Appendix C

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Walsall's Customer Experience Strategy 2021-2026		
Work stream	Customer Access Management (CAM)		
Directorate	Childrens Services		
Service	All		
Responsible Officer	Rashida Hussain		
Proposal planning start	The start date of Consultation phase was November 2020,	Proposal start date (due or actual date)	September 2021

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Show which category the proposal is and whether it is new or a revision.		
	Policy	**Yes**	**New**
	Procedure	**Yes**	**New**
	Guidance	**Yes**	**New**
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?	**Council wide, Customers and staff**	**Revision to some existing processes**
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?	**No**	
	Other - give details	**New ways of working**	**New**
2	**What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?**		
	The council has a firm commitment to improving customer experience for all residents, stakeholders and for our council staff and elected members. In order to provide steer and a comprehensive the corporate direction the council has developed a Customer Experience Strategy. This will enable the delivery of significant improvements to customer experience, outcomes and in turn deliver efficiencies across the whole council. The overall aims of the Customer Access Management (CAM) workstream are to: • Increase accessibility including use of digital channels so it is quicker and more convenient for customers. • Improve customer experience in how people interact with the council, with customers reporting a positive change.		

Walsall Council

- Reduce unnecessary demand so employees can focus on service delivery and supporting those with more complex needs.

Delivery of the proposed changes to CAM will deliver against the council's PROUD programme objectives:
- Improve outcomes and customer experience
- Improve employee satisfaction and engagement
- Improve service efficiency and performance

The Customer Experience strategy will detail the council core principles, objectives and identify some key areas to progress through an action planning event in Autumn 2021.

Employees play a crucial role in the delivery of resilience in the workforce and fundamentally delivering services effectively and efficiently. Leadership, which is delivered creditably, can not only enhance and harbour employer and employee relations, but can influence emotional well-being of all parties therefore enhancing service delivery. Bal et al (2013) found in their study of organisations the importance of the concepts of leadership. Mintzberg, (2004) supported this view and stated the importance of leadership and management operating in parallel. Rousseau (1989, 1995, 2001) developed the definition and progressive role of the psychological contract and found as a definition varied considerably. Blau (1964) in contrast states the psychological contract involves a level of unspecified duties and where the role of power is not distributed evenly. Guest (2001) states the psychological contract is a series of obligations and expectations which both parties are in agreement of what is received and what is delivered. Supporting this point of view Robbins (2003) imply that these expectations are in the main not formally written into literature.

Many organisations will actively engage in different levels of employee engagement through formal networks such as forums to more quantitative approaches such as through surveys. Phillips and Gully (2013) stated the engagement of employee and exceeds the boundaries of satisfaction and encompasses a wider variance of issues including enthusiasm and commitment. Employee engagement when modelled on aspects of the social engagement theory is found to be effective through communication and where there is dialogue and interaction. Supported this view social engagement theory pushes towards a two-way communication channel which enables dialogue and a culture of dynamic customer orientated change.

3	Who is the proposal likely to affect?		
	People in Walsall	**Yes / No**	**Detail**
	All	**Yes**	This work stream is designed to have a positive impact on all council residents and service users, offering additional channels to access council services. Only where the Service Level and Delivery model remain the same would there be no impact. This work stream is to improve our customers experience when accessing services to deliver a positive impact. The objectives of the WPP are
	Specific group/s		
	Council employees	**Yes**	
	Other (identify)		

defined as the following in this order of importance:

- Achieve better outcomes and customer experience
- Increase staff satisfaction and engagement
- Improve service efficiency and performance

4	**Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer's protected characteristics.**

As this is a Council-wide transformation programme it is highly probable that it will affect all 280,000 borough residents, businesses and visitors to the borough and council wide staff. At the time of drafting, it is not possible to state the protected characteristics apart from at a Borough level. Consideration to this will be included in section 7 of this EqIA.

