

MINUTES of the meeting of the **CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TASK GROUP** held at 10.00am on 6 March 2020 at the Contact Centre, County Hall.

Elected Members:

- Mr Will Forster
- Mr Bob Gardner
- * Mr Nick Harrison
- * Mr Chris Townsend
- * Mr Richard Walsh

1 VISIT TO CONTACT CENTRE [Item 1]

Witnesses (those present varied throughout the day):

Marie Snelling, Director of Transformation

Sue Grizzelle, Head of Customer Services

Sarah Bogunovic, Customer Relations and Service Improvement Manager

Louise Halloway, Web and Digital Services Manager

Rachel Bearman, Contact Centre IT Projects/Systems Lead

Claire Thomas, Contact Centre Social Care Operations Manager

Rik Jackson, Digital Project Lead, Customer Services

Dr Lisa Bursill, Assistant Director, Early Help & Hubs, Children's Services

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. It was agreed that the scope of the review should focus on future aspirations, plans and direction of travel for Customer Services and the Customer Experience programme, rather than usual operational or business aspects.
2. It was emphasised that it was a review of the Customer Experience program within Transformation, rather than the operational Customer Service function.
3. It was clarified that the review focused on Customer Experience through a 'two-way' lens: how customers interacted with Surrey County Council through Customer Services, and the ways the Council (including, but not limited to, by Customer Services) interacted with residents (such as through the Residents' Survey).
4. A former Cabinet Member indicated that his experience was that, as a Cabinet Member, he was much more informed than as an ordinary member. As a result, he felt that consideration should be given to improving the general knowledge of Members; in this instance in relation to all aspects of the Customer Experience.
5. This could be achieved through Councillor Training, in particular around the ways in which residents could interact with the Council, but also through information sharing and more regular formal and informal interaction with the customer Contact Centre.
6. Officers explained that learning and improvement was ongoing and largely iterative.

7. The model of customer interaction being used was considered to be the most efficient and effective because it focused on enabling those residents that could self-serve to do so and channelled customer enquiries through a 'single front door', in this way freeing up capacity and resources for those residents with significant and complex needs.
8. A primary focus for the Council's website was ease of access, with significant work being done to test improvements and changes with various user groups. It was suggested that Members be included as a user group.
9. Good connections with the wider business across Council departments was central to the success of the Contact Centre and it was worth considering the existence of any blockages and how these might be dealt with.
10. The highways digital experience, which had recently undergone a significant re-design, was considered to be very positive.
11. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) was being incorporated into the single front door model, in the form of an 'Extended Local Offer', which would result in freeing up capacity within the service. Lessons learned from setting up the Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA) would be applied. The possibility of Surrey Fire and Rescue Services being incorporated into Customer Services was also being explored.
12. It was important to take into account how a customer's first contact experience could shape how they view an organisation, impacting its reputation. The single front door model was especially effective at ensuring a high quality and consistent customer service experience at first point of contact.
13. It was commented that the single front door model would lead to a better experience for the customer. Members remarked that it might be interesting to see evidence of an improved experience; for example, whether having more services being brought into the single front door led to a better customer experience.
14. The libraries transformation project currently underway also offered opportunities. A key question for customer engagement and the Customer Services transformation overall was how to have more direct presence in local communities. Local engagement with communities based on encouraging independence and self-help were important aspects to consider. It was felt that this type of "culture change" could be achieved through local community engagement, possibly leading to the development of a new face-to-face customer service offer.
15. Members present felt that the carbon reduction agenda could suggest important lessons to be applied in changing behaviour.
16. The value of Customer Services satisfaction data was questioned. It was, though, considered valuable because it offered a feedback channel for disgruntled customers and could also be used to suggest areas for training based on recurrent issues.
17. Technology underpinned the success of the digital transformation of Customer Services with the emphasis being placed on digital interaction with customers. In relation to officer experiences with

technology, the only challenge experienced was in relation to third party provision. In-house provision of technology was good.

