

## **Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2029 – Action Plan**

The Customer Experience Strategy is underpinned by an action plan that runs from 2025 until 2029.

The action plan currently focusses on Year 1 of the strategy (October 2025 to 31 March 2026) – which are the “Explore” activities.

The activities for 2026/27 and beyond will move from Explore to Implement, with a new action plan being devised for this period. These activities will be appropriately linked to relevant Service Plans and staff appraisals

Each action will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis through the performance framework and ongoing customer consultation and engagement to ensure it meets current needs and is developed further to accommodate future requirements.

<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Our commitment to a customer first ethos</b>
<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Access to multiple service channels</b>
<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>Accessibility and Inclusion</b>
<b>Priority 4</b>	<b>Regular staff training</b>
<b>Priority 5</b>	<b>Technology</b>

### Priority 1: Our commitment to a customer first ethos

#### Our commitment:

To ensure customers are advised when their enquiry is passed on to another member of the team or service area for resolution

#### Purpose:

We will ensure that the customer voice is central to our decision making when we look at how our services are designed in the future. We'll also share learning and best practice across the organisation.

To be transparent and keep residents informed throughout their customer journey. Being clear, respectful and responding in a timely manner.

Priority 1: Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
<b>Outcome 1: Work with service areas to continually review the customer journey, measuring, monitoring and providing feedback regarding performance against service standards</b>	Review service area feedback with the relevant Customer Experience Champions; focussing on the feedback provided, query resolution and any remaining actions.	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Monthly performance clinic meetings between the Performance and Customer Improvement Lead and service areas to continue, with focus on the Customer Charter, Service Standards and action plan	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Monitor peaks and troughs in customer interactions throughout the day / week and respond to these accordingly to ensure a high level of service is provided	Daily	31 March 2026	
	Monitor call handling against the 80% service level standard for calls being handled by the Customer Service Team respond to these accordingly to ensure 80% call handling is maintained	Monthly	31 March 2026	

Priority 1: Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
<b>Outcome 2: Embed existing customer champions across service areas, which will be linked to the launch of the strategy</b>	Initial meeting with the Customer Experience Champions to introduce them to the Customer Experience Strategy, Customer Charter, Service Standards and action plan  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Initial meeting took place 9 October 2025	One off	31 October 2025	Completed 9 <sup>th</sup> October
	Meet regularly with the Customer Experience Champions to embed the above and received feedback regarding actions being undertaken within their teams	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Undertake regular customer satisfaction surveys through a variety of methods  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> This is currently being investigated and meetings have been arranged to review technology available, along with the investigating of use of Microsoft forms.	Every 6 months	30 December 2025	Updated
	Undertake exit satisfaction surveys for customers visit the Bourne and Grantham Customer Service Centres	Daily	31 March 2026	
<b>Outcome 3: Produce a clear handover of communication between teams when transferring enquiries and expectations on response times</b>	Awareness to all staff: Information regarding handover to be clearly recorded on relevant software system  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Meeting planned for November 2025 to address and move forward	One off	31 October 2025	Overdue November 2025
	Regular review of above activity to ensure actions are being undertaken as required	Monthly	31 March 2026	

Priority 1: Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
	Awareness to all staff: When handing over a communication, that they are to update the customer as to who it is being handed to (officers name and department) and why  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Meeting planned for November 2025 to address and move forward	One off	31 October 2025	Overdue November 2025
	Regular review of above activity to ensure actions are being undertaken as required	Monthly	31 March 2026	
Outcome 4: Set a standard of communication within teams	Awareness to all staff: Out of office notifications to be standardised across all teams, providing the customer with key information such as date of return and who to contact in the officers absence  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Meeting planned for November 2025 to address and move forward	One off	31 October 2025	Overdue November 2025
	Regular review of above activity to ensure actions are being undertaken as required	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Voicemail training to be provided to all staff; to ensure customer are able to leave a message and know this will be picked up and listened to, with the appropriate action being undertaken.  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> This is linked to the rollout of the new telephony solution for non-agent staff. This project has been delayed slightly to December 2025	One off	31 October 2025	Overdue December 2025
	Regular review of above activity to ensure actions are being undertaken as required	Monthly	31 March 2026	