The Customer Access and Management workstream of the Walsall Proud Programme will work to enhance customer experience with the introduction of new digital channels to enable those customers who choose to interact with the council the opportunity to do so at a time and place that best suits them.

Introduction

Walsall has an overall estimated population of 281,300 (ONS, mid-2017). It is predicted to increase by 5.9% over 10 years, from 274,200 in 2014 to 290,200 in 2024. Like many areas, the predicted growth of Walsall's older population (> 65) is higher than this at 12.4%. Walsall is a culturally diverse town with a 23.1% non-white British background, where people of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi background form the largest minority ethnic groups. The number of non-UK born residents in Walsall increased by 3.7% (or 9,900 people) between the 2001 and 2011 censuses and Walsall now has a small Eastern European population who make up about 1% of residents (2,700 people in total).

In terms of children and young people aged 0-17, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups has increased to 37.4% of all pupils living in the area from 36.7% in 2016 and 24% Primary pupils have English as an additional language. (School Census, January 2017).

In September 2015 it was agreed that the UK would resettle up to 20,000 refugees under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) by 2020. In July 2017 the nationality requirements were expanded to include individuals displaced by the conflict in Syria, but who may not necessarily have Syrian nationality. Walsall has housed 20 individuals through the national VPRS scheme.

Census 2011 shows 63% of properties in Walsall are owner-occupied, 24% social rent and 11.7% are private rented.

As at April 2019, there are approximately 116,261 households in Walsall, which is an increase of 8%, or 8439 households since 2011. (Source: Walsall Council).
However, between April 2018 and April 2019 there was a small increase in the number of households from 115,501 to 116,215. As at April 2019 Approximately 25% are currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction.

The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) now ranks Walsall as the 22nd most deprived English local authority (out of 326). Since 2015, Walsall has seen an increase

in deprivation where it previously ranked 33rd.

The 2019 IMD shows 20% of Walsall's population living in income deprived households. There are two supplementary indices, which are a sub-set of the Income Deprivation Domain.

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI 2019) is one of the sub sets measures, the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income-deprived families and shows 26.1% of children in Walsall are living in income-deprived families.

There are extremes of deprivation, with central and western areas typically much more deprived than eastern areas although pockets of deprivation exist even in the more affluent parts of the borough.

Walsall Council Workforce
Profile as at 31st March 2020

Headcount. The workforce headcount has reduced year on year; in 2019-20 the council headcount decreased by 1.40% from 3141 to 3097. Over a five-year period, the headcount has reduced by 14.8% from 3635 to 3097.

Gender. 67.7% of the council workforce are female; this is a decrease of 0.8% compared to 68.5% in 2018/19. The percentage of female employees has remained consistently in excess of 65% of total headcount over the last 5 years. The highest percentage of female employees are in grades 1-5 (71.46%); a decrease of 0.39% on the previous year (71.85%). In all remaining grades, the percentage of females has decreased on the previous year: in grades 6-9 by 0.67% to a total of 65.54%, in grades 10-13 by 1.25% to 63.88% and in grades 14 and above by 2.06% to 62.12%. Over a five-year period, the percentage of female representation at grade 14 and above has increased by 8.17%, from 53.95% in 2015/16 to 62.12% in 2019/20.

Ethnicity. 23.55% of the workforce who have declared their ethnicity are BAME. This is an increase of 0.99% compared to 2018-19 where this figure stood at 22.56%. The percentage of BAME employees have increased year on year and spanning a five-year period has increased by 4.4% from 18.0% in 2015-16. The highest percentage of BAME employees by grade are in grade 6-9 (27.18%), followed by G10-13 at 25.84%.

Disability. 4.88% of the total workforce have declared a disability; this is an increase compared to 4.39% in 2018/19. 5.32% of those who completed disability information have declared a disability.