18. The web and digital services approach was developed through user-testing, and data analytics tools were used to show how people used the website; for example, they identified where customers dropped out of a transaction.
19. Recent developments included the introduction of webchat (live chat rather than automated chat bots) on some website pages. One of the aims of webchat was to keep as many customers as possible in the digital space.
20. In relation to feedback, a Councillor emphasised the importance of the link between customer insight, customer experience, and improvement/transformation.
21. Feedback from a wide range of sources (e.g. regulators like Ofsted), in addition to that provided directly by customers, also provided useful feedback for Customer Services.
22. There were automated customer surveys at the end of telephone calls with customers. Customers were able to rate their interaction and make a comment which was captured verbatim. It was noted that there was relatively low uptake of this survey, but that it could provide useful feedback for service areas, and be beneficial for staff morale and training purposes.
23. The possibility of using sentiment analysis tools in the future was mentioned.
24. The importance of looking at feedback together, rather than in isolation, was also highlighted.
25. Continued compliance with the Customer Excellence Standard (CSE) was a significant achievement for the service.
26. The importance of the link between Customer Services and other departments in the Council was emphasised. Feedback and insight could (and should) be two-way.
27. The strategic value of Customer Services' expertise for other Council services and sharing intelligence, data and insight gathered from interactions with customers across the organisation, including with Members, was emphasised.
28. Having regular training sessions for Members and including demonstrations of how residents could interact digitally with the Council would be useful, as well as sharing this information with Members and local area committees.
29. Having access to service area expertise as part of the single front door model made a significant difference to being able to effectively manage enquiries and requests at first point of contact. For example, there was a social worker present in the Children's Request for Support Team.
30. There was partnership working with Districts and Boroughs; for example, through the Surrey Contact Group and the Surrey Web Managers' Group meetings, where information, challenges and learning was shared.

31. However, there was a lack of commonality with the Districts and Boroughs, particularly with regard to systems and technology and the nature of services being delivered, which led to limited opportunities for joint working.
32. Customer Services had benchmarked online up-take against other councils e.g. Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Lincolnshire, and West Sussex.
33. It was noted that interaction and joint working with partners such as Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue Services was a key part of the work of Customer Services.
34. The model of co-location where all Contact Centre staff worked together in the same space was important to the success of the team and this, coupled with effective working across departments in the Council, should be preserved as far as possible whilst still exploring opportunities for agile working where possible.
35. It was emphasised that all being located in the same office (co-location) was a key part of the Customer Service team's strength. For example, co-location enabled instant feedback regarding the website, and 'live' changes to it in response, as well as being able to react quickly to evolving situations through the fast sharing of information; for example, 'huddles' with telephone agents.
36. Members asked about the potential impact of the move of Customer Services to Leatherhead on the delivery and quality of customer service.
 - a. There was uncertainty regarding the impact on staff numbers and a potential for staff attrition. It was noted that this could have an impact on delivery of customer service due to the time required to fully train staff (up to 8 months).
 - b. While there was scope for some teams and staff members to work an agile way, it was not as feasible for other parts of the service at this time.
 - c. There was a question about whether agile working would reduce the benefits of co-location.
37. Financial efficiencies needed to be achieved in 2020/21; the FTE reduction based on increased digital uptake and a reduction of calls would make this achievable.
38. Members requested a detailed breakdown of finances in terms of costs and savings against the transformation programme, including savings commitments for this year and next. They wanted this in as much detail as possible and wanted to be clear on any changes that had taken place from previous commitments. They also wanted to know if the transformation programme contained a contingency budget in case it was needed.
39. A staff survey was currently being carried out to scope potential attrition as a result of the impending move of Customer Services to Leatherhead and how this might impact on overall service delivery.

40. In relation to the move, any sudden loss of staff was a risk. Members wanted to know what the budget contingency was for Customer Services transformation.

