



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Finance, Performance and Resources

Date: Wednesday 27 June 2018
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury

AGENDA

1.30 pm Pre-meeting Discussion

This session is for members of the Committee only. It is to allow the members time to discuss lines of questioning, areas for discussion and what needs to be achieved during the meeting.

2.00 pm Formal Meeting Begins

Agenda Item	Time	Page No
1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP	14:00	
2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN	14:05	
3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN	14:10	
4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To disclose any Personal or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	14:14	
5 MINUTES To agree the Minutes of the Meeting held on 08 May 2018.	14:15	5 - 10
6 PUBLIC QUESTIONS	14:16	



Public Questions is an opportunity for people who live, work or study in the county to put a question to a Scrutiny Committee about any issue that has an impact on their local community or the county as a whole.

Members of the public, who have given prior notice, will be invited to put their question in person.

The Cabinet Member and responsible officers will then be invited to respond.

Further information and details on how to register can be found through the following link:-

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/about-your-council/scrutiny/getting-involved/>

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| 7 | CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
For the Chairman of the Committee to provide an update to the Committee on recent scrutiny related activity. | 14:18 | |
| 8 | CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS REVIEW
Mr Lloyd Jeffries, Director of Customer, and Mrs Kelly Baines, Head of Customer Experience, will present an overview of the Customer Service Standards Review.

Contributors:
Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources
Mr Lloyd Jeffries, Director of Customer
Mrs Kelly Baines, Head of Customer Experience

Papers:
Report attached. | 14:20 | 11 - 22 |
| 9 | INQUIRY SCOPE PROPOSAL

Members will consider and agree the draft scope for an inquiry on Planning for Effective Leadership.

Papers:
Proposal to follow. | 15:00 | To Follow |
| 10 | PROPERTY AND ASSETS UPDATE
Mr Adam Smith, Director of Property and Assets, will provide Members with a presentation on the recently created Property and Assets department.

Contributors:
Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources
Mr Adam Smith, Director of Property and Assets

Papers: | 15:10 | |

PowerPoint presentation at the meeting.

- 11 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME** **15:55** **23 - 26**
To consider and agree the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee Work Programme.

Papers:

Work Programme attached.

- 12 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING** **16.00pm**
The next meeting will be held on 11th September 2018, 10am in Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall.

Purpose of the committee

The role of the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee is to hold decision-makers to account for improving outcomes and services for Buckinghamshire.

It shall have the power to scrutinise all issues in relation to the Council's strategic performance, financial management and corporate issues. This will include all areas under the remit of the Council's Assistant Chief Executive's Service (ACES) and Resources Business Unit. This includes, but not exclusively, responsibility for scrutinising issues in relation to:

- The Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan
- ACES responsibilities — including Council Communications, Business Intelligence.
- Resources responsibilities - including the Council's Technology Strategy, HR, procurement and Legal services and the strategic commissioning of Council resources.
- The overall effectiveness of the scrutiny function
- Strategic alliances and partnerships with others externally—nationally, regionally and locally.

By convention the Chairmen of the other Select Committees are invited to participate in the annual budget scrutiny inquiry, whereby the Executive's draft budget is automatically referred for scrutiny as part of the annual budget setting process.

Webcasting notice

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site - at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Therefore by entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should ask the committee clerk, who will advise where to sit.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services on 01296 382343.

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Kelly Sutherland on 01296 383602; Email ksutherland@buckscc.gov.uk

Members

Mr W Bendyshe-Brown	Mr D Martin
Mr T Butcher	Mr D Shakespeare OBE
Mr C Clare (VC)	Ms J Ward
Mr M Farrow	Mr D Watton (C)



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Finance, Performance and Resources

Minutes

FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY,
COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.30 PM.**

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place please see the webcast which can be found at: <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr J Chilver, Mr C Clare (Vice-Chairman),
Mrs A Cranmer, Mr S Lambert (In place of Mr M Farrow), Mr D Martin, Ms J Ward and
Mr D Watson (Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms S Barnes, Ms F Bashir, Ms C Evans, Mr L Jeffries, Mrs S Murphy-Brookman and
Mrs K Sutherland

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Mr M Farrow. Mr S Lambert substituted for Mr M Farrow.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr S Lambert and Mr T Butcher were both members of the SABPAC committee and declared an interest in Item 6.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.