67.74% of the whole workforce are female; this is a decrease from 68.51% in 2018-19 by 0.76%.
27.34% of the whole workforce are female employees who work part time, this is a decrease compared to 28.43% in 2018-19.
Of all female employees 40.37% work part time, this is a slight decrease from 41.50% in 2018-19 by 1.13%
The highest proportion of part time female workers (49.12%) fall within grade 1-5 posts and this is consistent with the previous year (49.13%).
3.97% of the whole workforce are male working part time, which is consistent with the previous year (4.20%).
Of all male employees 12.31% work part time, there has been a decrease of 1.04% from 2018-19 where this stood at 13.35%. The highest proportion is within the Resource and

Transformation Directorate (18.18%).

5	**Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).**

Bloor (1978) stipulated a key factor when addressing research as to ensure transparency wherever possible and where there would be minimal challenge. The primary data collection was based on an intrepretivist research methodology unlike positivist methods which focus on hypothesis building in comparison to more testing hypothesis. The Customer Experience Strategy will be delivered and investigated through a philosophy adopted on the fundamentals of Exploratory Research. Sandhursen (2000) states the difference between conclusive and exploratory research as conclusive research providing a set solution whereas exploratory research has the flexibility to propose a series of responses. A mixed approach of both qualitative and quantitative analysis and data collection was utilised.

The positivist research methods favour quantitative methods of data collection, which result in reliability and representativeness. Michell (1997) states measurement is by nature a quantitative type of analysis. Gall, Gall, & Borg, (2007) state surveys are a common form of data collation. The qualitative research method was adopted using structured questions for the surveys (but also allowed for unstructured questions which generated qualitative data). The survey was able to quantify respondents support for a particular variable and highlight the most prominent one in a data series. The qualitative feedback mechanism allowed the respondent to talk in some depth, choosing their own words through focus groups and through open questions in eth survey. The overarching benefits of this method allows for participants to explain the issues they wanted to expand on.

The qualitative data analysis utilised Thematic Analysis to identify patterns of meaning across a dataset. Patterns are also identified through a rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision. The dataset has also been analysed using word analysis and will formulate key words which are identified in the dataset.

Macdonald et al (2008) stated rather than providing predictions and/or causal explanations, the qualitative method offers contextualisation and interpretation of the data gathered. This research method is subjective by nature and requires a smaller number of carefully chosen respondents.

In order to inform the strategy a series of consultation activity took place:

1. The results of the Public Survey

2. Results of the Focus Groups

3. Results of the Young Persons Survey Booster sample

4. Results of the Accessible Survey and Telephone Feedback

5. Results of the member survey

6. Results of the Staff Survey

7. Feedback from Childrens Directorate Management Team, Homelessness Steering Group, Corporate Management Team and Scrutiny

Consultation Activity

1. Public Survey **Type of engagement / consultation**	Online Surveys with booster samples with those in Walsall South, and Hard-copy options for more isolated groups such as rough sleepers and new migrants.	**Date**	April 2021
Who attended / participated?	Members of the public key organisations (third sector), statutory services and housing providers, businesses and small proportion of staff. A return of 451 entries.		
Protected characteristics of participants	Age 33 (7%) 16-24 76 (17%) 25-34 98 (22%) 35-44 104 (23%) 45-54 69 (15%) 55-64 43 (10%) 65-74 11 (2%) 75+ 13 (3%) Prefer not to say **Gender** 199 (45%) Male 215 (48%) Female 30 (7%) Prefer not to say **Gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?** 383 (88%) Yes 25 (6%) No 29 (7%) Prefer not to say **Physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?** 120 (27%) Yes 287 (64%) No 44 (10%) Prefer not to say **condition or illness / do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?** 28 (23%) Yes, a lot 54 (45%) Yes, a little 22 (18%) Not at all 16 (13%) Prefer not to say **sexual orientation?** 16 (4%) Bi-sexual 14 (3%) Gay man 12 (3%) Gay woman / lesbian 336 (75%) Heterosexual / straight 13 (3%) Don't know 6 (1%) Other, please state below 49 (11%) Prefer not to say 11 (100%) **Ethnic group?** 251 (56%) White 30 (7%) Mixed / multiple ethnic groups 76 (17%) Asian or Asian British 28 (6%) Black / African / Caribbean / Black British 14 (3%) Other ethnic group		

