

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

13th December 2022



Subject: Customer Service Programme Phase 2
Report of: Director, Digital & Customer Services
Relevant Cabinet Member: Cllr Brigid Jones- Deputy Leader
Relevant O &S Chair(s): Councillor Sir Albert Bore – Co-ordinating Overview & Scrutiny
Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq – Resources Overview & Scrutiny
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| Are specific wards affected? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected |
| If yes, name(s) of ward(s): | | |
| Is this a key decision? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 010705/2022 | | |
| Is the decision eligible for call-in? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential: | | |

1.1 Executive Summary

1.2 The Customer Service Programme was formed in December 2021 following full cabinet approval being received on 14th December 2021, which initiated a discovery phase into areas that were not achieving the customer service standards required. The outcome of this discovery informed an enhanced business case, demonstrating how the Council will deliver significant

improvements in customer service performance by adjusting its approach and reviewing the customer experience end to end.

- 1.3 The programme has delivered a number of customer benefits in year one including the creation of an easy-read Customer Service Strategy, a co-created Customer Charter, introduced a Citizen Panel, the refresh and cleansing of approximately 800 web pages to date and end to end discovery of 4 high volume, high priority service areas for the Council with recommendations being played back to the appropriate department for progressing.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the drawdown of funding to continue to deliver the customer improvements required across year 2 and 3 of the programme, in order to continue to deliver the required outputs of the Customer Service Strategy. The scope of the Customer Service Programme Phase 2, the agile and customer centred approach and the associated funding required to deliver the programme are detailed in **Table 1**: Customer Service Strategy deliverables within the time period of Phase 2 (April 2023 - March 2025) and **Appendix A**: Year 2–4 Forecast Resource Budget Profile, of this report.
- 1.5 The Customer Service Programme had a number of defined outputs which created a roadmap for change and the delivery of savings. Therefore, the transformational nature of the programme enables us to capitalise the funding allocated to resourcing a dedicated team. The transformation programme is based on four key priority areas which will need to be considered across all services that the Council provides:

Service improvements - delivery of customer journey improvements for the priority service areas, identified in the discovery phase by customer preference, complaints, and volume data.

Fixing the basics - finalisation of the Quick Wins & Early Momentum outputs ('fix the basics') that have been scheduled to be completed.

Programme delivery - Embedding the thinking, skills, and approach into the organisation to enable a long-term sustainable approach to transformation.

Delivery of the enhanced business case – continue to deliver the core capabilities defined in year 1 of the Customer Service Strategy that will deliver ongoing efficiencies for the Council.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Recommendations to Cabinet: -
- 2.2 Note the progress made by the Customer Service Programme to date since approval of the Enhanced Business Case in December 2021 (**Table 2**).
- 2.3 Approve the Customer Service Programme Phase 2, as defined in this report to ensure a joined-up and consistent approach to best-in-class service delivery

across the Council and partner organisations, putting the customer at the heart of everything we do.

- 2.4 Approve the forecast resource budget profile (**Appendix A**) to invest reserves of £4.2m to deliver the Customer Service Programme Phase 2 to start in April 2023 until March 2025 as a drawdown of the already approved investment funds for Customer Service activity.

3 Background and Context

- 3.1 The UK saw the equivalent of more than 12 years of ecommerce growth in a single year and the pandemic accelerated the digitisation of customer interactions in Europe by three years and the partial or total digitisation of products and services by seven years, compared with the average rates of adoption in 2017-19. (Source: Digital Transformation Report in the Times (Sept 2021). We cannot stand still as this technological revolution continues to accelerate yet many of our service areas do not have an online presence. We need to be bold and embrace the innovation that has now become commonplace.
- 3.2 Cabinet mandated on 14th December 2021 a significant shift in how we improve the services we provide to customers. This mandate initiated the formation of the Customer Service Programme (Phase 1) with a vision to deliver significant improvements in performance and implement the Council's new [Customer Service Strategy](#) which aims to embed change and improve how the Council delivers its services to citizens through all access channels.
- 3.3 Research conducted by the programme during phase 1 validated earlier anecdotal insights:
- customer service standards across the Council are inconsistent
 - opportunities to digitalise and automate to improve interactions are not being taken up
 - customers feel overwhelmed with having too many access points
 - a large amount of our online content is poor and needs improving
 - we receive high volumes of complaints and have high costs associated to managing failure demand activity (chase ups, etc).
- 3.4 In addition to the lack of consistency across different services, we needed to acknowledge that expectations from our citizens are increasing, they expect to be able to transact with the Council through a variety of access channels including online, and for those services to be good, to keep them informed and simply work without hiccups.
- 3.5 Since the start of the programme in January 2022, with an initial 12-month timeline to 'Fix the Basics' as outlined in the Customer Service Strategy commitments, the customer service programme undertook analysis of existing BCC data sources (i.e. Online Brum; Corporate Contact Centre, CSAT and

Online Fire & Send) to identify the Top 60 services our customers engage with most frequently.