Priority 1: Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
	Ensuring the corporate feedback system is used correctly and understood by all service areas – how to record feedback, how to use the feedback system, responding to feedback and analysing information to improve services.  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Investigating best ways forward due to system changes. To be discussed with Amber as there is an opportunity to reissue a net consent with the feedback policy and some procedural notes. However, the Meritec process has recently been updated and changed slightly so unsure on the training notes update.	One off	30 November 2025	Updated
	Regular review of above activity to ensure actions are being undertaken as required	Monthly	31 March 2026	
<b>Outcome 5: Ensure consistency of messaging via phone, email, online form or in person. Implement Training and development plans to respond to feedback and improve our offer. Embed the customer voice into our performance appraisals across the authority</b>	Undertake a review of supporting documents relating to telephone, email and online to ensure consistent information is provided	Quarterly	30 November 2025	Updated
	Inclusion of Customer Charter and Service Standards in appraisal process to ensure requirements are understood and training needs identified	Annual	28 February 2026	
	Review training and development in line with front facing needs – such as handling difficult situations and managing difficult conversations  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Conflict resolution training being completed by CS and officers managing face to face enquiries. Operating procedure and lock down process reviewed and tested and will continue to be.	Quarterly	30 November 2025	Complete

<b>Priority 2: Access to multiple service channels</b>
<b>Our commitment:</b> Ensure customers have access to multiple service channels to support their needs and type of enquiry.
<b>Purpose:</b> To enable customers to choose their preferred communication channel at every touchpoint.

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
<b>Outcome 1: Each of our processes will continue to be reviewed in detail, and where necessary, remodelled to support digital interactions in the future</b>	Ensure customers have access to multiple service channels to support their needs and type of enquiry	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Where possible, staffing levels will be reviewed to complement peak activities	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Analyse the data available to understand whether service channel access needs to be reviewed	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Discuss with service area Customer Experience Champions to review processes and potential remodelling other methods of interaction  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Planned for the next customer Experience Champion meeting to be discussed November/ December	One off	November 2025	Updated
<b>Outcome 2: Focus on the core channels our customers prefer</b>	Encourage customers to notify the council of changes promptly so we can respond to this change in a positive way	Monthly	31 March 2026	

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
<b>Outcome 3: The customer will get an improved outcome and will have greater choice in how to access a service</b>	Review access channel use for service areas – most / least used, at what time of day is the service access and how  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Discussions taking place with regards to gaining data to give us greater insight into the web usage.	One off	January 2026	Updated
	Active promotion of all service channels available to customers for each of the service areas – highlighting the benefits of each service channel  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> This is promoted across the Customer Service team over the 17 areas we manage. However, this will be discussed in the Customer Experience Champions Meeting during November / December.	One off	November 2025	Updated Part complete
	Ongoing promotion of service area channels (once appropriate method has been identified)	Monthly	31 March 2026	
	Provide visual information to customers which shows busy / quiet periods – day of the week and hour of the day  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Performance data is being looked into by the Performance and Change Development Lead with potential to display on the website and in the TCs in the two customer service centres	Monthly	December 2025	Updated
<b>Outcome 4: The council will see lower operating costs through greater levels of automation and a reduction in repeat contacts from customers.</b>	Activities link to Priority 5: Technology			

### Priority 3: Accessibility and Inclusion

**Our commitment:**

We will ensure our services are accessible and inclusive for everyone regardless of ability, background, or circumstance.

**Purpose:**

To comply with legal requirements and a commitment to supporting all customers equitably.