52 (12%) Prefer not to say	

Subgroups:
224 (92%) Welsh / English / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
11 (5%) Irish
4 (2%) Gypsy or Irish Traveller
1 (0%) Prefer not to say
4 (2%) Any other White background, please describe below
White other
3 (100%)
3 (10%) White and Black Caribbean
7 (24%) White and Black African
18 (62%) White and Asian
1 (3%) Prefer not to say
0 (0%) Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background, please describe below
Other Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups
0 (0%)
31 (42%) Indian
23 (32%) Pakistani
12 (16%) Bangladeshi
4 (5%) Chinese
3 (4%) Prefer not to say
0 (0%) Any other Asian background, please describe below
Other Asian / Asian British other
2 (100%)
14 (50%) African
10 (36%) Caribbean
0 (0%) Prefer not to say
4 (14%) Any other Black / African / Caribbean / Black British background, please describe below
Other Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
0 (0%)
6 (43%) Arab
5 (36%) Prefer not to say
3 (21%) Any other ethnic group,

Feedback: Majority of the feedback was positive towards the key actions such as wanting digital services however, those with disabilities and vulnerabilities did state in the future councils should provide a level of meaningful face to face contact.

Type of engagement / consultation	2. Results of the Focus Groups	Date	January 2021 to April 2021
Who attended / participated?	Key stakeholders, third sector, housing providers and community association		
Protected characteristics of participants	A cross section of organisations were contacted and given access to the sessions.		

Feedback The outputs of the focus groups showed a general support for the councils formulation of a customer experience strategy. Key areas of discussion included feedback on services internally not delivering a joined up approach, a lack of consistency at times and a need for services in the community for some more isolated groups.

Type of engagement / consultation	3. Results of the Young Persons Survey Booster sample	Date	January 2021
Who attended / participated?	Teams style survey which was conducted over the phone with a sample of 20 young people who are current service users of the Whg young persons temporary accommodation.		
Protected characteristics of participants	Gender (11 Male, 4 Female 2 not stated) Age – 16-25 Year olds Indian, Asian British, Sudanese and White British.		

A sample of young people showed young people were unsure over what a page document may achieve for a customer experience strategy but wanted support, meaningful contact and wanted someone to help them when needed. Young people alos showed a preference to support via digital channels.

Type of engagement / consultation	Results of the Accessible Survey and Telephone Feedback	Date	January 2021 to April 2021
Who attended / participated?	Results from the telephone survey and feedback from the easy read survey		
Protected characteristics of participants	All participants had a disability including, learning disabilities, visual impairments and physical disabilities.		

Feedback – Different communications for different groups of people.

Would like to use online if user friendly towards all protected characteristics. There was discussion at the LD/Autism group about the role of advocacy and the way existing networks could be used instead of necessarily having a civic centre based service.

Type of engagement / consultation	Member Survey	Date	July 2021
Who attended / participated?	SNAP Survey link sent to all members – 36 responses		
Protected characteristics of participants	To what age group do you belong? Select one only. 16-24 (9) 25-34 (8) 35-44 (8) 45-54 (5) 55-64 (4) 75+ (1) Prefer not to say (1) 65-74 (-)		

What is your sex? Select one only.
Male (18)
Female (16)
Prefer not to say (2)
44%
Do you have any physical or mental health conditions
or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12
months or more? Select one only. (Do you have any
physical or mental health conditions)
No (21)
Yes (11)
Prefer not to say (4)
Does your condition or illness / do any of your
conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry
out day-to-day activities? Select one only. (Does your
condition or illness / do any of your
condition...)
Prefer not to say (4)
Yes, a lot (3)
Yes, a little (3)
Not at all (1)
What is your ethnic group? Choose one option that
best describes your ethnic group or
background. (Ethnic background)
White (18)
Asian or Asian British (7)
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups (6)
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (2)
Prefer not to say (2)
Other ethnic group (1)

Feedback – All members supported the need for a joined up council response to service users, and wanted staff to be able to offer resilient services that met the diverse populations needs.