The analysis highlighted high volume services such as those detailed below, which it should be noted, also aligns with the services outlined within the Council Leader's Top Ten Non-Negotiables:

- Housing (repairs, applications and ASB)
- Waste (garden waste renewal, replacement and missed bins)
- Highways (repairs, fly tipping, report pavements)
- Revenues & Benefits (benefit entitlements)
- Education & Skills (school admissions, child bus pass)
- Bereavement Services (register a death).

- 3.6 To understand the current customer experience for high demand services, the customer service programme conducted an initial discovery phase focused on Waste Management, Housing Repairs, Bereavement Services and Highways. Through user research and data analysis the programme sought to understand the current customer and staff experience, including pain points and user needs, to identify a model customer experience, based on best practice that will increase/improve satisfaction.
- 3.7 Based on evidence from the research, a high-level common 'gold standard' customer experience was developed that is intended to be broadly applicable to any service area; and provide the north star underpinning the activity of the Customer Service programme.

Figure 1. Visual extract of the target 'gold standard' customer experience



- 3.8 In addition to the development of the 'gold standard', findings from the research provided the following insights:

About our customers:

- People are proud of Birmingham
- There are mixed views of the council
- Trust in the council (and Government as a whole) is low
- There is an awareness that the council is stretched

- There is some discontent around political and contractual structures within the council

Research themes:

- Most people commented on a lack of communication when interacting with council services
- Decisions aren't made transparently, there is a lack of understanding about why things happen
- There is an expectation that the council should be proactive – some things shouldn't need customer interaction
- People should be treated empathetically

What good customer service looks like:

- People don't need to submit a formal complaint when things go wrong
- People want the council to be held to account but won't always take action to do so
- Examples of good customer service include being kept informed, being treated with empathy and ease of use
- A general belief that the council can achieve 'good customer service' but expectations are low
- Customers expect the council to make improvements around training and culture.

3.9 As a result of the programme's discovery work, 116 recommendations / opportunities to improve customer satisfaction and associated insights have been presented to the relevant service areas to date (i.e. Bereavement 28, Waste 13, Highways 10, Housing Repairs 13 and Housing Management 52), which demonstrates the scale and complexity of improvement work still required in some service areas in order to 'fix the basics' end-to-end to achieve that 'gold standard customer experience' for their service users. **Appendix B**

Each recommendation / opportunity detailed the insights gathered from user research conducted with our customers, with supporting storyboards (visual representation of a theme of actions and/or events gathered from the discovery user research), personas (snapshot of a typical service user highlighting their user needs, and positive and negative experiences), and user journeys (detailing the experiences a user has when interacting with a service area). Three key themes emerged:

- **Communication:** with customers, within services and between services
- **Complaints and feedback:** asking at the right time, making it easy to give feedback and action being taken by the service as a result
- **Use of digital and technology:** we need to address the paper based, manual processes and maximise what is already available

3.10 This discovery informed the programme's next stages of work with the service areas:

- **Bereavement Services:** To provide clear, accessible guidance (end to end) to help people understand how to lay a loved one to rest in Birmingham; transition of service into the Contact Centre (single contact number).
- **Culture Change:** To embed the principles of Our Customer Charter ensuring all 11,000 provide a basic level of customer care – putting people first all the time, every time
- **Waste (prototype & testing):** Investigate how we can enable proactive digital communication between the Waste service and residential customers e.g. against missed, assisted collections and garden waste
- **Housing Management:** To develop a common understanding of the current end to end journey of a housing tenant. Agree options to proto-type and test with users using evidence-based user needs
- **Web Content Review:** To ensure customers access the right information at the right time and content is accurate and update. Applying an iterative approach to the improvement work and ensuring alignment to the standards outlined in the new Content Strategy and Content Governance guidelines, also developed by the programme. (**Figure 2. Overview of web audit reports for prioritised services**).
- **Customer Panel:** Giving our customers a voice - to take an active role in shaping the services we deliver to make sure we continually meet people's needs. The Customer Service Programme has established a Customer Panel of core citizens members based on the 2022 ONS Census data; and work to continuously improve the panel in terms of diversity, purpose and role; and to establish a wider cohort of member will continue during Phase 2 to ensure the group is truly representative and reflective of Birmingham's diverse community.