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
Outcome 1: We will aim to identify any and all barriers to accessing our services (e.g language, literacy, digital inclusion), reducing these through continued working across all teams	To undertake activities which ensures all those involved understand accessibility is not just about place – but always about people	Immediate	31 March 2026	
	Customer Service section on SKDC website to include all relevant information regarding people and place accessibility and inclusion	Immediate	November 2025	
	Promotion and advertising of translation service on request of any document (except a form)	Every 6 months	December 2025	
	Consider (with relevant service areas) providing easy read versions of documents / advice / instructions for those customers who have limited literacy, whose first language is not English  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Performance and Change Improvement Lead to discuss this with service areas in monthly performance clinic meeting on their approach and way forward with this.	Every 6 months	January 2026	Updated



Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
	Review of feedback and demand as to whether outreach is needed within Deepings and Stamford.	Every 6 months	January 2026	
	Review accessibility for people who are deaf and hearing impaired – such as hearing loop and text relay.  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Looking at the cost of portable hearing loop units that can be utilised in multiple locations across both offices.	Immediate	November 2025	Updated
	Ensuring we include within our location on the website that both Customer Service Centres can be access on one level  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Website will be updated and access promoted during discussions with customers	Immediate	October 2025	Overdue November 2025
	Ensure all staff are aware of "Language line" and how to use this service  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Customer Services Manager has spoken to relevant teams recently about this and is looking to put a document out to all staff on net consent on how to use.	Immediate	October 2025	Updated
	Liaise with SKDC IT Team and external provider to undertake a review of Website accessibility	Every 6 months	December 2025	
	All service areas to work together to understand what the needs of our vulnerable customers are. To be undertaken up as part of the regular meetings with Customer Experience Champions	Quarterly	31 March 2026	

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
	Liaison with third sector support organisations to better understand the barriers customers have when accessing our services	Ongoing	31 March 2026	
<b>Outcome 2: 100% of our staff to receive training in accessibility and continuous learning in this area to increase staff confidence and capability</b>	To ensure all staff are aware of the support available in Outcome 1	Ongoing	31 March 2026	
	Liaise with HR to explore the potential of customer facing (front-line) staff being trained in disability awareness - not just physical disabilities – but to also include insights into neurodivergent conditions, dementia, mental health etc	Immediate	November 2025	
	<p>Liaise with HR to explore the potential of customer facing (front-line) staff receiving British Sign Language training</p> <p><b>Updated 13 November:</b> This is an issue with single point of failure if limited number of staff receive train. The training is intensive and its advised to practise daily. This is not a quick win. Look to see what AI is available as alternative options</p>	Immediate	November 2025	Updated
<b>Outcome 3: Satisfaction scores from consultation with groups who may have previously experienced inaccessibility will be improved</b>	<p>Introduce exit surveys at Bourne and Grantham Customer Service Centres</p> <p><b>Updated 13 November:</b> This is currently being investigated and meetings have been arranged to review technology available</p>	Immediate	December 2025	Updated
	Work with our Community Engagement Team colleagues to ensure we engage appropriate. The team have contacts for groups that work with people with varying disabilities and also those who work with people whose first language isn't English.	As required	Ongoing	

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
	To work with the Community Engagement Team to ensure in person consultation is considered with those groups who support the people whose first language is not English. The consultation could form part of the feedback process from any interaction.	As required	Ongoing	
	Ensure service areas act on responses from consultation & feedback and publicise the outcomes / changes. It is important customer know that something has changes as a result.	Quarterly	31 March 2026	

#### Priority 4: Regular staff training

##### Our commitment:

We will ensure our staff receive regular training to enable them to respond to enquiries with accurate information.

##### Purpose:

To ensure all staff have knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver excellent customer service across all service areas.

To stay current with changes in policy and procedure and service area updates.

Our aim is to support all residents effectively across all contact channels.

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
Outcome 1: Development of staff learning plans to increase staff confidence through training	Ensure relevant staff training is identified through the appraisal and 1-1 processes (2025 appraisals)	One off	31 October 2025	Complete
	Review of current training needs and ensure our staff receive regular training to enable them to respond to enquiries with accurate information  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> Ongoing in regular check ins	Quarterly	31 December 2026	Updated
Outcome 2: Develop our knowledge-base for use by customers, staff and virtual assistants	Performance and Change Improvement Lead to liaise with service areas as part of monthly performance clinics to identify gaps in information, to produce FAQs online and consider these activities as part of developing Virtual Assistants (see technology action)	Monthly	31 March 2026	
Outcome 3: Training to better improve staff	Monitor customer feedback through variety of methods: We have asked customers to engage positively and give honest & constructive feedback to help the Council understand how services can be improved.	Monthly	31 March 2026	