5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- The Chairman met with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills about progress on the home-to-school transport policy. The Chairman would be taking back a Member suggestion that the home-to-school transport policy item be brought before the Committee in September 2018.
- Since the last Committee meeting, a 'minded to' decision was communicated from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, about the unitary status in Buckinghamshire County. The Chairman asked that the Committee focused on business as usual and to not speculate beyond.
- July 2018: The draft new Technology Strategy would be coming to the FPR select committee.
- September 2018: The Director of Assets and Procurement would be presenting an update on the financial survey and providing an in-depth analysis of costings in Children's Services and Adult Social Care. There would also be an update on the impact of modernising local government (should decisions be made).
- Members would like to be copied into information on the headlines, income and expenditure summary at the end of the financial year.

6 HR AND OD UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources, Mrs Sarah Murphy-Brookman, (Interim) Director for HR and OD, and Mrs Carly Evans, Business Partner for Transport, Economy and Environment, Resources and ACES to the meeting. Members received a BCC Workforce Review report and asked questions on the report. During the session and in answer to subsequent Members' questions, the following main points were noted:

- In response to a question about increased overtime costs, the Director of HR & OD agreed to provide further information after the meeting.

ACTION: Director of HR and OD

- The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that staff turnover had reduced from 16% to 14% over the past 12 months with fluctuations quarter by quarter, and that the retention rate among the highest performers was 92%.
- Agencies were more expensive to use for employing staff, so BCC would go out to tender for the most competitive rates. If a service area was looking to downsize, it was financially more efficient to employ agency staff. Bucks Care had an average turnover of 25%, and temporary hires were being used to fill gaps in the recruitment of permanent staff. There was a push to reduce the number of agency workers.
- A Member questioned whether the growing agency staff and linked costs were sustainable, and why educational psychologists were not becoming permanent staff. It was agreed that Sarah Murphy-Brookman would come back to the Committee with information on the reasons why there were increasing agency staff and costs, and to confirm whether the Educational Psychology Services had been impacted as a trading arm due to the high turnover in Educational Psychologist positions.

ACTION: Director of HR and OD

- The Chairman asked for information on the appropriate balance between permanent and agency staff, and that the Council's budget should have reflected this. The Director of HR and OD agreed to provide the Committee with the information.

ACTION: Director of HR and OD

- The Director of HR and OD explained that there was no BCC policy stating a limit on the amount of time that an employee could remain interim for.
- A Member inquired about plans to train people in-house rather than rely on recruiting agency staff. The Director of HR and OD agreed to provide information to the Committee.

ACTION: Director of HR and OD

- Members agreed that if temporary staff were being paid more than permanent staff performing the same role, this would be likely to lead to negative feelings of demoralisation among permanent employees.
- It was observed that senior members of staff were not necessarily having exit interviews. The Director of HR and OD explained that exit interviews/ one-to-ones were voluntary. Completing exit interviews was not mandatory practice in BCC. Surveys were more likely to capture honest answers as they were confidential. However these relied on an individual's willingness to respond. Line managers were strongly encouraged to carry out exit interviews.
- Members recommended that exit interviews should be mandatory at senior levels, and that junior members must complete a leaver questionnaire before exiting BCC.
- A programme was being rolled out whereby leavers were interviewed by different managers in BCC as an opportunity to capture more honest feedback.
- The practice of completing exit interviews was communicated to staff through a prompt from the SAP system. For school staff and support staff this process was managed internally.
- Members felt that there was a significant gap in BCC staff retention and understanding the reasons for staff wanting to leave the organisation.
- Scarce skills payments were targeted at qualified children's social workers.
- A benchmarking exercise was conducted yearly to attract and retain staff. The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that external factors including strength of the economy impacted on opportunities available externally.
- A spring clean was required on SAP for vacancies, some should have been deleted – this contributed to the large number of vacant posts.
- The Apprenticeship Levy was an opportunity to grow social worker talent internally, but there was no agreed national standard for this available yet.
- Depression and stress reasons for sickness were persistently high. Primarily these were fuelled by reasons outside of the workplace. To help reduce these levels, employee relations team members underwent mental health training workshops to enable them to have trained conversations with staff. Employees could also contact the Employee Assistance Programme, and one-to-one counselling was available for social workers.
- Members commented that stress was often a reflection of a difficult relationship with their line manager. They added that managerial conversations on a weekly basis might pick up issues early, a good manager would reward and encourage but it should be done regularly. Were employees feeling that they were valued, encouraged, supported in difficult situations before they became depressed and stressed? The Director of HR and Operations added that the single greatest determinant of employee engagement was their relationship with

their line manager. There was a need to remind people how important the line manager was in relationship building with employees.