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SCRUTINY VISIT – 6TH MARCH 2020**10:00 – 16:00****TIMETABLE FOR DAY**

Time	Duration	Event	Personnel	Location
10:00	60 mins	Welcome – Transformation and setting the scene	Marie Snelling, Sue Grizzelle, Sarah Bogunovic, Rachel Bearman, Louise Halloway, Claire Thomas	298 - TR2
11:00	15 mins	Tour of Customer Services	Sue Grizzelle	298
11.15	30 mins	Introduction to Contact Centre Social Care Operations	Claire Thomas	298 - TR2
11:45	15 mins	Meet/shadow Adults Social Care Team – Professional portal and MASH	Claire Thomas	298
12:00	30 mins	Web user testing – how we work with residents	Rik Jackson	298 - TR2
12:30	45 mins	Online Highways Customer Journeys	Rachel Bearman, Rik Jackson,	298 - TR2
13:15	45 mins	Break		298 - TR2
14:00	15 mins	Webchat	Rachel Bearman	298 - TR2
14:15	15 mins	Meet/shadow Request for Support Team	Claire Thomas	298
14:30	30 mins	Interview with key partner	Dr Lisa Bursill – Surrey Children’s Services	298 - TR2
15:00	30 mins	Play back – Q&A session	Sue Grizzelle, Sarah Bogunovic, Rachel Bearman, Louise Halloway	298 - TR2
15:30	30 mins	Listening in – generic contact centre (optional)	Sit with agents and listen to live calls	298 – TR2
16:00		Close		

ATTENDEES

- Marie Snelling – Director of Transformation
- Sue Grizzelle – Head of Customer Services
- Sarah Bogunovic – Customer Relations and Service Improvement Manager
- Louise Halloway – Web and Digital Services Manager
- Rachel Bearman – Contact Centre IT Projects/Systems Lead
- Claire Thomas – Contact Centre Social Care Operations Manager
- Rik Jackson – Digital Project Lead, Customer Services
- Dr Lisa Bursill – Assistant Director, Early Help & Hubs, Children’s Services

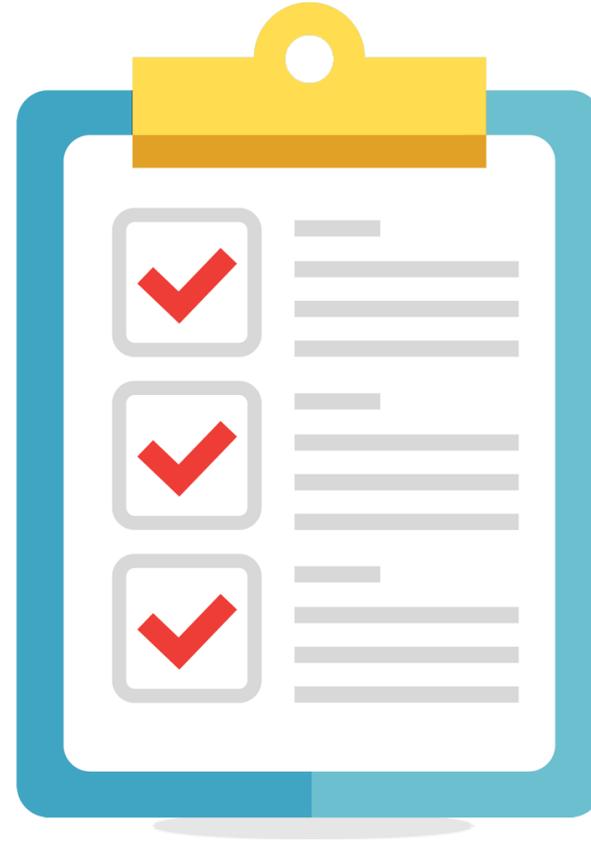
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Customer Services: Our Transformation Story

