

Brighton & Hove City Council

Full Council

Agenda Item 25

Date of meeting 21 July 2022

COMPOSITE AMENDMENT

Customer Service

That the relevant changes are made to the recommendations as shown below in strikethrough and **bold italics**:

This Council:

- Recognises and appreciates that the pandemic has seen an unprecedented challenge for staff at the City Council;
- **Notes that some services have not offered a face-to-face customer support service for many years, with services such as City Clean offering a phone/digital only service since at least 2007**
- Notes that there has been a 55% increase in stage 1 complaints regarding customer service **but notes that this represents an 11% increase compared to pre-pandemic year of 2019/20 when adjusted against customer contact levels;**
- Believes that a satisfaction rate of 57% for transactional council services is disappointing **but commends council teams for achieving 1% above the national average for satisfaction and improving satisfaction in the year where the national average was dropped;**
- **Notes that against the backdrop of continued cuts from Government to the council's budget, we need to adjust our method of delivering customer service to best use our resources.**
- Believes that customer satisfaction will increase if ~~there is a focus on inperson delivery~~ **we provide a range of ways to contact the council, including a 24/7 digital service, as is standard in industry and deploy our resources to meet customer demand across all channels.**
- **Recognises Welcomes that returning to, and focusing on an in-person service has been offered at Hove and Brighton Customer Service Centres since as early as September 2021, and welcomes these services continuing to be well-staffed with direct links to key service teams, to ensure residents can access key services such as Housing, Parking, Libraries, Benefits and Bereavement, and Financial Advice 9-5 5 days per week in-person, alongside a focus on rather than a service focused on improving digital access and social media, which will help to ensure that the most vulnerable residents, including often the poorest, the elderly, the dyslexic, and the hard of hearing, are able to access council support in the way that works for them.** ~~many of whom cannot use email or the phone easily, can receive the same level of care as other residents;~~

Therefore, resolves to:

1. Express its support for ensuring that key services such as Housing, Parking, Libraries, Benefits, Bereavement, and Financial Advice, and Rubbish and Recycling will provide ~~a fully accessible in-person service from 9-5 5 days per week from 1st September 2022~~ **customer service in a variety of ways that meets customer needs through the continued development of the current operating model taking into account customer feedback; and**

2. ~~**Further express its support for an improved contact rate of 15% (the rate last seen in 2015) to be achieved by 1st January 2023 when compared to letters, email, phone and online., noting that this rate was 0% on 1st January 2022.**~~
3. **Expresses support for continued hybrid working where appropriate, so long as working from home does not impact upon residents being able to access services over the phone or in-person**

Proposed by: Cllr Clare

Seconded by: Cllr Yates

Motion to read if carried:

This Council:

- Recognises and appreciates that the pandemic has seen an unprecedented challenge for staff at the City Council;
- *Notes that some services have not offered a face-to-face customer support service for many years, with services such as City Clean offering a phone/digital only service since at least 2007*
- *Notes that there has been a 55% increase in stage 1 complaints regarding customer service but notes that this represents an 11% increase compared to pre-pandemic year of 2019/20 when adjusted against customer contact levels;*
- *Believes that a satisfaction rate of 57% for transactional council services is disappointing but commends council teams for achieving 1% above the national average for satisfaction and improving satisfaction in the year where the national average was dropped;*
- *Notes that against the backdrop of continued cuts from Government to the council's budget, we need to adjust our method of delivering customer service to best use our resources.*
- *Believes that customer satisfaction will increase if we provide a range of ways to contact the council, including a 24/7 digital service, as is standard in industry and deploy our resources to meet customer demand across all channels.*
- *Welcomes that an in-person service has been offered at Hove and Brighton Customer Service Centres since as early as September 2021, and welcomes these services continuing to be well-staffed with direct links to key service teams, to ensure residents can access key services such as Housing, Parking, Libraries, Benefits and Bereavement, and Financial Advice 9-5 5 days per week in-person, alongside a focus on improving digital access, which will help to ensure that the most vulnerable residents, including often the poorest, the elderly, the dyslexic, and the hard of hearing, are able to access council support in the way that works for them.*

Therefore, resolves to:

1. Express its support for ensuring that key services such as Housing, Parking, Libraries, Benefits, Bereavement, and Financial Advice, and Rubbish and Recycling will provide *customer service in a variety of ways that meets customer needs through the continued development of the current operating model taking into account customer feedback;*
2. *Further express its support its support for an improved contact rate to letters, phone and online*
3. *Expresses support for continued hybrid working where appropriate, so long as working from home does not impact upon residents being able to access services over the phone or in-person*