Type of engagement / consultation	Staff Survey	**Date**	July 2021
Who attended / participated?	SNAP Survey for all staff to respond (73 responses)		
Protected characteristics of participants	To what age group do you belong? Select one only. 45-54 (33) 55-64 (20) 35-44 (14) 25-34 (5) Prefer not to say (1) 16-24 (-) 65-74 (-) 75+ (-) What is your sex? Female (52) Male (18)		

		Prefer not to say (3)
		Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? Select one only.
		Yes (72)
		No (-)
		Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? Select one only.
		Straight or heterosexual (63)
		Prefer not to say (9)
		Bisexual (1)
		Gay or lesbian (-)
		Other sexual orientation (-)
		Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? Select one only. (Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or i...)
		No (49)
		Yes (15)
		Prefer not to say (9)
		Does your condition or illness / do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities? Select one only. (Does your condition or illness / do any of your condition...)
		Yes, a little (8)
		Not at all (5)
		Yes, a lot (1)
		Prefer not to say (1)
		What is your ethnic group? Choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background. (Ethnic background)
		White (51)
		Prefer not to say (7)
		Asian or Asian British (6)
		Mixed / multiple ethnic groups (4)
		Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (4)
		Other ethnic group (1)
	Feedback – Feedback from the staff survey suggested a support for a customer experience strategy which would address key areas such as the phone contact, the need to work closer with other services and staff seeking	

6	**Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation**

Public Survey Key Results:
- 451 online surveys completed
- 395 (88%) Resident of Walsall 31 (7%) Walsall Council employee
- 104 (23%) aged 45-54,
- 215 (48%) Female and 120 (27%) had a physical/health condition
- 251 (56%) White Back ground, 148 (33%) BAME group

52 (12%) Prefer not to say
- Fairly even distribution - Main responding post code WS1 (Walsall South), WS9 (Walsall East) WS2 (North/South Walsall)

To what extent do customers agree?
- Enable customers to make informed choices and decisions about the services they receive **– 52% Strongly agree**
- Provide consistent high quality customer experience across all services – **46% Strongly agree**
- Deliver value for money services – **47% Strongly agree**
- Involve customers in the design of services – **37% Strongly Agree**
- Be a resilient and transparent council – **52% Strongly Agree**

As a customer what is important to you:
- **information** provided by the council is **accurate** and up to date – 81%
- **self-serve** and online options are available – 53%
- it is **easy to contact** / access the council – 68%
- council services work in a **joined up** manner – 57%
- the customer experience is consistently **high quality** across all council services – 58%
- you have the option to **speak to someone** face to face – 46%
- That your requirements and needs **are understood at the first point of contact** – 55%
- the council is **clear about** what can and **can't be done** – 71%
- your query is managed **efficiently and effectively** by connecting you to the right service / person – 62%

Feedback from the Telephone Survey:
- *Customer and provider demand for joined up services,*
- *demand for self-serve*
- *website accuracy*
- *telephone contact to be meaningful*
- *updates on contacts from customers*

Feedback from our Easy Read Survey: (feedback from disability groups):
- *demand from vulnerable customers is face to face*
- *More local based services*
- *Make consultation accessible*
- *Alternative formats need to be realistic*
- *Generally people are happy with services but past negative experiences will shape how people approach us.*

Key Feedback from Young People Booster:
As a young person, when receiving services from the council
- Fast/ efficient response 16
- Quality of the service and support… 15
- Having a named contact person 15
- Someone that listens and understand what I need… 16