- The Better Everyday Leadership Programme was running across the Council, highlighting what it meant to be a manager and what the responsibilities were.
- Members suggested that both presenters should be invited to attend a future Committee meeting, or that an inquiry should be set-up to review this issue in more detail. The Chairman thanked Members for their suggestions.

ACTION: Committee and Governance Adviser

7 TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources, Mr Lloyd Jeffries, Director of Customer, and Mrs Sarah Barnes, Head of Technology Services Operations to the meeting.

- The County Council and the NHS agreed to recruit a Joint Strategic Director of ICT. This post was designed to enable the team to develop and deliver a joint transformation programme across the Council and the NHS. It will be critical in the delivery of the local Integrated Care System. Benefits would include the opportunity to develop a shared approach to the use of technology and data across the NHS and Adult Social Care to promote prevention and better health outcomes for residents.
- In addition to the Joint Strategic Director of ICT, Paul Golland joined the Information Technology Unit as an interim Operations Director. Ben Unsworth will be joining the Council as the new Head of Digital on 25th June.
- The Digital team joined the Customer team in February 2018.
- “Brilliant at the Basics” was a programme to improve the customer experience at the Council. Webchat was due to be rolled out across the County’s website in the next two weeks. The “Fix My Street” application had been launched.
- The average reading age for the Council’s website was currently too high. Work was in progress to alter the language so that it reached a lower reading age. The recommended reading age was under 15 years old.
- £15 million was allocated from the capital budget for ICT developments in the next 4 years. Savings of £1 million had been made.
- The content of the Adult social care pages on the website was to be upgraded to reflect the integration with health. This was currently being procured. A Member queried how this would work if there was no knowledge of where synergies could be made? The synergies would be established by the incoming Joint ICT and NHS CCGs Director.
- The new Technology Strategy was about stabilising foundations before progressing with other technology.
- Regular problems with the N drive were caused mainly by inadequate data retention and archiving behaviour. As part of the new Technology Strategy, principles on data retention were needed as well as learning around behavioural patterns using meta-compliance.
- Service Level Agreement - Web Key Performance Indicators were reported to the Resources Board on a monthly basis. The Committee would receive these on a regular basis.

ACTION: Director of Customer

- There were ICT workshops ongoing with Members to ensure that Member requirements were specified and that the IT provided met their needs. The Board was working with a Member steering group.

- Governance monitoring needed to be more robust, especially in light of procurement and functionality issues.
- Technology Services played a central role in the rationalisation and coordination of 1400+ applications and 80+ microsites.
- The Customer, Digital and Technology Board fulfilled a similar function to the Asset Strategy Board, reviewing, assessing and appraising business cases for new ICT capital acquisitions and use of capital budget. Funding would be released in instalments as projects proceed.
- Members questioned whether Board members had a suitable level of skill and knowledge to check and challenge appropriately. The Director of Customer believed that the right membership was present.
- In the future, any microsite proposal or change would have to come through the Digital team to be published.
- 4 web editors were now in the Digital team.
- The Council's website was re-launched in 2016 with a faster speed, based on the gov.uk approach.
- A milestone was to achieve Socitm score improvement by September 2018.
- The Digital team would be working with PCG, who hosted the BCC web estate, to understand how to improve customer experience from a look and feel viewpoint. This would include consultation with users and Members to test new ideas.
- The Digital team would be testing the functionality of different elements of the website in development with external users and members.
- The Digital team aimed to create more streamlined and efficient digital processes, from which there would be resulting financial implications.
- Members praised the work of the team in the progress made between January and May 2018.
- The funding priority for the website (digital front door) was to deliver customer improvements which would lead to improved services and efficiencies. Most investment would be resource based.
- An efficient digital front door meant delivering as many services as possible online.
- A written progress update on milestones would be provided to the Committee in September 2018.

ACTION: Director of Customer

8 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members queried whether the draft new Technology Strategy would be ready for the Committee to review in July, as a number of new recruits would be coming into post who may want to input into the strategy. The Committee were advised by Technology Services that the strategy would be ready for July 2018 and should, therefore be added to the work programme.