6 March 2020

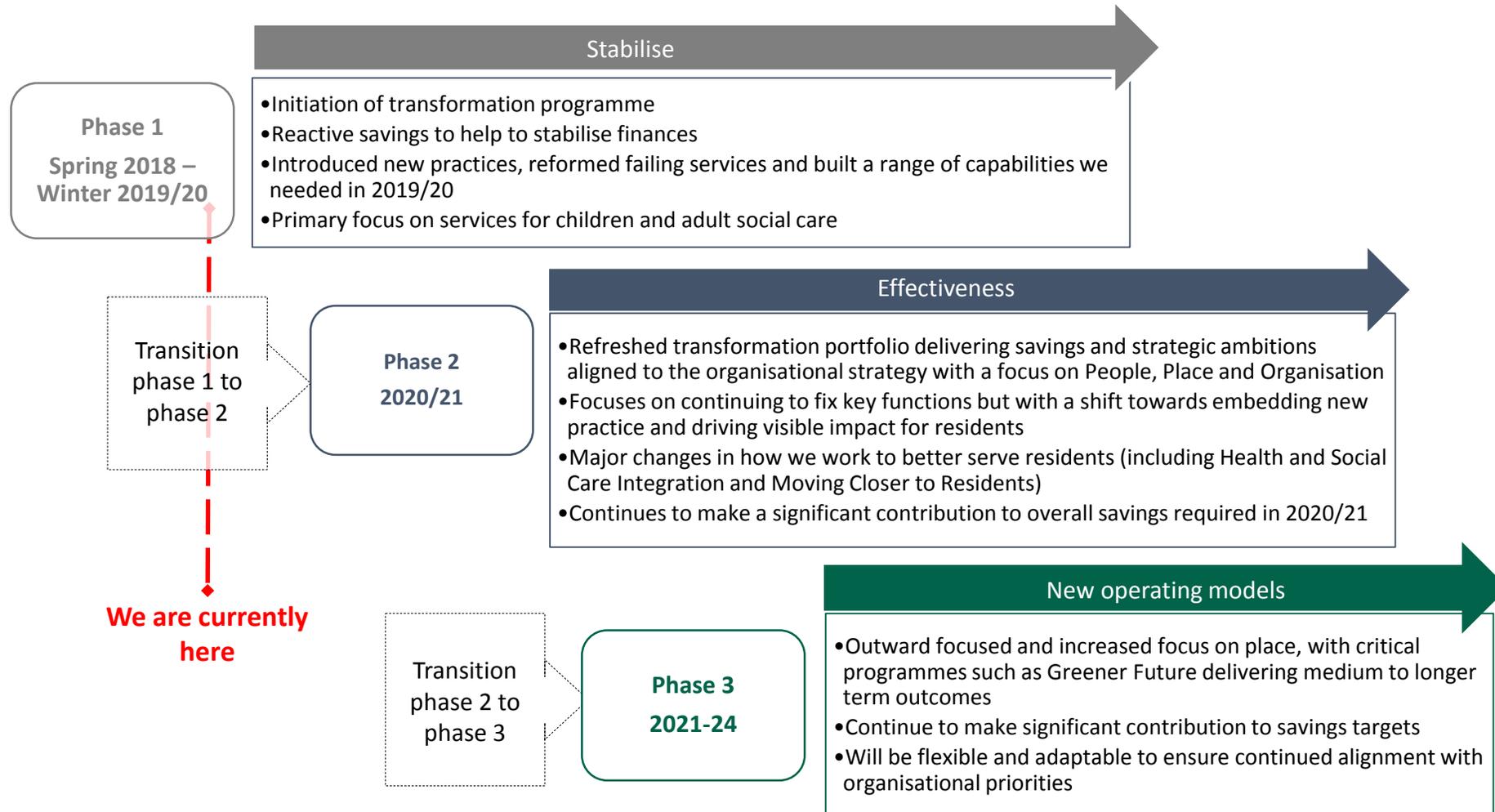
Plan for the day

- Setting the scene
- Transformation
- What we've achieved
- What next?
- Our wider journey
- Seeing things in action!



Our transformation journey...a shift from service based improvements to wider challenges and opportunities

Phases of transformation



The next phase of transformation will deliver on our strategic priorities for 2020-25

<h3>Tackling inequality</h3> <p>Working with residents in every area of Surrey to identify and address causes of inequality, especially in life expectancy for everyone.</p> 	<h3>Supporting independence</h3> <p>Helping residents help themselves and each other within their community.</p> 	<h3>More joined up health and social care</h3> <p>Integrating health and council services so they're more effective, efficient and seamless for residents.</p> 	<h3>Creating a greener future</h3> <p>Tackling the causes of climate change and become a carbon-neutral county as soon as possible.</p> 
<h3>Embracing Surrey's diversity</h3> <p>Recognising the benefits of a diverse workforce and population to ensure Surrey is a place full of opportunity.</p> 	<h3>Partnership</h3> <p>Working with residents, businesses, partners and communities to collectively meet challenges and grasp opportunities.</p> 	<h3>Supporting the local economy</h3> <p>Investing in the infrastructure Surrey needs to build a strong and resilient economy.</p> 	<h3>Digital revolution</h3> <p>Making the most of new technology to innovate and improve services, and the way we work, to help Surrey and residents thrive.</p> 