3.11 With the endorsement, buy-in and engagement of directorate services, the inflight workstreams and the growing product backlog (pipeline of improvements) present opportunities for BCC to achieve outcomes such as:

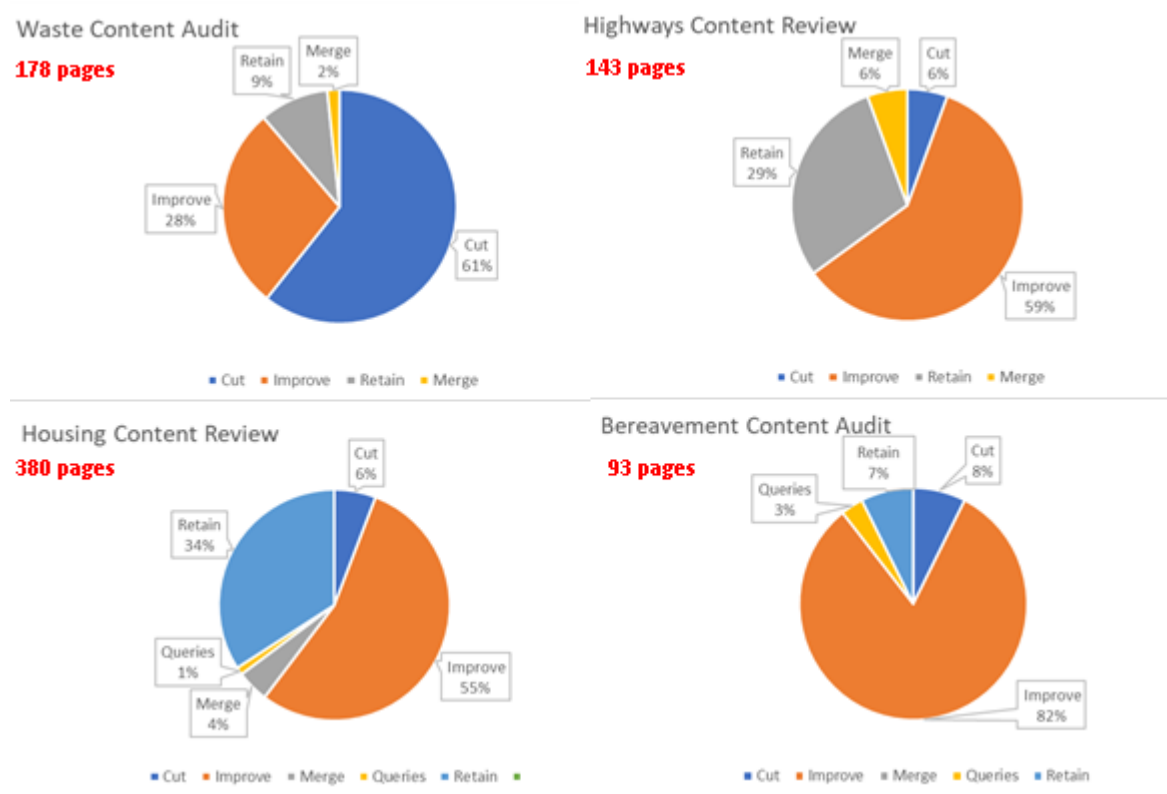
- Improved customer service across a range of priority service areas
- A method/internal capability for delivering ongoing service improvements
- Improved reputation for the Council and reduction in complaints
- Reduction in costs as failure demand is tackled
- Cultural change and the embedding of agile practice through delivery

3.12 Analysis of the Council's customer contact showed:

- Contact is not managed in a structured or uniform way - we have fewer than 2% of services managed within the contact centre, resulting in excessive points of contact.

- We don't ask customers what they think or gather knowledge to improve - Only 5% of our service areas ask customers about satisfaction and where we do, the satisfaction level is only 60%.
- We are not using our customer portal (Brum Account) to its full capacity. Only 21% of service areas have services available on our customer portal.
- Non-standardised web forms: we have 119 forms online. The functionality is not uniform, and, in some cases, forms still need to be printed off and for a wet signature to be added.
- Unclear access points for Customers, Visitors, Businesses and Tenants to information, advice guidance or trading opportunities.
- Difficult to navigate website with jargon and often out of date content.

Figure 2. Overview of web audit reports for prioritised services



- 3.13 The programme is **“Everyone’s Battle Everyone’s Business – together we will tackle inequalities”** aware and through discovery user research is shaping customer access to services against the protected characteristics to ensure content is accessible and easy to understand for all our communities (e.g. Deaf people can now [call the Council's Contact Centre in British Sign Language with SignVideo](#), connecting users to a registered BSL interpreter. They'll confirm you're calling Birmingham City Council and will start the conversation in BSL to facilitate service requests.