ACTION: Committee & Governance Adviser

9 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 27th June 2018 at 2pm in Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.

CHAIRMAN

Customer Service Standards

“Striving for Excellence”

June 2018

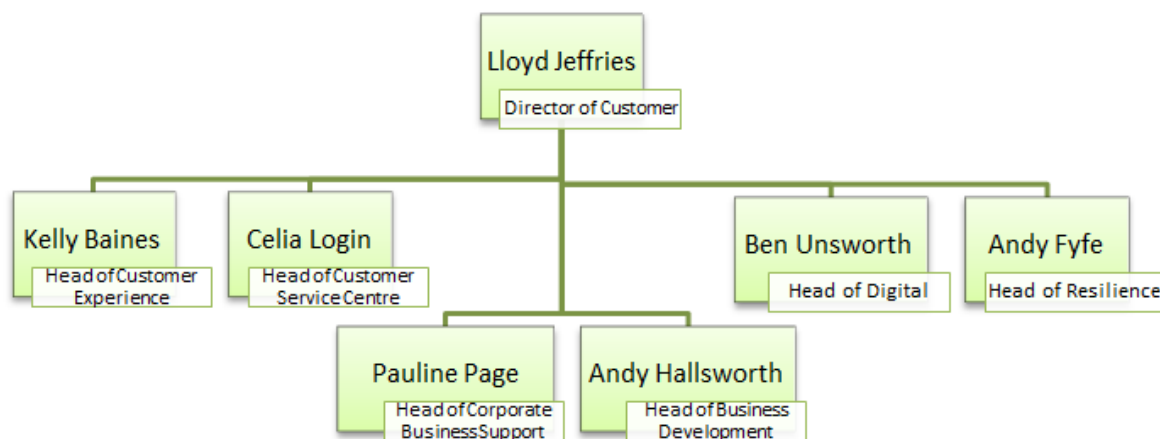
Lloyd Jeffries - Director of Customer

Kelly Baines – Head of Customer Experience

Celia Login – Head of Customer Service Centre

Introduction

In February 2018, a newly formed Customer directorate was launched bringing together all functions under the Director of Customer, Lloyd Jeffries, moving the digital team from Technology Services to report to the Head of Customer Experience. A newly-appointed Head of Digital will complete the Customer Senior Management Team.



The new directorate creates a more focussed team looking at the approach to customer experience, access channels and service delivery. A new customer strategy has been produced in draft and this is a timely opportunity to review the Service Standards and performance.

Background

In 2015, a set of Service Standards (inserted below) were agreed and launched. The Standards reflected the organisations ambition to become more digital, align with customer expectation and set clear accountabilities for employees. There was a focus on channel shift and delivering excellent customer services in the most cost effective way.

The standards were set using customer survey data, stakeholder engagement across all levels of employees in the organisation and a benchmarking exercise. This paper sets out the current performance and progress within each area of the Standards.

Customer Service Standards

Our commitment to you the customer

At Buckinghamshire County Council we are committed to providing good quality, simple to use services that represent value for money. Our website is full of information about the services we provide, many of which you can access online. New information and online services are being added and updated regularly.

If you have a query, there are various ways in which you can contact us. Whichever way you chose, we will always

- Treat you as an individual, protect your personal information and treat you with dignity and respect.
- Listen to you, respond to your needs, keep you informed and communicate clearly.
- Wherever possible, answer your enquiry the first time you contact us and if needed we will put you in touch with other organisations who can help.
- Provide easy to understand, useful and up to date information in a clear format and written in plain English.
- Give you choices in how to contact our services.
- Adapt to your needs if you have a disability.
- Ensure our staff are trained and able to deliver our services.
- Priority is given to those contacting us online or via web chat for general enquiries

When you self-serve through our website, we will:

- Make it easy for you to find the information and services you want.
- Work to improve our content and use your feedback to ensure our website has up-to-date and jargon free content with further information or contact points clearly signposted.
- Provide an acknowledgement that your transaction or enquiry has been safely received including details of what you can expect to happen next.
- Regularly add new online services so you can easily make more payments, applications and bookings online.
- Make it faster and easier to do business with us online, rather than calling, visiting or writing to us.

When you contact us via Web Chat, we will:

- Offer an extended service outside of our normal office hours during peak demand e.g. for school admissions or in the event of snow
- Give your enquiry priority over our general enquiry telephone calls into our Contact centre.