Feedback from the member survey:
To what extent do you agree or disagree that Walsall Council should do the following?
(Put customers at the heart of services we deliver) **89% strongly agreed**
 Enable customers to make informed choices and decisions about the services they receive) **81% strongly agreed**

(Provide consistent high quality customer experience across all services) **64% strongly agreed**
(Have a consistent customer focused culture) **53% strongly agreed**
(Deliver value for money services) **56% strongly agreed**
(Involve customers in the design of services) 47**% strongly agreed**
(Meet the needs and aspirations of all customers) 53**% strongly agreed**
(Adapt and change to meet the needs our diverse communities) 58**% strongly agreed**
(Be a resilient and transparent council) 61**% strongly agreed**
What else, if anything should Walsall Council do to help build a modern and resilient council that meets the needs of our diverse communities? Ensure we say what we do and do what we say, improve public perception of council as backward

- thinking and not efficient use of resources, make customer contact quicker/ simpler
- really good communication between various groups with excellent social media connections
- more transparency
- All staff are informed about all on going situations in order to insure we able to be provided with
- information that meets the needs of query

Thinking about the communities you serve, how important or not are the following?
(That information provided by the council is accurate and up to date) **Very important 83%**
(That self-serve and online options are available) **Very important** 69%
(That it is easy to contact / access the council) **Very important** 83%
(That council services work in a joined up manner) **Very important** 75%
(That the customer experience is consistently high quality across all council services) **Very important** 64%
(That customers have the option to speak to someone face to face) **Very important** 47%
(That customer requirements and needs are understood at the first point of contact) **Very important** 53%
(That the council is clear about what can and can't be done) 72
(That customer queries are managed efficiently and effectively by connecting customer to the right service / person) **Very important** 40%
(Customers are given clear response timescales and kept up to date regarding progress / delays) **Very important** 57%
 (That customers can influence the design of council services so they better meet the needs of communities) **Very important** 44%
(That the council makes effective use of customer feedback to improve services) **Very important** 50%
What else, if anything is important in terms of customer service?
The key themes identified were:

- *understanding of the issues faced residents in the vast majority only contact as a matter of last resort and increased communication skills for staff.*

What could the council do to improve the customer journey (start to finish)? Consistency of approach, ideally a single point of contact nominate officer at point of report to contact

- Ensure public concerns are followed up and communicated back, feedback is fundamental
- By continuing to support the customer through the whole process of engagement even if its not a council service

- keep customer well informed
- Provide a timescale for a response to their query and assurances that they will receive a response,
- Even if delayed. Consistent updates are also needed so customers remain informed.
- Make sure all staff are up to date on all events and issues
- Make sure all staff are co-operative

