

# Customer Experience Strategy

2024-2027

Vision: To put the customer at the heart of our service delivery

# Why we need a Strategy?

- Everyone in OCC understands what standards are expected when engaging with customers
- Customers know they are valued and there are clear guidelines for engagement with them
- Employees feel motivated and positive due to better interactions
- Customers' needs are evolving e.g new technology, post pandemic, cost of living crisis and customer profiles are changing
- This work links in with current new ways of working and Martin's ethos which is to be more resident focused
- Improving the Customer Experience programme
- 'Customer service isn't a department, it's a corporate state of mind'

# Strategy Document Supporting Evidence

The Strategy has supporting key statistics on:

- Our customers and their main profiles
- Our customer contacts and interactions
- Our service delivery and performance
- Local and national context around customer experience
- Resident Survey Results which shows to improve our customer satisfaction and build back trust with our residents we need to work on acting on residents' concerns, creating value for money services and keeping our residents well informed.

# Strategy Overview- Four Key Principles

**Embed a  
customer ethos  
across the council**

**Develop a Better  
understanding of  
our customers,  
and what they  
want from the  
Council**

**Optimise  
customer access  
to services**

**Design an  
excellent end-to-  
end Customer  
Experience**

# Principle 1 - Embed a Customer Ethos across the Council

## How we will achieve this:

- Create a culture where **delivering a good customer experience is everyone's job and part of DTFT transformation**
- Provide **clear information and values that sets out what our customers need to do, and what they can expect from us**
- Ensure our **team members and managers are highly trained and take an empathetic approach**
- **Provide our staff with the opportunity to achieve qualifications in Customer Excellence**
- **Engage with & learn from our staff about barriers or problems** that stop them delivering that excellent customer experience
- **Empower our staff to make changes** to their processes and ways of working to improve the customer experience.

## Principle 2 - Develop a Better Understanding of our Customers, and what they want from the Council

### How we will achieve this:

- Create **up to date profiles** of our differing customer groups using various sources of information.
- Understand the **needs of our more vulnerable customers**
- Use **'insight'** to inform our **improvements and ensure everyone is catered for**
- **Engage with our Customers** to understand how and when they **access our services and any barriers**
- **Consult with customers to understand what** a positive customer experience would look like
- **Examine complaints, comments and compliments** to identify what is working well, and what is not so good



# Principle 3 - Optimise Customer Access to Services

## How we will achieve this:

- Provide a **modern range of access channels** which customers want to use, including 24/7 digital access channels
- **Join up our data and channels**, so customers only need to **tell us things once**
- **Facilitating easy access to customer and service information** for customers and service area groups whilst ensuring that we safeguard and protect information
- **Automating simple and easy transactions**
- **Continue phone and face to face services** but reduce the number of telephone numbers we have
- **Provide a consistent approach** to ensure all customers receive the same level of service

# Principle 4 - Design an excellent end-to- end Customer Experience

## How we will achieve this:

- **Design our processes using customer insight to put their needs and expectations at the heart of how we work.**
- **Ensure our processes/ ways of working do not exclude anyone, are in a standard format and streamline complex processes.**
- **Focus on 'getting it right first time' and for issues that cannot be resolved at point of contact, ensure that we gather everything we need at the point.**
- **Improve the content of correspondence sent and build regular communication points into our processes**
- **Learn from best practise and use improvement methodologies to keep educated on emerging initiatives and innovative technology to adopt to be more efficient**
- **Develop a knowledgebase of information, which we can use to answer queries at the first point of contact and integrate that with AI technology for self-service queries.**



# Feedback So Far

## **What's working well:**

- Agreement with the guiding principles
- This strategy is long overdue, and many did not know about the online customer standards
- The data strand is exciting-it will be helpful to have a better insight of our customers
- Helpful to have local and national context in the strategy as a benchmark
- Clear positive link to DTFT values and ongoing transformation of DTFT
- It's good to show we want to shift our mindset to be more outward facing

## **Even better if:**

- Focus on getting the basics rights and have a clear timeline for actions
- Need clear expectation management with customers
- Support for how to not carry customer burdens while still being empathetic
- Need clear examples of storytelling and user journeys
- A blend of human and AI. We could ask customers to test IT systems and decide with us through coproduction
- Examples of best practice and good news stories in the strategy

# How we know we are making a difference?

## **Feedback from Customers:**

- Tell us and others about excellent experiences
- Say our employees are listening to them and being empathetic
- Report they found using our access channels easy, simple and quick, and that they were able to achieve what they wanted to do, when they wanted.
- They feel empowered to tell us about any issues they have, and we tell them what we have done about it.

## **Feedback from Employees**

- Empowered to tell us where they feel things are affecting their ability to deliver a good experience and can do something about it.
  - Delivering a good experience is 'just part of the job'.

## **Feedback from Our Data**

- Customer satisfaction indicators increase related to service delivery
- Increased use of access channels that customers told us they wanted
- We deliver our services as efficiently as possible, making it less complex for our customers, easier for our employee and reducing our cost of service
  - Reduction in complaints related to customers experience
- We regularly elicit feedback and comment from our customers, and have a good response rate
- Our performance indicators show service provision is effective, consistent, co-ordinated and well received.

# Engagement Plan

## **Internal:**

- DTFT Champion sessions 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November
- DTFT Champions feedback to teams over December
- We will engage teams without champions and frontline teams
- Draft strategy document will be ready by end of January
- We will work with Internal communications to get the message out over the new year and have drop in sessions
- We will go through CMT, SLT, scrutiny, informal cabinet, cabinet
- We will engage Cllrs through an all members briefing and town and parish Cllrs through the charter.

## **External:**

- We will consult with resident focus groups over February and March, particularly engaging groups with a protected characteristic.
- We will design up the finalised strategy with the marketing team in March
- We will launch the strategy with DTFT Champions in April
- An action plan will follow once the strategy is socialised.

# Supporting the Work

- Comments on the draft outline
- Ideas for the action plan
- Contacts for focus groups and on who to speak to