- Aim to answer within 20 seconds of receiving your query.
- Call you back if either you or we feel it is necessary. Answer your query as fully as possible. If we need to refer your query to a specialist we will pass on the full details of your enquiry, so you do not have to repeat yourself.

When you use one of our online forms, we will:

- Ask you for the relevant information we need to answer your query, so that we can give you a quicker answer that is right first time, without having to come back to you for more information.
- We will provide you with an acknowledgement that we have received your enquiry.
- We will respond to you with an answer within *24 hours (excluding Weekends and Bank holidays)*

When you contact us through our Social Media pages, we will

- Tell you how to contact us in case of an emergency
- Respond to queries/questions posted on Social Media within *2 hours during office hours*.
- Talk to you in a friendly, personal nature.
- If your enquiry is personal, we will ask you to contact us on a private channel of your choice.

When you telephone us, we will:

- Give you our name and department when answering the phone.
- Advise you of services and information on our website relevant to the nature of your enquiry.
- Use technology to ensure your call is directed to the most appropriate individual who will aim to resolve your enquiry without having to hand you over to someone else.
- Give you the option to be put straight through to the person you need to speak to through the use of voice recognition technology.
- When we do have to pass your enquiry to another department, we will provide the full details of your enquiry so that you do not have to repeat yourself.
- If needed, we will agree a convenient time to call you back.
- Keep the use of voicemail to a minimum. If you are asked to leave a message on our voicemail you will receive a response to your message with 24 hours. If a member of staff is away, they will provide alternative contacts for you to call.
- Provide emergency out of hours numbers for critical situations and concerns.

When you write to us, we will:

- Acknowledge your email, with details of when you will receive a full response and who to contact if you require more information.
- Acknowledge receipt of your letter within 5 working days and ensure you know who to contact for more details. Provide a full respond to your letter or email within 28 working days and ensure that you know who to contact if you require more information.
- Respond within 20 working days to requests managed under the Freedom of Information

When you visit us, we will:

- Keep County Hall reception opens from 9am - 5pm, Monday to Thursday and 9am - 4pm Fridays.
- Greet you promptly on your arrival and ensure that our name badges are visible.
- Aim to resolve general enquiries within 15 minutes of your arrival.
- Ensure all reception areas are clearly signposted and include a seated waiting area and private interview facilities.
- Provide specialist communication or access support as soon as possible.

When we visit you, we will:

- Make an appointment at a time and place, convenient to both you and us.
- Arrive promptly or inform you if we are delayed.
- Clearly display our identification and introduce ourselves, explaining the purpose of the meeting.

How you can help us:

- Provide all the information we need to progress your enquiry.
- Tell us when your circumstances have changed and let us know if you need to cancel an appointment or a request.
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect. We will not tolerate the use of physical or verbal abuse in any form, including the use of foul and abusive language.

Feedback and Complaints

Our customer standards and hours of service will be reviewed regularly to ensure we deliver the best customer experience.

We will use customer feedback to help us make changes to our online services.

We are committed to delivering high customer service standards but if we fail to meet your expectations or you would like to provide us with feedback, please go to our ['Feedback & complaints'](#) pages for details on how to do this.

We will act quickly if we've got it wrong and take appropriate action to resolve issues.

Feedback will be responded to in full within 28 working days.

Progress

The Service Standards fall under a number of sub-headings that state a variety of ways for

customers to contact us and our intention to deliver excellent customer service through each channel. Since the Service Standards were launched in 2015, we have made huge progress to create easy to access, quality channels that provide value for money.



Underneath each sub-heading below, we are continuously working to improve and enhance the customer experience.

➤ **Our commitment to you the customer**

As part of our commitment to customers, we have recently produced a Customer Experience (CX) Strategy. This is currently in draft and will be subject to a Cabinet Member decision in due course. This customer experience strategy sets out the vision and the objectives to achieve our overall goals while recognising; our diverse and growing population, the growing demand on our services, the need to be more cost effective coupled with rising customer expectations.

The strategy outlines an updated approach to customer experience for both internal and external customers, working alongside, and in collaboration with, the Smarter Buckinghamshire Strategy, OD Strategy and Performing Better Everyday Strategy, to place our customers at the centre of our service design, empower employees to deliver

outstanding customer experience and introduce new and exciting digital solutions.

