

Customer Experience Strategy

2016-2022

1. Executive summary

Havering is changing. Over the next six years the borough will benefit from new infrastructure and physical redevelopment including high quality housing and new fast transport links. Social change, including an increasing population, welfare reform and reductions in local government funding will change the way that the Council operates. The Council needs to adapt to these external challenges and create new, improved ways of supporting and delivering services.

We want to create a positive customer experience.

We want a two-way relationship with our customers in order to create and deliver the best services as efficiently as possible. Our customers include Havering residents, councillors, businesses, partners and our internal council customers.

We want customers to be able to access the right information to help themselves and the right service at the right time. It is important that customers choose digital services because they are so good that they prefer them. We also want people to be confident that payments are safe and reliable and that services always improve as a result of feedback.

We accept that there is much work to be done in order to improve services, transactions and access points for our customers, this strategy sets out our commitment to that improvement journey.

An Improving the Customer Experience plan will be developed to capture and consolidate all of this activity. This will ensure that we prioritise the important work first; that we successfully deliver improvements in the right order and that we track and deliver the savings.

2. Where do we want to be?

Creating a ***positive customer experience*** is vital.

We want a two-way relationship with our customers in order to create and deliver the best services as efficiently as possible.

We want customers to:

- be able to access the right information to help themselves;
- be able to access the right service at the right time;
- see services improve as a result of their feedback;
- have digital services so good that they prefer to use them; and
- be confident that payments are safe and reliable.

To achieve our objectives we must work together to create:

- An understanding of our customers – their needs, experiences and preferences both now and into the future;
- Easy access to transparent information, advice and guidance and a proactive approach to using information;
- Continuously improving services;
- A trusting relationship;
- Less bureaucracy;
- An environment where you tell us only once;
- Safe secure payment process which meets industry standards; and
- Reduced debt by increasing online and direct debit payments and encouraging advance payments.

By making sure our service improvements match these design principles, the Council will ensure a positive customer experience and deliver the objectives of this strategy.

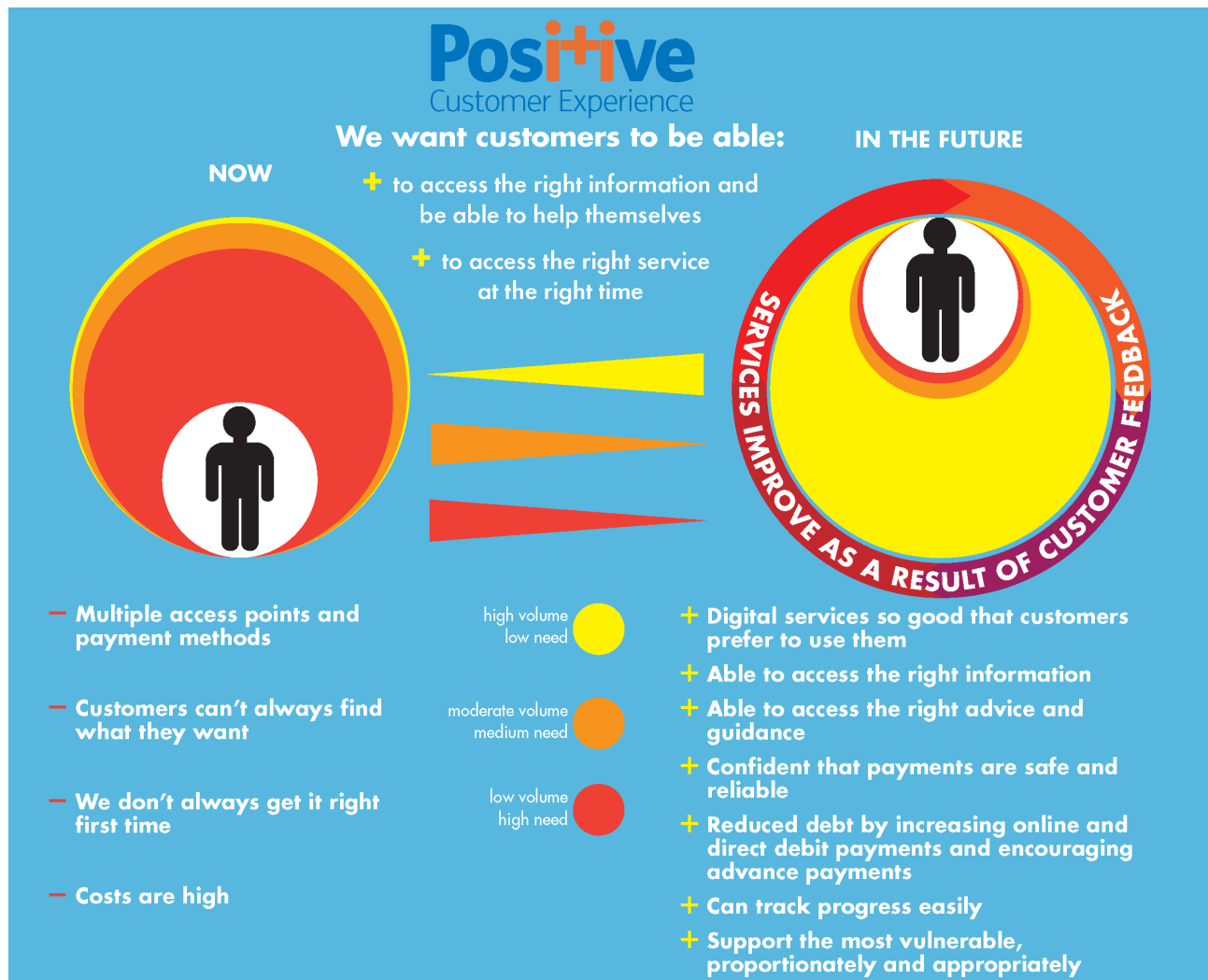
We intend to continuously improve our services by focusing on:

- How we interact with customers;
- The information and intelligence we hold about our customers;
- How we reconfigure services to achieve a great customer experience;
- How we make the best use of technology to improve the customer experience;
- How we create the environment for customers to apply, report and pay easily;
- How to track progress easily; and
- Supporting the most vulnerable; proportionately and appropriately.

We are committed to publishing regular performance information so that customers can see the progress we are making towards achieving our goals.

3. Our customer experience operating model

In order to turn this strategy into action, and to ensure a positive impact for our customers, we use what's called an 'operating model'. This sets out our approach to Customer Experience:



In the future we want people to have a more positive customer experience when they deal with the council. Underpinning this will be a move towards self-service becoming the preferred option; the provision of transparent and easily accessible advice and guidance as well as a safe and reliable payment system. We will also continue to support our most vulnerable residents. This more efficient and streamlined approach will also lead to lower costs for the Council and will support the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

4. Key improvements

If we want to create a positive customer experience we need to identify and implement improvements. There are a number of 'quick wins' but more substantial work to fundamentally improve services, transactions and customer access points is planned for delivery from now through until 2022.

This strategy identifies a series of potential improvements that will need to be delivered across the Council. An Improving the Customer Experience plan will be developed to capture and consolidate all of this activity, making sure that we prioritise the important work first, that we deliver improvements in the right order and that we understand what the cost and benefits of all changes will be.

The principles agreed will underpin our future service redesigns and the ways we interact with customers.

5. Related documents

The strategy should be read in conjunction with the Policy and Strategy Development Framework; Public Consultation Policy; Corporate Performance Framework; Communications Strategy; Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure; Demand Management Strategy; Information Governance Commitment Statement.

6. Consultation

This strategy has been produced in consultation with the Customer Experience Board, Transformation Management Board, Directors and Heads of Service.

7. Authorisation and communication

The strategy has been authorised by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and will be communicated to staff through implementation of a communications plan.

8. Implementation and monitoring

The Improving Customer Experience Plan will be a 'living' document. The plan will be signed off by and progress reported to the Customer Experience Board. Programme management principles will be used.

The Strategy will be fully reviewed and amended as necessary.

9. Further information

Contact the Head of Culture and Customer Access.