- 3.14 In addition, the programme also contributes to the five key principles of EBEB to drive systemic change and guide our work to become a council that puts equity at the heart of our policy making and services:
- **A focus on equity** - We will focus our approach on equity.
 - **Actively listening to the voices of lived experience** - We will put those who are affected by inequalities at the heart of designing solutions.
 - **Understand the diverse range of views and perspectives of citizens and ensure solutions are based on the widest available evidence** - We will take an intersectional approach to understand how people experience inequality according to their social class, age, gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.
 - **Language counts** - We will aim to use plain language in our publications that is jargon-free and easily understood and will also develop a shared understanding of the terms used to describe inequalities.
 - **Place matters** - we will focus on place-based approaches that improve access to opportunities.
- 3.15 In order to ensure all programme engagement was reflective of Birmingham's diverse community, participation was based on the ONS 2022 Census data and all user research with our customers conducted by the programme to date has been rigorous in the analysis and application of the sampling mix.
- 3.16 The Customer Service Programme is working with our customers to maximise opportunities to tackle inequality and address both long-standing and novel challenges facing the city, including customer service improvements.
- 3.17 Our Customer Service Strategy will enable the Council to organise our services around demand; leverage the city's many opportunities for the benefit of local people; connect with customers in a way that improves their quality of life and drive innovation within the organisation and across partnerships by making sure we put in place the necessary strategies and capacity to enable it to happen. The Customer Service Strategy complies with the Council's Delivery Plan 2020-2022 and will contribute to the following outcomes and related priorities:
- Using innovative technology and processes to support making Birmingham an aspirational city to grow up and live in.
 - Optimising services to support making Birmingham a great city to live in
 - Focus our resources on the people that need it most, making Birmingham a fulfilling city to age well in
- 3.18 Improving customer satisfaction/experience is further compounded by organisational culture and although creation of the first iteration of Our Customer Charter (developed and tested with our users) communicates the principles, standards and behaviours expected of all our 11,000 employees; embedding a change in culture of this scale (i.e. across all levels, from the front

line to our managers, the board and even our members) takes time and the shift in culture required to become truly user needs focussed and put people first, all the time, every time should not be underestimated. Having said this, the Customer Standards Workshops rolled out by the programme has seen engagement steadily increase, with nearly 1,000 staff participating following the go-live launch in September 2022, and a Forward Plan of engagement scheduled to March 2023. However, further work is required to evaluate the change, and further embed the principles via continual learning and application of the standards in practice.

3.19 The Customer Service Programme [Phase 1] delivery approach aimed to help Birmingham City Council's maturity on its journey towards being a truly 'person centred' organisation...'Putting people first, all the time, every time'. The programme adapted well to the new way of working, partnering with contracted supplier Methods during the first year, building organisational capability and experience as well as helping the organisation to embed the approach, so that continuous improvement to customer service becomes second nature.

3.20 The Customer Service Programme continues to map out and prioritise with service leads the 116 recommendations/opportunities for customer journey improvements identified in the discovery phase. The outputs have provided the programme with a roadmap for change for Phase 2 which are based on four key priority areas to start in April 2023 until March 2025:

- **Fixing the basics** – continued implementation of the web content improvement plan, pipeline of the identified Top 50 prioritised services, and a roadmap of engagement for all Council services.
- **Service improvements** - delivery of customer journey improvements for the priority service areas, identified in discovery to understand the current customer experience for high demand services.
- **Programme delivery** – Customer Service Programme Phase 2 delivery of the Customer Service Strategy for the period up to March 2025, and embedding of the thinking, skills, and approach into the organisation to enable a long-term sustainable approach to continuous improvement and modernisation.
- **Delivery of the benefits** – continued delivery of the capabilities defined in the Customer Service Strategy, where validated by the evidence, data and insights gathered by the Customer Service Programme's user research. With an ambition to deliver end-to-end, reusable solutions (i.e., Advanced payments) that may potentially deliver savings for the Council and can be used by other business areas during and beyond the programme to achieve efficiencies. However, it should be noted, without a mandated strategic approach for services to engage and be accountable (i.e. take ownership) to the identified recommendations/opportunities for improvement, enabling and driving forward the associated service and business change required,

realisation of any financial benefits and/or efficiencies will be adversely impacted.

- 3.21 Work is ongoing to define and develop quantifiable and measurable benefits against the programme's current scope of work and this will be strengthened during Phase 2. Mapping the benefits, conducting a process of review and consideration of benefits realised during Phase 1 will enable the identification of any gaps for Phase 2. A high-level view of the approach adopted to facilitate this work across the Transformation Programmes, including the Customer Service Programme is detailed at **Figure 3**. The output dashboard detailed at **Figure 4** provides a representative view of the improved visibility, tracking and reporting of benefit categories, such as efficiency, customer satisfaction and complaints reduction, proposed for Phase 2 delivery.