THE PRINCIPLES GUIDING OUR WORK:

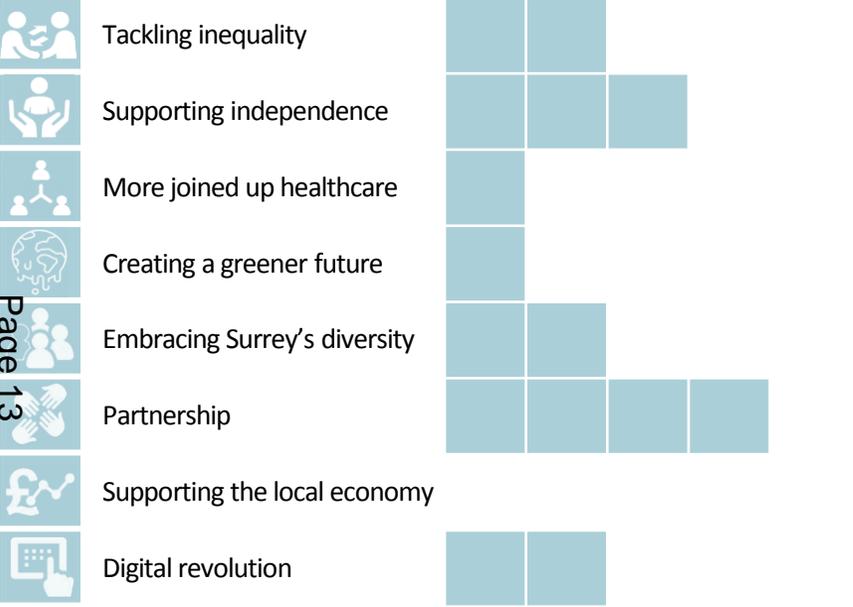
- 1 Focus on ensuring no one is left behind**
- 2 Take a fresh approach to working in partnership**
- 3 Support people to help themselves and each other**
- 4 Involve and engage residents earlier and more often in designing and delivering services, and responding to challenges**

Customer experience

“Making people’s experience of dealing with the council quicker, easier and better”



Strategic Priorities – Focus for 2020-25



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What is the programme ambition?

The programme aims to transform what people experience when dealing with the Council, be that through online services, contact with a staff member, or more indirectly through support the council helps facilitate in their local community. The next phase of this programme will be focused on areas where people contact the council for help and support, making sure it is seamless, easy and automated where appropriate for speed and simplicity. At the same time we will ensure the more vulnerable in our communities can always access what they need. A key priority is to introduce improved ways to access to and discuss Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) related support.

As we complete this next wave of improvements we will also start to look at our future ambitions, including further part of the council’s operations, joining up across different public sector organisations and using the power of new technologies and data.

What will be different for residents?

- It will be easier to contact the council, whatever the issue
- More support and information will be accessible online 24/07 or through webchat and chat-bots, providing a quicker resolution, especially for routine enquires and advice and information
- People with specific needs and support will receive the right help and support first time
- Frontline staff can dedicate more time to the people they support rather than be tied up in managing triage and request processes

Who is leading the programme?

Cabinet Lead(s)	Tim Oliver (Leader), Zully Grant-Duff (Cabinet Member for Corporate Support)
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)	Marie Snelling, Director of Transformation
Accountable Executive [Director]	Sue Grizzelle, Head of Customer Services
Programme Manager	Rik Jackson