The Customer Experience vision

“We will continue to place our customers at the heart of what we do, to understand their needs and support them to do more for themselves.”

Our priorities:

- To transform our customer experience so that we can deliver preventative solutions and better support our customers, using data and feedback to improve service delivery
- Deliver customer service that provides value for money, flexibility and choice whilst placing our customers at the heart of everything we do
- To become brilliant at the basics, to allow customers to find what they need, when they need it with ease and at speed, to keep them informed and to manage their expectations
- Deliver our services, transact and engage with our customers where they already are, through social media and messenger apps
- Protect the vulnerable by using our resources effectively and work in collaboration with our partners to achieve better outcomes for our residents
- Ensure that the customer experience is not led by technology but by the needs of our customers
- Support and empower our staff with the tools and support they need to make a positive difference to customers at every interaction

The Service Standards tell our customers that we are committed to delivering services in a way that they want to access and to provide good quality, simple to use services that represent value for money.

➤ **When you self-serve through our website**

In February 2018, the website and digital team moved to the Customer Directorate and was given a change of focus and a new direction.

With over two million visits a year to our website, a programme of work called “Brilliant at the Basics” has been launched to achieve our ambition of creating a digital front door to the organisation, creating a platform that our customers can interact with us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The programme aims to deliver a 4* Socitm rating by 2019 and improve customer experience

Due to limited capacity some core activities had become difficult to manage. With over 1000 requests a month for web changes to be made across the 3000 pages on the main website. The main Bucks website scored a Socitm rating of 2* consecutively in June 2015 and 2016. We have also experienced an increase in services setting up separate websites (microsites) due to limited functionality on the main website coupled with restricted resource.

Since the Brilliant at the Basic programme launched in February 2018:

- We have recruited 3 fixed term posts to assist with the programme
- We have been awarded a 3* Socitm rating
- We have launched a project to put our Schoolsweb extranet on a new platform and are creating a one stop shop for our customers
- We have launched a project to create more functionality within the main BCC website to migrate microsites, deliver a better customer experience and re-engage services.
- We have launched a new customer effort score with feedback options on every page of the website.

➤ **When you contact us via webchat**

We have recently launched webchat on the BCC website. We recognise that webchat is the fastest growing online channel and plan on using the insight gained from customers to drive improvements on our webpages. Our advisors are trained to deal with multiple chats and our aim is to help customers that go online stay online. We are investigating the opportunities to use artificial intelligence in the form of Chatbots in the future, to further drive efficiencies and provide a 24/7 service to customers.

Webchat is now also available to employees when contacting the HR service desk and is already receiving high levels of satisfaction. We are planning on launching the service on our commercial site, Shop4Support, with push-out options to talk to a specialist when customers spend time looking at products without progressing through to checkout.

➤ **When you use one of our online forms**

More than ever customers expect to not only find information online but transact online, providing and receiving information to access services without ever telephoning or visiting us.

BCC use Firmstep as our customer account and self-service platform. We have recently recruited additional resource within the team, accelerating the number of transactions customers can access online.

We have developed more opportunities to self-serve, placing customers at the centre of our design principles, adopting a digital by default approach wherever possible.

We currently have over 80 customer forms that customers can access through our website. In May 2018, we had over 17,200 forms completed by customers. 47,000 customers have accounts with us and are able to track progress and see all of their interactions with us.

Our waste permit process serves over 2000 customers a month, providing an instant permit for residents with commercial type vehicles to allow them to bring their waste and recycling to our recycling centres. Permits are then scanned, either from their mobile phone or from paper copies. They can also retrieve their permits through their account, update their permit and check when their permits are due for renewal.

We've built over 100 internal forms ranging from keeping record of all of our customer service centre calls allowing us to easily report our common queries, querying databases or requesting a BCC swipe card. Our maintenance reporting form receives around 500 reports per month from schools, libraries and other council buildings allowing them to report any issues quickly and easily.

We also have various internal processes that start from an online form; our library volunteering form allows residents to apply to volunteer at a library, while internally it takes the member of staff through the checking process from DBS checks to interview and induction all through an online dashboard.

➤ **When you contact us through our Social Media pages**

Buckinghamshire County Council currently has 14,000 followers on Twitter and 2,899 followers on Facebook, these channels are in the main used to utilise customer engagement and communications manage these channels by pushing relevant content. Customers can contact us via these channels and receive a response through our communication team.