On occasions the council is not responsible for resolving a customer query or issue or can't help them any further. When this is the case what do you think you / the council should do?
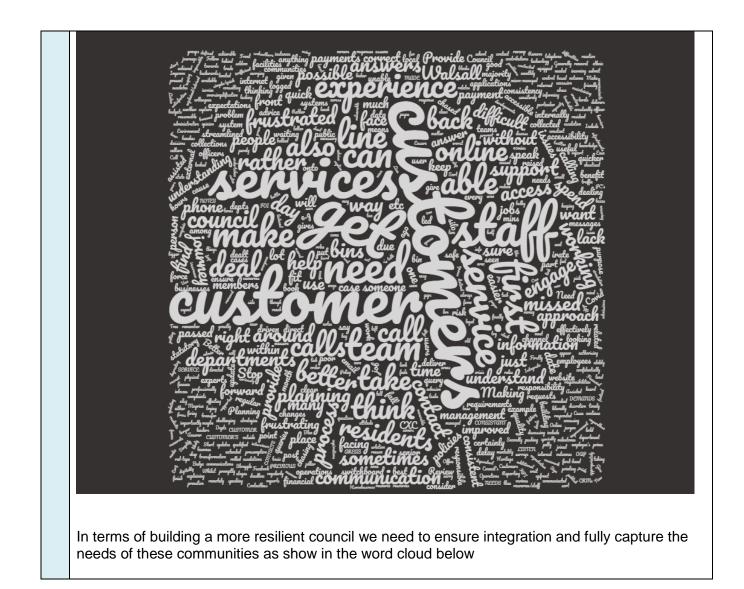- **Suggest what they could do next (14)**
- Forward the customer query / problem to the relevant organisation / agency (7)
- Seek further information and get back to the customer as soon as possible (7)
- Signpost the customer to the right organisation / agency providing details (5)
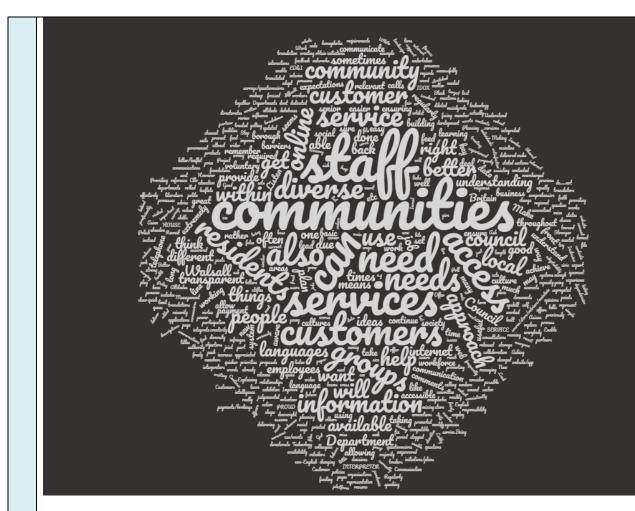- Explain and end / close the call / query (3)

Results from the Staff Survey
Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Support customers to make informed choices and decisions about the services they receive)
Most of the time (30)
Always (29)
Does not apply (8)
Rarely (6)
Never (-)
Don't know (-)

Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Provide consistent high quality customer experience)
Most of the time (37)
Always (29)
Rarely (3)
Does not apply (2)
Never (1)
Don't know (1)

Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Have a consistent customer focused way of working)
Always (33)
Most of the time (32)
Rarely (5)
Does not apply (2)
Never (1)
Don't know (-)
Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Deliver value for money services)
Always (32)
Most of the time (31)
Rarely (4)
Does not apply (3)
Don't know (2)

Never (1)
Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Take feedback from customers to help improve services)
Always (24)
Most of the time (23)
Rarely (17)
Never (3)
Don't know (3)
Does not apply (3)

Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Meet the needs and aspirations of all customers)
Most of the time (33)
Always (17)
Rarely (15)
Does not apply (4)
Don't know (3)
Never (1)

Thinking about your job, do you feel able to do the following...? Select one only on each row. (Adapt and change to meet the needs our diverse communities)
Most of the time (31)
Always (26)
Rarely (9)
Don't know (4)
Does not apply (2)
Never (1)

In terms of improving the customer journey staff felt the customers were central to their jobs but felt a lack of joined up services and a need to ensure processes and policies are customer oriented as shown in the word cloud below:

In terms of building a more resilient council we need to ensure integration and fully capture the needs of these communities as show in the word cloud below

Some key information in terms of staff perception found:
- 74% stated either most of the time or always provided a joined up service
- 32% stated their teams made use of feedback most of the time
- 90% stated most of time or always they provided consistently high quality customer service

Based on the consultation it demonstrates we need to include in the strategy:
Our Customer Vision – We want to *place customers at the heart of everything we do, which will increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, and deliver resilient and profitable services for the council.* We want to understand what our customers' needs and aspirations are, do things well First time, every time, make services accessible, and make sure we invest in our staff and infrastructure so we can deliver continuous improvement