Figure 3. High-level visual of approach adopted to map benefits





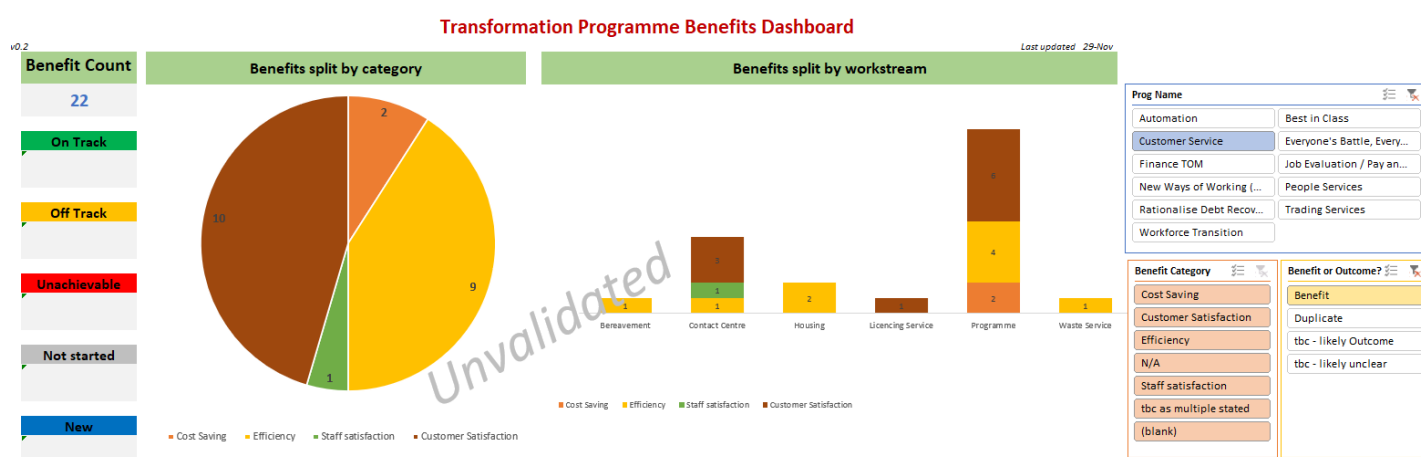
| |  |  |  |  |
|------|---|--|---|--|
| What | Identify | Capture | Monitor | Evaluate |
| How | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Benefits map / Logic models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits Tracker– High level KPI Tracker– low level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KPI Tracker Dashboard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check back against Benefits Tracker statement |
| Why | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture initial thoughts Develop from statements to measures that flow from outcomes/outputs through to strategic objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To profiling Benefits and link to planned activities Validate Ensure data is accurate at the start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor progress against phased metrics, adjust accordingly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent review of whether benefits were truly realised Feedback Lessons learned into new initiatives / business cases |
| Who | Business + Programme Manager + Portfolio Lead + CPMO | Business + Programme Manager + CPMO | Programme Manager + Portfolio Lead | CPMO + Portfolio lead |

Figure 4. Visual of Transformation Programme Benefits Dashboard (example)



- 3.22 In order to deliver the outcomes outlined there is a dependency on other cross-cutting programmes with a range of core capabilities which will impact this work including:

- **Smart communications** – chat bots and other automations to handle and improve customer enquiries.
- **Robotic process automation** – for appointment reminders and reducing double keying of information e.g., Care plans and financial assessments.
- **Pre-emptive demand reduction** – for example garden waste renewals.
- **Customer service improvements** – prioritising individual customer service and efficiency improvements, implementing best practice and user centred design principles.

- 3.23 The services we have worked with to date are outlined in the Leader's top 10 non-negotiables and continuation of the programme is vital to ensure an improved customer satisfaction/experience.
- 3.24 Our Customer Service Strategy established a key set of principles and promises, positioning work and priorities within the context of 'A fit for purpose council', using a sustainable process and approach to sustain the strategy beyond the lifetime of the programme, an ambition Phase 2 will endeavour to continue to achieve, with a vision to not only raise standards but set standards and strive for a 'best in class' relationship with our customers.
- 3.25 Customer expectations of the Council are rising. Our customers expect services that are reliable, joined up around their needs and involve them as equals. They benchmark our performance against the likes of Uber and Amazon, Spotify, and Expedia. These changes in expectation fundamentally challenge how our services need to be designed; how they are led; our approach to innovation and how we drive change and improvement in a consistent and reliable manner across the Council as a whole. This applies not only to services run by our customer services team – it means all services, from children to adults, from street cleansing to parking enforcement, treating customer, citizens, and service users with respect. This will require a step change in our approach rather than incremental changes at the margins or digitising what remain effectively paper based or manual processes. The world has moved on and so must we.
- 3.26 There is sometimes a lack of trust between our customers and the Council. Customers expect a much greater level of involvement in decisions that affect their lives, be they the big things that have a bearing across the City as a whole, or the little things that have a big impact in their street or neighbourhood.
- 3.27 In this context, getting the basics right means more than relentless reliability, it also means understanding and then exceeding expectations, and in turn that means an approach to service delivery that is open, reflective, and humble. The test for our services should be whether, they are consistently putting citizens first, building trust and designed around citizen needs.
- 3.28 Our recent success in delivery of the Commonwealth Games; and meeting the challenges posed by covid19 has given us much for the Council to be proud of, but we need clear ambition to make sustainable changes to how the customers