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
understanding and response to feedback	Provide relevant training as a direct result of the feedback from our customers			
Outcome 4: Embedding a learning culture about customer service across our teams	Ensure all services are aware of their responsibilities within this strategy – customer service is an ethos, a culture, not just one team  <b>Updated 13 November:</b> This was highlighted at the Customer Experience champions meeting and is referenced regularly during the performance clinic meetings with service areas.	One off	31 October 2025	Complete
	Regular review of above activity to ensure actions are being undertaken as required	Monthly	31 March 2026	

## Priority 5: Technology

### Our commitment:

To review the provision of technology to improve services – such as customer contact, keeping customers up to date with progress of enquiries, website information.

### Purpose:

To provide user friendly technology that enhances the customer experience and improves efficiency to access services. We want to ensure our customers can easily access information and services when and how they need to via our website, online portals, telephones and offices.

Technological advancements are moving faster than ever and have a significant impact on customer expectations. There is no such thing as standing still. If we don't invest then in reality our services will be going backwards and won't be moving at the pace our customers expect. We need to fundamentally review the type and configuration of technologies used to deliver services across each channel.

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
<b>Outcome 1: Evaluate and consider the procurement and implementation of a new digital engagement / CRM platform</b>	Meet with other Councils to understand what digital engagement / CRM platforms are used to understand the capabilities and benefits  Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2	One off	31 March 2026	
<b>Outcome 2: Evaluate the deployment of new booking solutions to provide greater customer choice,</b>	Explore the technology which is currently available to us (if new technology if needed) to enable customers to undertake self-booking  Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2	One off	31 March 2026	

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
independence and automation	Review use of desk bookings by service areas to understand whether this is officer or customer led. To review improvements to ensure the contact channel is known to all staff and customers and is being used to its full potential	One off	30 November 2025	Updated
	<b>Updated 13 November:</b> Management to undertake a review of desk bookings in both offices to identify need, demand and peak times.			
Outcome 3: Evaluate deployment of chat technologies, including chatbots in high volume, repetitive environments	Research to be undertaken to understand how technology is being used by our customers to engage with the Council – platforms for access etc	One off	31 March 2026	
	Meet with other Councils who are using this technology to understand the objectives they have set, whether these are being met and the outcomes from deployment of the technology			
Outcome 4: Continue to improve digital access - 24/7, portals, online forms, support in offices for the less digitally confident	Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2	One off	31 March 2026	
	Telephone system – text message and chat bot			
	Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2	One off	6 to 10 October 2025	Complete
	Promotion of online and self service portals during National Customer Service Week (6 to 10 October 2025)			
	Review existing online / feedback – working with service areas to review specific customer feedback to ensure digital access continues to be developed and relevant technology is considered to move the Council forward	One off	31 March 2026	

Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
	Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2			
	Work with Third Sector organisations to understand the technological barriers faced by residents of South Kesteven	One off	31 March 2026	
	Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2			
<b>Outcome 5: Ensure fast efficient updates through online portals, phone system, online, text message</b>	<p>Review available technology can provide proactive messaging to customers.</p> <p>Where existing technology is not available, consider alternative requirements.</p> <p>Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2</p>	One off	31 March 2026	
<b>Outcome 6: Procure and deploy a new telephone system (September 2026)</b>	<p>Review the specific improvement requirements for new telephone system (replacement in September 2026) and include in tender specification</p> <p>Outcome will determine next steps and activities for Year 2</p> <p><b>Updated 13 November:</b> Priority requirements list completed and visited to another Lincolnshire District Authority with IT team review their telephony system and AI.</p>	One off	November 2025	Updated
<b>Outcome 7: Continued development of our website – using feedback and improvements to our web</b>	Review resources available to undertake activities directly associated to the website, co-ordination of web champion, regular review of website content, liaison with service areas for improvement, review of customer feedback	One off	October 2025	Overdue



Activities to be undertaken		Frequency	Deadline	Status
pages from customer engagement. Also identifying gaps in our online information and update regularly				November 2025
	Continue to monitor monthly website feedback and report improvement requirements to service areas	Monthly	31 March 2026	