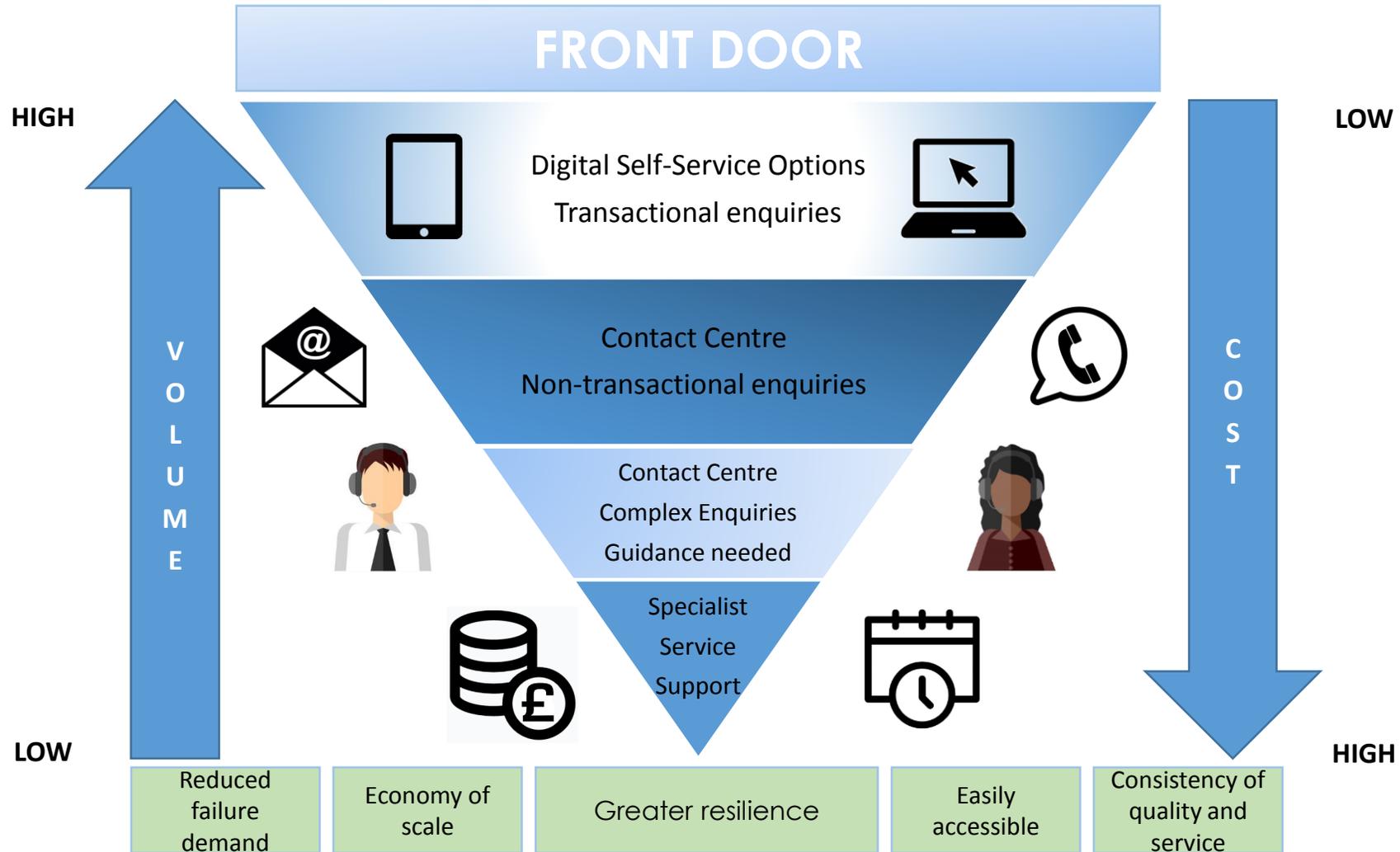
How will we know it is successful?

- Residents report improved satisfaction with the customer service they receive
- Automation is used widely and effectively to improve services
- We have fully established a single way (“a single front door”) for contact with the council
- Systems and processes for interactions with residents are joined-up across all parts of the council

Let's have a
think about
our front
door....



'Single Front Door' Model



What we have achieved so far...



Children's Request for Support Team



New Highways online customer journeys



Adults Social Care – Blue Light and Professional Portal



Website re-design

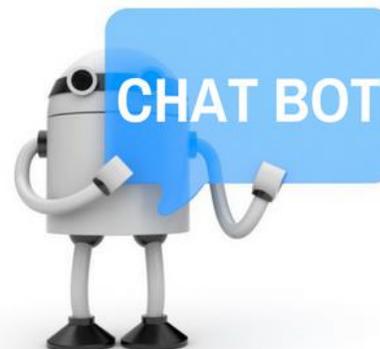
What next?