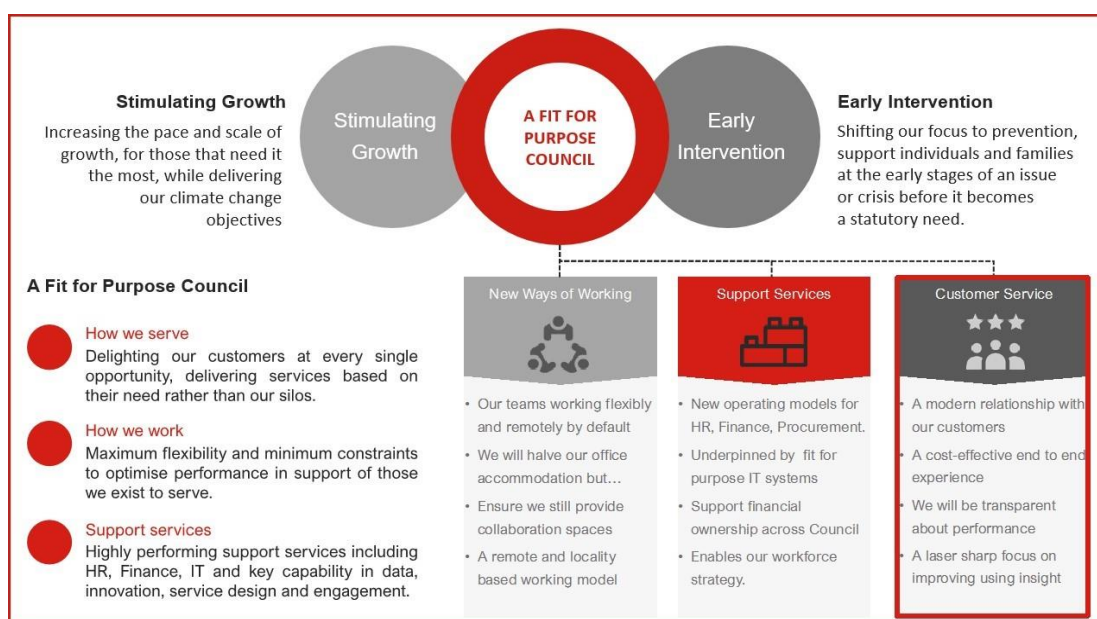
experience the services the Council provides. It is within this context underpinned by the Customer Service Strategy that continued delivery by the Customer Service Programme is required.

3.29 Our Customer Service Strategy was developed with the following principles:

- We will work better together with you
- Make quicker decisions for you
- Reduce your need to contact us
- Tell us once
- We will put the citizen first
- Taking a proactive approach to customer service

3.30 **Figure 5** below, provides a high-level summary of how the Customer Service Programme relates to our parent portfolio and to other strategic transformation initiatives across the Council.

Figure 5. Fit for Purpose Council portfolio breakdown.



4 **Table 1. Customer Service Strategy deliverables within the time period of Phase 2 (April 23- March 25):**

| Commitment |
|---|
| A Customer Focussed Council |
| Owning customer service We will ensure that all 11,000 of our staff have completed customer centricity training |
| Testing our services We will recruit and launch our first mystery shopping teams |
| Understanding you We will use publicly available data sets to really understand the make-up of those in |

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| Birmingham and use this information to help shape our services |
| Unblocking services We will have reviewed all our major processes to remove unnecessary steps and blockers |
| Sector leading customer service We will create a customer service Centre of Excellence |
| A Connected Council |
| Getting our information right We will review and update information and materials we provide about our services on our website |
| A single front door We will have a broader range of services through our, dedicated and specialist customer service team |
| Speeding up your frequent tasks We will identify the top 50 service requests and prioritise digitising them, with many to be available online |
| Speeding up your frequent tasks We will develop the technology to share your information, in a safe and secure way, so that you don't have to keep repeating information to us approach |
| Helping you stay on top of things We will be able to send you simple reminders for your appointments |
| Personalised service alerts and reminders We will personalise automated reminder texts and emails, based on your circumstances and preferences (e.g. channel, time, messaging etc), so you never have to miss a deadline or an appointment with us |
| Digital to promote healthy lifestyles We will identify the top 50 service requests and prioritise digitising them, with many available online |
| A Smarter Council |
| Connecting our Teams We will create a network of customer service champions across services, to work together to identify new ways of working better for you. |
| Redesign our customer service set up We will create a new team to provide earlier support and intervention, bringing together the parts of the Council providing the top 50 targeted and specialist services |
| One view of you We will develop our single view of you, sharing data safely and securely across the top 10 service areas. |
| Getting ahead of demand We will look for ways to work smarter, pre-empting your contact wherever possible across the top 10 service areas |
| Pointing you to services We will identify the top 20 related services (e.g. school applications and local summer activities) and start automating linked messaging |
| Keeping you informed We will identify the top 5 activities you would like to know about in your area (e.g., planned roadworks) and trial pre-emptively tell you, by text or email |
| A Connected city |

