

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE
CABINET MEMBER**

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek cabinet member approval of new Customer Service Standards.
- 1.2 The standards demonstrate the Council's commitment to providing consistently high standards of service in line with our ambition and council plan.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council's ambition is to be the #BestCouncil we can be and the #BestPlace for our residents.
- 2.2 We recognise that excellent engagement between the council, its residents and communities is essential for realising our council plan.
- 2.3 Effective customer service is an integral element of effective public engagement. The previous Customer Service Standards published by the council historically focused solely on a range of process issues that are no longer compatible with the Council ambition.
- 2.4 As part of our enhanced approach to public engagement, we have set out our commitment to residents in the form of new Customer Service Standards (appendix 1). The standards are shaped around 4 key customer service principles:
 - Treating you right
 - Keeping you informed
 - Making it easy
 - Getting it right
- 2.5 The standards:
 - Set out the Council's customer service commitments
 - Establish a single and consistent approach to customer service
 - Provide a basis for monitoring performance
 - Are clear and transparent helping to build improved understanding, trust and confidence

2.6 The standards will be published on the council's website and will be monitored as part of established performance management and assurance frameworks.

2.7 There is also a need to publish service-specific standards. This continues to be developed across service areas.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 Option 1: Approve the Customer Service Standards

3.2 Option 2: Do not approve Customer Service Standards

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 Option 1 - approving the standards will support the Council's ambition and fits with the organisation's values, in particular "Excellence". It will support the delivery of the Council Plan and it will demonstrate commitment to providing consistently high standards of service.

4.2 Option 2 - not approving the standards will limit the enablement of the above.

5. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 Enhanced public engagement and customer service will be achieved through embedding the customer service standards and associated principles in service development, delivery and workforce culture.

5.2 The standards will be incorporated in organisational development and allied training.

6. **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 Not applicable

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 An initial impact assessment has been undertaken and has identified that the implications of implementing the standards will be positive, as they set out a consistent one-council commitment to customers. No negative impacts have been identified.

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 We have carried out informal customer engagement in the customer service hubs to gain insights into what matters to residents in respect of customer service and this confirmed that the proposed standards are in line with customer expectations.

8.2 Cross-council consultation has taken place.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the cabinet member approves the Customer Service Standards.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Customer Service Standards
Council Plan 2018-19

North Lincolnshire Council

Our Customer Service Standards set out what you can expect from us when you contact the council.

Our ambition is to be the #BestCouncil that we can be for our residents and we want everyone to be safe, well, prosperous and connected.

Customer Service Standards

Treating you right

We will:

- Be welcoming and polite and treat you fairly and with respect
- Listen to what you have to say
- Tell you the name of the person who is dealing with your enquiry
- Respond to your contacts and enquiries promptly
- Protect your personal information
- Explain what to do next if you are not satisfied with how you have been treated

Keeping you informed

We will:

- Publish a wide range of information online about what we do
- Make sure that our information and responses are clear and easy to understand
- Tell you what we will do and when you can expect a response
- Explain why if we cannot help you and if possible refer you to an organisation that can

Making it easy

We will:

- Ensure that everyone can access our services
- Enable you to do more online at a time that suits you
- Explain clearly how to contact us in other ways
- Provide convenient ways for you to give us your views

Getting it right

We will:

- Aim to resolve your enquiry correctly and at the first point of contact
- Show you our council identity badge if we visit your home or business premises
- Apologise if we have got something wrong and put it right if this is possible
- Use your feedback to improve our services

In return, we ask you to

- Treat us with respect
- Provide us with the information we need to help you
- Use our online services
- Work with us to resolve matters