



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

# Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 6 May 2026

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Governance and Licensing

## Customer Service Interactions and Performance - 2025/26

### Report Author

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### Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update regarding customer interactions within the Customer Service team and high contact service areas for 2025/26. As well as a review of completed actions from Year 1 of the Customer Experience Strategy and a forward look at the Year 2 action plan.

### Recommendations

#### The Committee is asked to:

1. Note the report and invited to ask questions regarding its content;
2. Note the Customer Experience Strategy action plan and invited to ask questions regarding its content.

### Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 There are currently no direct budget implications associated with this report.
- 1.2 Any actions associated with the Customer Experience Strategy will be met from existing budgets or, where required, additional budgets will be requested through the appropriate process.

*Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.3 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report. The matters covered relate to operational service delivery which is undertaken within existing legal and regulatory frameworks. These include equality, data protection and complaint handling requirements.

*Completed by: Graham Kitchen, Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to Connecting Communities and being an Effective Council. This report, and the service provided through the Council's Customer Service Team and high contact service areas strives to deliver these priorities.
- 2.2. A customer service update, including the strategy action plan, has previously been presented to the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2025/26.
- 2.3. The Customer Service Team handle customer interactions in various ways for 17 high contact service areas, as well as general public enquiries. This report provides an update regarding customer interactions for these service areas during 2025/26.

## **Customer Interaction – 2025/26**

- 2.4. **Appendix 1** shows the number of customer interactions during 2025/26, and comparison to 2024/25. These interactions include all methods of contact.
- 2.5. In comparison to 2024/25, on the whole, contact has increased. Telephone and face-to-face contact have increased by 9% and digital contact by 15%.
- 2.6. The Customer Service Team and individual service areas continue to promote the portal. For Council Tax, this is the most efficient way to contact the team, with customers receiving updated Council Tax bills within 24 to 48 hours from point of contact.
- 2.7. It is important for the Council to provide a variety of methods of contact for its customers. It is appreciated one contact method may not be suitable for all. Therefore, the method for customer contact provided by South Kesteven will continue to include all methods as shown in appendix 1.

## **Call answering – 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**

- 2.8. During 2025/26, on average, 92% of calls were answered, with just 8% of calls being 'abandoned' to other service channels. This is a significant improvement from 2024/25, where these figures were 79% and 21% respectively.
- 2.9. Call handling statistics continue to be produced and issued by the Performance and Change Improvement Lead on a monthly basis to the Council's Corporate Management Team and service areas. The information includes number of calls offered, answered, abandoned and average speed of answer.
- 2.10. Performance clinics with service areas are continuing on a monthly basis which enable both the Customer Service Team and service area to analyse call handling performance and for the service area to advise of changes in service activity and any upcoming activities which may impact on the number or nature of customer interactions.

## **Ability to contact the Council**

- 2.11. Customer feedback (compliments, complaints and feedback) via the Council's corporate feedback process is monitored with headline information being reported to Governance and Audit Committee. The feedback specifically in relation to this report is where the customer has indicated an issue regarding the "ability to contact the Council".

2.12. During 2025/26 there was a total of 608 feedback received, of which, only 8 had a 'root cause' identified as 'ability to contact the Council'.

Quarter	Service area	No. feedback
Q1	Housing	3
	Waste	1
Q2	N/A	0
Q3	Licensing	1
	Revenues (Council Tax)	1
Q4	Housing	1
	Waste	1

### Website – feedback and improvements

2.13. During 2025/26, the website contact increased by 352,707, or 19% (compared to 2024/25).

2.14. With regards to feedback, each page on the Council's website has a 'was this page useful?' function. A customer can choose 'yes' or 'no' by clicking on the relevant 'happy or sad face' icon at the bottom of the page. In doing this, the customer is given the option to provide and submit their comments, along with their name and email address.

2.15. A report is produced each month by the Performance and Customer Improvement Lead. For the purpose of this committee report, the information provided is from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

2.16. During this period, there have been a total of 828 individual 'was this page useful' interactions and this is broken down as follows:

	Was this page useful				
	Yes	No	Total	% Yes	% No
<b>Total interactions</b>	208	620	808	26%	74%

2.17. Customers are also able to provide comments regarding their feedback and can leave their contact details which enables officers to provide a response as to the actions taken.

2.18. All comments are reviewed and actions taken where required – of the 620 'no' responses, 68 required a change to be made – this is 11%.

Total 'No'	Provided a comment	Provided contact information	Changes have been made (Number)	Changes have been made (%)
620	519	232	68	11%

2.19. The common areas for feedback and reasons for changes not being taken are:

- Customer did not provide enough details for action to be taken
- Information requested is already on the website
- Customer had a service enquiry, not a comment on the page

2.20. Officers have analysed the feedback and actions taken – these are detailed in **appendix 2**.

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

2.21. The Strategy was introduced to ensure all services and staff provide an effective and positive customer experience, who are aware of and understand their responsibilities in fulfilling the Customer Charter, Service Standards, Priorities and Vision to a high level.

2.22. An action plan focussing on Year 1 (October 2025 to 31 March 2026) was developed to cover the 'Explore' activities within its priorities – this is detailed in **appendix 3**. Those areas updated since the last committee are shown with comments and have been rated red (overdue), amber (due and updated) and green (complete).

2.23. The Year 2 action plan (1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027) moves on to the 'Implement' activities – this is detailed in **appendix 4**. These activities will be appropriately linked to relevant Service Plans, staff appraisals and will formulate the Customer Experience Champions discussions.

2.24. The Customer Service Management Team will be responsible for the strategic direction of the action plan, collaborating with the Customer Experience Steering Group who will have oversight of the Strategy to enable effective co-ordination of delivery of the actions.

## **3. Key Considerations**

3.1. These are included throughout the report and members of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the report and are invited to ask questions regarding its content.

## **4. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 4.1 The recommendations are to ensure Members are aware of and are able to provide feedback regarding the level of Customer Service being provided and the progress being made towards the implementation of the Customer Experience Strategy and it's action plan.

## **5. Appendices**

- 5.1 There are four appendices included in this report:

- Appendix 1: Customer Interactions
- Appendix 2: Website Feedback
- Appendix 3: Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029 action plan (Year 1)
- Appendix 4: Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029 action plan (Year 2)