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| <p>Signposting for you</p> <p>We will identify the top 50 non-Council service requests and ensure we prioritise and signpost to them on our website</p> |
| <p>Community hubs</p> <p>We will conduct a review of our properties to identify the best locations for community hubs / one stop shops, with partners</p> |
| <p>Asking you to help out</p> <p>We will trial using digital technologies with a first cohort of 10 citizens, linking them to family and friends who can help with their care</p> |
| <p>Located together for you</p> <p>We will co-locate with other service providers and partners, able to jointly support your needs, by December 2024.</p> |

5 Year 2-4 Forecast Resource Budget Profile

5.1 The Forecast resource budget profile of £4.2m is detailed in **Appendix A** of this Cabinet Report.

The original Enhanced Business Case sought and approved total funding of £1.7m. The Customer Service resource profile forecasts budget spend at the identified £1.7m costs allocated to the programme in final quarter of 2021/22 and 2022/23.

5.2 As stated earlier in the report, to date the Customer Service Programme has achieved several benefits such as creating a Customer Strategy, Customer Charter, cleansing down of web content, creating a customer panel, see the table below for further detail.

5.3 The Customer Service Programme has developed a comprehensive proposal for change, using agile project management principles. In doing so, the programme will be cognisant of other parts of the portfolio to determine the type of council that Birmingham needs to be in the medium and longer-term to deliver its vision and ambitions.

5.4 The Customer Service Programme is an overarching, cross-cutting programme and requires the Council to manage customer service improvements as a set of portfolios of works in line the Customer Service Strategy. Thus, ensuring a joined-up and consistent approach to best-in-class service delivery across the Council and partner organisations, putting the customer at the heart of what we do.

5.5 The Customer Service Programme will continue to use the current programme governance to ensure the overall performance, benefits, risks, and issues are strategically aligned so that future Customer Service is fully understood and agreed by key stakeholders. Customer Service Design Principles will be established to assure new solution designs, ensuring that each component meets the requirements and are fit for purpose with the overall architecture / corporate strategy in meeting customer needs.

- 5.6 The Customer Service Programme will implement and embed a sustainable process and approach to deliver the strategy using internal resource during the lifecycle of the programme.

6 Table 2 - Current Progress against Strategy Commitments from January 2022:

| Commitment | Timeline | Status |
|--|----------------|-------------------|
| A Customer Focussed Council | | |
| Our contract with you We will develop a customer charter, setting out the customer service standards you can expect from us. | May 2022 | Completed |
| Communicating change We will launch an annual customer services communications plan | January 2022 | Completed |
| Owning customer service We will ensure that all 11,000 of our staff have completed customer centricity training | December 2022 | In Progress |
| Giving you a voice We will launch customer service panels, for citizens, young people etc | August 2022 | Completed |
| Testing our services We will recruit and launch our first mystery shopping teams | August 2022 | In Progress |
| Understanding you We will use publicly available data sets to really understand the make-up of those in Birmingham and use this information to help shape our services | December 2022 | In Progress |
| A Connected Council | | |
| Getting our information right We will review and update information and materials we provide about our services on our website | September 2022 | In Progress |
| Speeding up your frequent tasks We will identify the top 50 service requests and prioritise digitising them, with many to be available online | August 2022 | Completed |
| Helping you stay on top of things We will be able to send you simple reminders for your appointments | June 2022 | Phase 1 Completed |
| A Smarter Council | | |
| Redesign our customer service set up We will create a new team to provide earlier support and intervention, bringing together the parts of the Council providing the top 50 targeted and specialist services | January 2023. | In Progress |
| One view of you We will develop our single view of you, sharing data safely and securely across the top 10 service areas. | December 2022 | In Progress |
| Keeping you informed We will identify the top 5 activities you would like to know | December 2022 | In Progress |

| | | |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| about in your area (e.g., planned roadworks) and trial pre-emptively tell you, by text or email | | |
| A Connected city | | |
| Signposting for you We will identify the top 50 non-Council service requests and ensure we prioritise and signpost to them on our website | March 2022 | In Progress |
| Easy searching We will improve search capabilities on our website, so it is easy to find the right service provider for your needs | March 2022 | Completed |
| Asking you to help out We will trial using digital technologies with a first cohort of 10 citizens, linking them to family and friends who can help with their care | January 2023 | In Progress |

- 6.1 In the adoption of an agile approach, the programme will continue to seek to implement the strategic objectives above. The individual projects will be prioritised for delivery into the programme product backlog based on the value they bring to both our customers and the Council. The three delivery teams established during year 1 will continue to build solutions that are designed collaboratively with real users of that service. Teams will continue to be timebound to solution delivery to ensure that the programme remains on track and gets solutions into people's hands quickly to test and iterate swiftly. Dedicated change team support will be required to embed the solutions into service areas as well as report back the benefits that have been realised as a result of any change.