The Customer team is currently working in collaboration with the Communications team to enhance this service and push any contact from customers through to the Customer Service Centre to be answered in the same way as the telephone or webchat. This will become a managed operational channel and customer details and queries will be logged to provide a more accurate customer record that will be able to put through to services with progress update opportunities and allows customers and services to view customer history.

➤ **When you telephone us**

We have delivered a 32% reduction in budget since 2015, through efficiency savings. We have achieved significant channel shift with 273,000 calls reducing to 185,000 in 2016/17, and have maintained an impressive first call resolution rate of 63%.

With our digital offering continually evolving with the launch of Fix My Street and increasing customer forms assisting with straight forward transactional tasks, the telephone channel is seeing more complex queries coming through to our advisors and we are seeing a trend for longer handle times.

Future developments of the telephony channel include an appetite to deliver more at the first point of contact, working with services to enhance advisors learning and creating deeper integrations that will assist back office teams deliver their services.

We are looking to implement a best in class voice recognition solution that will enable us to, filter calls to the right place, prioritise our queues and support the delivery of transaction tasks for those customers that cannot access online services (for example – renew a library book)

➤ **When you write to us**

We are working to reduce customers having to write to us unless they wish to do so and a recent example of placing just one paper process online has resulted in a 98% uptake. A

process that previously required BCC to post out a paper form and then the customer to complete and send back with a cheque for payment has resulted in over 800 instances of online completion and payment. This saves the organisation over £5000 in postage, paper and admin costs and vastly increases the customer experience.

➤ **When you visit us**

We carried out a major refurbishment to our County Hall reception area in 2017 to incorporate a self-serve area and two pods for those visitors who require a private area in which to have conversation.

The staff are equipped with iPads to allow them to quickly and efficiently check in people coming for meetings which makes up over half of the reception footfall.

We have integrated the reception staff into the Customer Service team and provided training to ensure they are offering the same high levels of service as our Customer Service Advisors. They are able to assist customers in accessing information from the Internet and completing transaction online, and can do so on behalf of the customer if they are not able to do so themselves.

We have listened to our customers' feedback and increased our County Hall Reception open from 8.30pm – 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday and 8.30pm – 5.00pm Fridays.

➤ **Feedback and Complaints**

The Compliments & Complaints Team was created in 2012. Since then we have integrated together all compliments and complaints from across the organisation to be managed and recorded in one place. This has provided improved reporting with more information about why our customers make complaints. This includes Statutory Complaints for Children's and Adult Social Care as well as all other complaints dealt with under the Corporate Complaints Process.

The number of complaints recorded over the last 5 years has been steady with no significant increases. The number of compliments recorded has been increasing steadily also as services become more aware of the need to record them so that we can celebrate our successes.

In 2016, the corporate complaints process was reduced from a 3 to a 2 stage process bringing down the total timeframe the organisation has to deal with complaints before going to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

In October 2017, we launched an Improvement Plan for corporate complaints. So far we have set an internal target of 10 working days to respond to complaints. This has reduced the timescales so far but is an ongoing goal. We are working on the quality of responses and each Business Unit has a Complaints Lead to ensure ownership and accountability of complaints. Our focus going forward will be to continue to reduce timescales and to record actions taken from learning. An annual report on complaints is presented to the Regulatory and Audit Committee.

Review

We intend to review the current standards and ascertain if they are still the right measures. We would like to re-engage with stakeholders and customers to ensure the standards are relevant, ambitious and align to expectations.

Challenges and Opportunities

The challenge has and always will be measuring the standards outside of the core customer functions such as the Customer Service Centre and Digital team, where statistics are easy to obtain and performance is measured and monitored. This review will provide the opportunity to build accountability for customer experience across the wider organisation, we propose to ensure the standards are embedded and quality monitored through the following activities:

Vision



Using the Service Standards and Customer Experience strategy we will provide a clear, inspiring vision for customers and provide the tools for employees to deliver it consistently

- We will launch the refreshed Service Standards and Customer Experience strategy and work with Communications to ensure all staff are engaged. We will hold roadshows during National Customer Service week.
- Customer Experience induction training will be designed and implemented for all staff.
- We will work with the Learning and development team to create Customer Experience E-Learning Modules for all staff to complete.

