In progress and will continue into year 2.	New Customer Complaints Policy launched. Analysis of complaints being completed by BI using text-based recognition system. New complaints system will be part of the CRM system. Feedback from all areas of the organisation will continue to be identified and included in the customer view.
Develop community digital education programme aimed at getting communities and individuals online	In progress and will continue into year 2.	Activities that have been undertaken include those in response to COVID: Libraries ICT helpline, Customer Service Centre staff helping customers to navigate online, YouTube videos to help the public access digital services e.g., Borrow box.
Outcome 2: Enhanced Customer Focus and Engagement		
Set up a Citizens'/People's panel Investigate the options available for the Citizens Panel. What is the scope, responsibility and purpose of the citizens panel?	In progress and will continue into year 2.	In September 2020 Cabinet agreed the establishment of a Residents Panel for Warwickshire with the intention of providing additional capability for key policy areas, aligned to recovery and the Council Plans. The aim of the Panel is to provide WCC with the capability to access residents' views outside of formal consultation exercises.
Develop and implement an action plan with partners including the voluntary and private sector Co-produce a plan with WCS on customer engagement	Delayed	Due to COVID activity, this is now linked into the Community Recovery plan around the introduction of the Residents Panel (see above).
Outcome 3: Clear Customer Support Service Offer		
Undertake benchmarking review with public & private sector organisations considered to be best in class including digital and technological improvements Identify service providers prior to benchmarking	In progress and will continue into year 2.	Some elements of this activity have been covered by the Catalyst engagement project and the replacement of the telephony systems. Links with public & private sector organisations such as Coventry City Council, Agilisys, Virgin and CTalk have been made and researched for best practice. In

		addition to this input from those who have joined the organisation within the last year with relevant external experience has been drawn upon.
Undertake comprehensive 'customer experience' engagement activity to inform action plan and route map by engaging with Microsoft's Catalyst team to complete a review of the Customer Experience	In progress and will continue into year 2.	Catalyst Discovery Phase complete. Further work ongoing into 'customer experience' engagement activity throughout the organisation in partnership with Microsoft.
Embed staff behaviours at all tiers of the workforce that enable staff to offer innovative and creative solutions to deliver excellent services	In progress and will continue into year 2.	<p>Customer Promise shared as part of the Customer Experience Strategy launch with Directorate Leadership Teams.</p> <p>A communication plan will be developed, alongside working with HR&OD to embed the promise through the organisation.</p> <p>A formal method of measuring the level of buy in to the customer promise, which is a corporate wide standard, will need to be agreed.</p>
<p>Develop business requirements for technology investment (App, website, artificial intelligence, chatbots, etc)</p> <p>Engage with Microsoft Catalyst team to complete a review of the Customer Experience</p> <p>Develop Business Requirements for Contact Centre Telephony, CRM and Customer Feedback</p>	In progress and will continue into year 2.	<p>Catalyst discovery phase on 'customer experience' review complete and output from this will inform the design phase. Further work ongoing into 'customer experience' engagement activity will now continue as a result of the intelligence gained through the catalyst process and market research e.g., contact centre telephony system.</p> <p>Process redesign will identify where and what technology solutions are best to meet requirements.</p> <p>Options around which technology can be used to support the customer experience and be embedded into the new CRM</p>

		<p>system will now be taken forward in January 2021.</p> <p>Contact Centre Telephony system business requirement activity continues with workshops in January 2021.</p> <p>Voice recognition to be trialled within the Customer Service Centre in 2021. A pilot has been approved at PPD stage and a business case is being developed.</p>
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6. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 6.1 Progress on the action plan agreed for the Customer Experience Strategy has been impacted by COVID, but the services provided by everyone at Warwickshire County Council in relation to the COVID response supported the fundamental ethos behind the Strategy.

Going forward there is still a significant amount of work that needs to be undertaken with regards improvements to embed the Strategy within the organisation.

Over the next 12 months mechanisms to capture customer feedback in a consistent way will be needed. Support will continue to be required from Business Intelligence to improve customer engagement as well as analyse and log all customer feedback.

A communication plan will be needed to assist in implementing of the customer promise throughout the organisation. Alongside this, work will be required with HR and Business intelligence on measuring how effectively the customer promise attributes have been embedded.

The outstanding actions from 2020/21 will be carried over to 2021/22 and progress monitored through the performance reporting framework.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 [CSE Action Plan Year 1](#)
2. Appendix 2 Customer Experience Strategy 2020-2025 (link to website - <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/directory-record/2253/customer-experience-strategy>)

Background Papers

None

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