We want services in the council to:
- understand what customers want and deliver an excellent customer service experience

- be fair, resilient, and create value for all the diverse communities we serve

- Learn from best practice and when things need to improve make changes quickly

- create a culture which puts customers first and central within all of our services be flexible and make reasonable adjustments for service users

	- be clear with communication and treat you with respect, courtesy and politeness
	- Make it easier for our customers to access information and advice and services and enable them to help themselves
	- Take care to fully understand and respond appropriately to your needs
	- Prioritise capacity to support those with complex problems or vulnerability
	- Keep you informed with up to date information and explain what we have done
	- Increasingly provide digital services but still aim to deliver a personal service, treating you with
	- Ensure our digital services are up to date and easy to use
	- Work with customers where digital is not appropriate and identify another way of helping you
	- Keep your personal data secure and ensure your confidentiality
	- Aim to answer the query at first point of contact, when this cannot be achieved we provide clear timescales and options
	- Reduce demand and cost through innovative and effective redesign of our services involving staff and service users
	- Make sure our officers have the skills and tools to deliver the service you need
	- Work together across the council to provide a joined up approach wherever possible
	- Support our staff to provide the best possible experience to you, and invest in their training and understanding of digital and good customer service
	- Provide Face to face services for those who need this option
	- Embed our Customer Promise across the whole Council in a consistent joined up way

7	**How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group?** **The effect may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.**			
	Characteristic	**Affect**	**Reason**	**Action needed Yes / No**
	Age	Neutral	The Strategy will affect a number of age groups across the borough as it sets out the needs of different groups. Those from the 16-25 year age band	Yes – ensure this is highlighte d through the action plan and

		showed a preference for more digital services whilst those who were more		representative age groups are considered through the event.
Disability	Positive	The needs of disabled groups were listened to and showed a preference for some groups through the use of advocacy services and a need for the council to ensure communication channels are offered alongside digital channels.		No
Gender reassignment	Neutral	Those from these groups responded through the public survey.		Yes ensure this group is recognised in terms of action planning phase
Marriage & civil partnership	Neutral	Although information was collected on this variable the impact to this group is unknown.		No
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Although information was collected on this variable the impact to this group is unknown.		No
Race	Positive	23.55% of the workforce who have declared their ethnicity are BAME and 33% of the public surveys respondents were from an ethnic minority group. the needs of these groups have been captured where possible.		Yes
Religion or belief	Positive	The needs from these groups were captured and the action plan process will ensure the council is able to meet		Yes – as part of action planning process

			the needs of the communities it services	
Sex	Positive	The needs from these groups were captured and the action plan process will ensure the council is able to meet the needs of the communities it services	Yes – as part of action planning process
Sexual orientation	Positive	The needs from these groups were captured and the action plan process will ensure the council is able to meet the needs of the communities it services.	Yes – as part of action planning process

8	**Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.**	(Delete one) **Yes**
	The CAM work stream forms part of the Proud Programme and as a result there is a high likelihood that there will be a cumulative effect on various (some or all) equality groups.	

9	**Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?**	
A	No major change required	
B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality	
C	~~Continue despite possible adverse impact~~	
D	~~Stop and rethink your proposal~~	

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	**Action**	**Responsibility**	**Outcome Date**	**Outcome**
Oct 2021	Launch event and Action Plan development	Rashida Hussain/Neil Hollyhead	October 2021	• Address any needs from protected characteristic groups • Update and develop action plan • Publish action plan
November 2021	Review Impact Assessment	Rashida Hussain/Neil Hollyhead	December 2021	Review EQIA in line with action plan

Update to EqIA	
Date	**Detail**
21/07/2021	v1 EqIA produced
	v2 EqIA revisited – Following Comments from BF
October 2021	v3 EqIA Edited based on Prior set-up for Action Plan Event
December 2021	v4 EqIA edited to include Feedback following Action Plan event

Contact us

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