Customer Service offer in Libraries?



Extend Highways work



Web & Digital innovations



Commercialisation opportunities



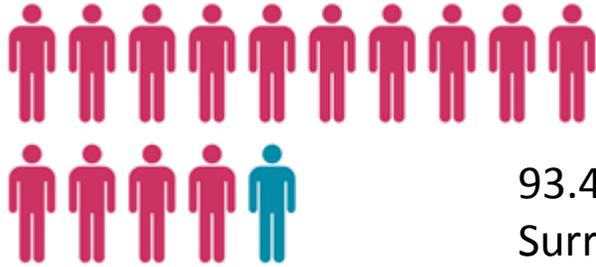
“Making people’s experience of dealing with the council quicker, easier and better”



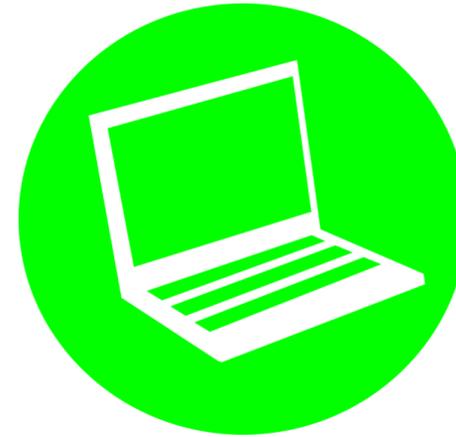
Our wider journey...



How people access our services is changing...



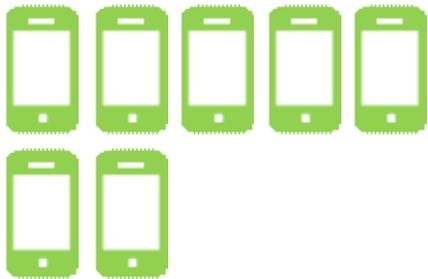
93.4% of adults in Surrey go online regularly



SCC website receives approx. 6.5 million visits each year; 43% take place out of office hours



Approximately 250,000 calls to SCC in 2019



71% of adults have a smartphone in the UK



98% of premises in Surrey can receive broadband

85% can access superfast broadband



Partnership Working: District & Borough Councils



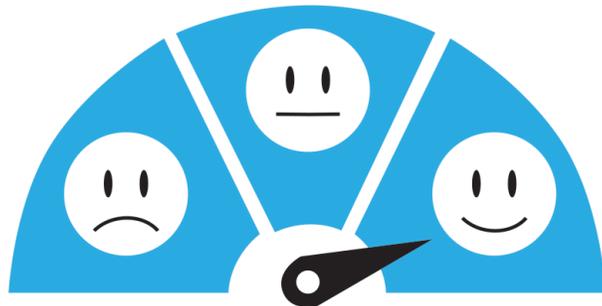
Contact Centre Satisfaction

95%

Average satisfaction rating 2019

8k

Telephone surveys completed 2019



There's nothing to do to make it better I was very happy.

(02/03/2020 16:43:08)

I do not think that you could do any better than has been done today.

(03/03/2020 09:50:42)

I was very grateful for the service that I received today and the lady I spoke to Linda was excellent.

(02/03/2020 13:05:53)

Any Questions?



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Customer Experience Task and Finish Working Group – Reporting to the Resources and Performance Select Committee: Form for recording the scrutiny visit to the Customer Services Contact Centre on 6 March 2020.

Purpose of the visit: To better understand and ultimately make recommendations on the Customer Experience.

1. What are your impressions, based on the evidence you gather, of the Customer Experience?
2. What works well for the Customer?
3. What might be improved on?
4. What emerging recommendations come to mind?

Please use the form below to record your impressions and emergent recommendations.

These will be taken into account in drafting and finalising the report to include recommendations for submission to Cabinet. They will also be of use for the site visits/Skype meetings with other Local Authorities.

Name:	
What positive aspects of the Customer Experience did you observe during the visit?	
What aspects of the Customer Experience did you observe that you think require improvement?	
Do you have any other comments?	
What recommendations could the Task Group make based on today's visit? Please make these as concrete and achievable as possible.	

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