

# Report to Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

27 July 2023

<b>Subject:</b>	Customer Journey Progress Update
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Regeneration and Growth, Tony McGovern
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Strategic Improvement Manager – Corporate Customer, Helen Green Helen_Green@Sandwell.gov.uk






## 1 Recommendations

1.1 That the progress to date on the Customer Journey be noted.


## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board have requested an update on the progress of the Customer Journey.

## 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people	The Customer Journey focuses on achieving long-term sustainable improvements in the service that we offer to customers and on improving outcomes for residents however they choose to contact us. Therefore, this impacts on the council's ability to deliver all the objectives in the Corporate Plan.
	People live well and age well	
	Strong resilient communities	
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods	
	A strong and inclusive economy	



	A connected and accessible Sandwell	
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## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 As public servants, we have a vital role in delivering services to meet the needs of our residents and communities and put local people at the heart of everything we do.
- 4.2 The means by which customers and partners interact with Sandwell Council varies across the authority and has naturally evolved in recent years, particularly following the Covid19 pandemic, which necessitated new ways of working.
- 4.3 Customer expectations and needs in relation to how they contact and interact with the Council have changed. Improvements in technology and means of communication are impacting across society. Customers expect to be able to contact the Council at a time that suits them and in a way that suits them. At the same time, the Council is continually looking to ensure value for money for residents.
- 4.4 Increased channel shift, with an emphasis on self-serve, will enable the Council to meet customer expectations whilst making the best use of resources and delivering greater efficiencies and value for money.
- 4.5 However, whilst a high percentage of Sandwell residents have access to the Internet and have a preference for doing business or contacting the council online, there will still be a proportion of the population that require face to face options, in addition to those that are digitally excluded.
- 4.6 To address this, a Customer Journey Board has been established to provide governance and oversight to all elements of the Customer Journey.

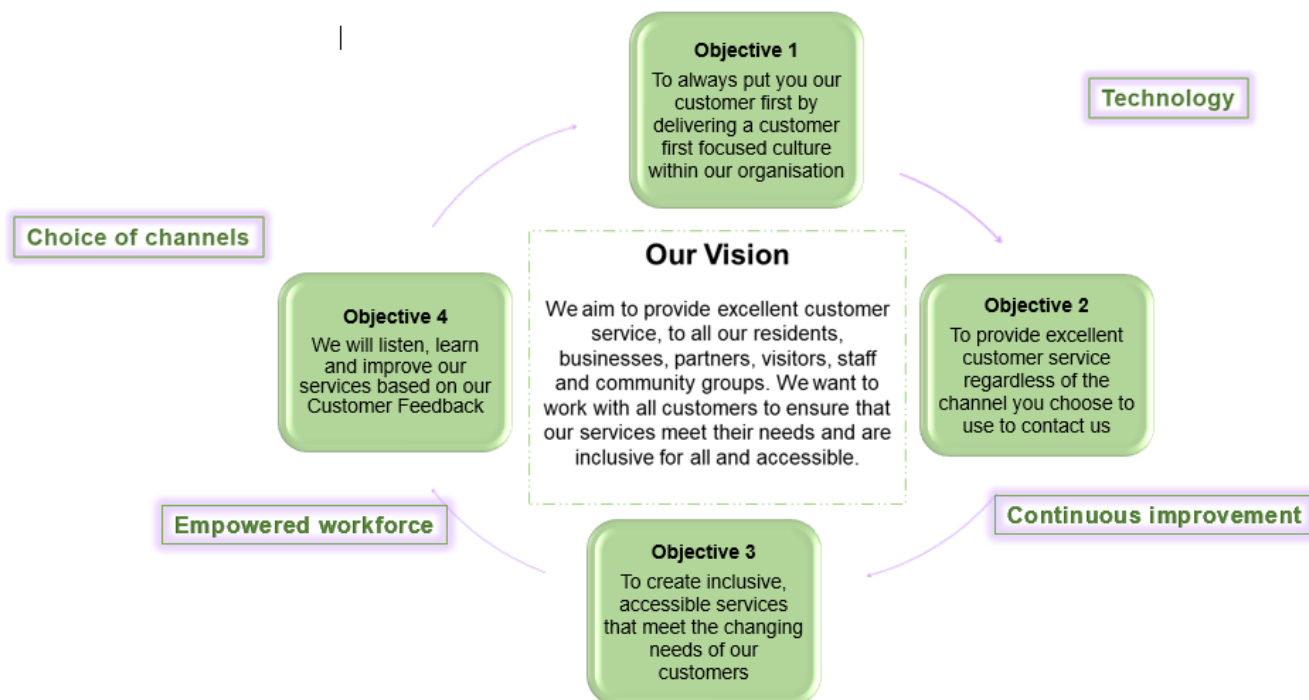


## 5 Aims and Objectives

5.0 The Customer Journey Board aims to ensure all customers of Sandwell MBC receive the best possible service. In order to achieve and monitor this, a set of aims and commitments have been co-produced with Cabinet Members.