Governance



We will ensure Customer experience is quality monitored and all employees are empowered and accountable

- We will build a network of CX champions within teams to drive innovation in customer experience and ensure accountability for the Service Standards. The champions will meet monthly and will provide updates and share best practice.
- We will measure performance at the Customer Focus Group and invite champions to deliver project updates.
- The Customer, Digital and Technology Board will have oversight of performance metrics.

Metrics



As part of the review we will build in performance metrics

- 4* Socitm Website
- Customer Effort scoring
- Customer Service Centre performance
- Mystery shopping data

Time Line

Launch new standards 1st – 5th October 2018 during National Customer Service week with a series of customer roadshows and activities surrounding the week long event.

Finance, Performance & Resources Select Committee				
27 Jun 2018	Customer Service Standards Review	Mr Lloyd Jeffries, Director of Customer, and Mrs Kelly Baines, Head of Customer Experience, will present an overview of the Customer Service Standards Review, the work underway, and how the Review will align with the objectives of the overarching draft Customer Experience Strategy.	Lloyd Jeffries, Director of Operations	John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Lloyd Jeffries, Director of Customer Kelly Baines, Director of Customer Experience
27 Jun 2018	Inquiry Scope Proposal	Members will consider and agree the scope for the next inquiry topic.	Fazeelat Bashir, Committee & Governance Advisor	
27 Jun 2018	Property and Assets - Update	Mr Adam Smith, Director of Property, will provide an update to the Committee on the recently created Property and Assets department. Contributors: Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Mr Adam Smith, Director of Property Ms Sarah Ashmead, Executive Director and Assistant CEO	Adam Smith, Interim Director of Property and Assets	Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Mr Adam Smith, Director of Property Ms Sarah Ashmead, Executive Director and Assistant CEO
27 Jun 2018	Work Programme Update	For Members to discuss the Committee's work programme.	Fazeelat Bashir, Committee & Governance Advisor	

11 Sep 2018	Budget Scrutiny 2018 - 6 month progress report	<p>The Committee will examine a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations from Budget Scrutiny 2018 after 6 months. Members will have an opportunity to question the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Director of Finance and Assets, before discussing and allocating a RAG status for the progress of each recommendation.</p> <p>Contributors: Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Mr Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Assets</p>	Fazeelat Bashir, Committee & Governance Advisor	John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Assets
11 Sep 2018	Home to School Transport - Update	Miss Sarah Callaghan, Service Director for Education, will provide an update on the Council's Home to School Transport policy.	Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education	Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education

11 Sep 2018	Home-to-School Transport Update	<p>Miss Sarah Callaghan, Service Director for Education, and Ms Tracey Lawrence, Project Manager for SEN/CWD, will provide an update to Members on home-to-school transport.</p> <p>Contributors: Miss Sarah Callaghan, Service Director for Education Ms Tracey Lawrence, Project Manager for SEN/CWD</p>	Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education	Miss Sarah Callaghan, Service Director for Education Ms Tracey Lawrence, Project Manager for SEN/CWD
11 Sep 2018	Modernising Local Government - Update	<p>Details to be confirmed.</p> <p>Contributors: Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Mrs Sarah Ashmead, Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer</p>	Sarah Ashmead, Executive Director (Resources)	John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Sarah Ashmead, Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
13 Nov 2018	Budget Scrutiny 2019 - Scope	<p>The Committee is asked to consider and agree the draft inquiry scope for the Budget Scrutiny Inquiry 2019.</p> <p>Contributors: Mrs Fazeelat Bashir, Committee and Governance Adviser All Members of the FPR Select Committee</p>	Fazeelat Bashir, Committee & Governance Advisor	

13 Nov 2018	Business Rates Retention - Change Implications	<p>Mr Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Procurement, and Mr Matthew Strevens, Corporate Finance Business Partner will update Members on changes to business rates retention and how these will impact the Council and small businesses in Buckinghamshire.</p> <p>Contributors: Mr Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Procurement Mr Matthew Strevens, Corporate Finance Business Partner</p>	Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance & Procurement	Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Procurement Matthew Strevens, Corporate Finance Business Partner
13 Nov 2018	Work Programme Update	For Members to discuss the Committee's work programme.	Fazeelat Bashir, Committee & Governance Advisor	
11 Dec 2018	Work Programme Update	For Members to discuss the Committee's work programme.	Fazeelat Bashir, Committee & Governance Advisor	