7 Options Considered:

- 7.1 The approach to the cost savings requires a mandated approach to which services need to comply and respond to, in order to realise any financial benefits and/or efficiencies. Projects will be prioritised into the delivery schedule based on the value they bring to the both our customers and the Council; size and scale of complexity; pace i.e., ability to deliver any potential quick-wins, as agreed with the service areas.
- 7.2 The option of not completing the programme has been considered and discounted as this would have significant customers and organisation impact for the following key reasons:
- Satisfaction with Council Services would not improve and our reputation for providing services would continue to worsen
 - The capabilities identified have utility capability that can be used multiple times and are required for the modern relationship with customers and implementation of the Customer Service Strategy.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 The Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, and Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee have been consulted.
- 8.2 Phase 2 Programme scope was informed by consultations and engagements with stakeholders across the Council including, but not limited to:
- Council Leadership Team
 - Customer Service Governance Board and Steering Committee
 - Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chairs
 - Officer Consultation regarding Finance, Legal, Procurement, HR, Communications.

9 Risk Management

- 9.1 The ongoing risks will be managed in Phase 2:

Table 4 – High level risk management

| Description | Impact | Mitigation |
|---|--------|---|
| There is a risk that services lack buy-in and engagement to adopt the strategy and that new processes will not realise benefits in line with the programme's aims. | High | Service commitment to providing an appropriate level of internal resources to support work across all services in-scope for redesign will be sought. A detailed time-based resource plan will be provided in support of this request. Corporate Governance has been established via the Customer Service Programme Board. |
| There is a risk that cashable savings will be absorbed as service efficiencies if they are not clearly defined for each programme area. | High | The cashable savings which must be attributed to the programme are detailed in the existing the eight MVP Business Cases. A status breakdown per business case and service commitment is provided in the Enhanced Business Case. |
| There is a risk that an appropriate level of resources will not be dedicated to the programme resulting in it being unable to deliver at pace or with the necessary momentum. | High | The programme has set aside specific budgets to second staff over to the programme and support with delivery. Backfill arrangements shall be confirmed in advance of commencement. Regular monthly meetings held with the Finance Business Partner updating on spend to date and forecast for the programme lifespan. |

- 9.2 These risks are incorporated into the programme risk register and are regularly managed/mitigated.

10 Compliance Issues

- 10.1 The recommended decisions are consistent with the Council's priorities, plans and strategies, supporting the Council's stated commitments to ensure we are a truly customer centric organisation.

11 Legal Implications

- 11.1 The Council is under a duty under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness
- 11.2 The City Council will carry out this work under the General Powers of Competence Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

12 Financial Implications

- 12.1 Total forecast spend on the programme is £4.2m as per section 5 above.
- 12.2 The savings that are currently set out in the MTFP increase by £0.600m in 2023/2024, phase 2 will help to deliver these and also identify future potential savings of over the next 2 years.
- 12.3 Further work is needed to understand which services will be in scope during Phase 2 to be able to allocate Customer Service Programme Phase 2 savings targets to services at the start of the financial year, so that services take ownership of the targets, are accountable for driving through customer improvements, and translate the work done into savings.
- 12.3.1 Options under consideration:
- The refined 116 recommendations/opportunities for service improvements identified in the discovery phase across Housing, Waste, Highways, Bereavement Services; Customer Service Strategy commitments across Regulation and Enforcement (Pest Control and Garden Waste); and following further service engagement, programme backlog items for Children & Families, Adults & Social Care and Early Intervention & Prevention.
 - Top 50 prioritised services
- 12.4 There are no procurement implications of the recommended decisions for Phase 2 as defined in this report.

13 HR implications

- 13.1 Any required changes to current job roles or current operating model will be done so in line with Birmingham City Councils Policies and Procedures, incorporating a full engagement/consultation process with Trade Unions and employees. All new roles will be recruited to in accordance with Birmingham City Councils Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure, supporting

Birmingham City Councils commitment to mitigate against compulsory redundancy where possible, any new roles will be prioritised to employees at risk of redundancy.

14 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 14.1 An Equality Impact Analysis EQUA1000 has been completed and is attached at **Appendix C.**

15 Background Documents

- 15.1 Customer Service Programme Phase 1 Report to Cabinet dated 14th December 2021 – “Customer Service Strategy Enhanced Business Case and Delivery”

16 Appendices:

- 16.1 A – Year 2–4 Forecast Resource Budget Profile
- 16.2 B – Recommended opportunities to improve the customer experience
- 16.3 C - Equality Impact Analysis