5.1 The Strategic Objectives are detailed below:

We aim to give all our customers the best possible service. We have broken this up to several objectives that we can give clear actions against to ensure we are delivering.



5.2 Customer Commitments:



## Customer Experience Strategy - Our commitments

We aim to provide excellent customer service, to all our residents, businesses, partners, visitors, staff and community groups. We want to work with all customers to ensure that our services meet their needs and are inclusive for all and accessible.

<b>1.Adapt</b>  We will continue to adapt our face to face services to meet the changing needs and demands of our customers.	<b>2.Online</b>  We will develop our online offer to support customers who prefer to communicate digitally. This will include the use of modern technology such as Artificial Intelligence, including a navigation bot for the website.	<b>3.First point of contact</b>  We will always try and answer your query at the first point of contact, but if for any reason we can't we will put you in contact with the team best placed to support you.	<b>4. Listen</b>  We will listen to feedback and actively learn lessons when things go wrong so that we can improve.
<b>5.GDPR</b>  We will work within regulations to protect your personal information.	<b>6.Timely</b>  We will get back to you in a timely manner and keep you updated as to what response times you can expect. This will be linked to set service standards.	<b>7.Person Centered</b>  We will work with customers who may need additional support. We will ensure this support is tailored to their specific requirements whether this is access, language or any other related need.	<b>8.Honest</b>  We will be open and honest and apologise when we get things wrong.
<b>9.Training</b>  Our staff will be regularly trained to maintain and strive for the highest standards.	<b>10.Customer Focused</b>  Our approach will be customer focused.	<b>11.Respect</b>  We will treat you with respect and dignity.	<b>12.Friendly</b>  We will be friendly & helpful in our approach, with a 'can do' attitude.

5.3 An Action Plan detailing work ongoing to achieve the above, overseen by the Customer Journey Board is attached at Appendix 1 & 2.

5.4 An update on Customer Satisfaction data & the Community Hub Pilot can be found at Appendix 3 & 4.

## 6 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	The Customer Journey is being carried out within existing resources from within the Corporate Customer Team and there is a dedicated Programme Manager resource. These resources are monitored regularly by the Customer Journey Programme Board.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	Governance: monthly meetings of the Customer Journey Programme Board are held (membership: Director of Finance / S151 Officer: Director of Regeneration & Growth: Corporate Customer Team & other Officers as required)
<b>Risk:</b>	The Customer Journey Programme is a key Council priority and part of the required work to provide Commissioners with assurance in order for intervention to cease. A risk register is in place and will be maintained for the duration of the Programme



	which will underpin the council's strategic risk relating to the council's Customer Journey work (057b).
<b>Equality:</b>	The successful delivery of the Customer Journey Programme will require the review of many of the council's policies, procedures, and systems. Any changes will build in consideration of the impact on equalities throughout the development and will include an Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	The Customer Journey Programme is committed to improving the customer experience for all residents which in turn should lead to better outcomes for residents.
<b>Social Value:</b>	Any contracts awarded under the Customer Journey Programme will require suppliers to demonstrate how they will be responsive to Social, Environmental and Local Economic prospects, and how they will construct and operate their work to deliver a positive impact on the local economic, social and environmental well-being of the local area. For example, this was factored into the recent procurement exercise for the replacement telephony system.
<b>Climate Change:</b>	All decisions made within the Customer Journey Programme will have to take full account of the council's Climate Change Strategy and the ambitious targets to work towards a net zero / carbon neutral society. For example, this was factored into the recent procurement exercise for the replacement telephony system.
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	All decisions made within the Customer Journey Programme will ensure to take into account the Council's Corporate Parenting role and responsibilities.

## 7 Appendices

- Appendix 1 Customer Journey Action Plan – May 2023.
- Appendix 2 Customer Journey Action Plan – June 2023.
- Appendix 3 Customer Satisfaction data.
- Appendix 4 Community Hub Pilot update.

