

# Brighton & Hove City Council

**Council**

**Agenda Item 48**

**Subject: Better Customer Service**

**Date of meeting: 19 October 2023**

**Proposer: Councillor Stevens**

**Seconder: Councillor Robinson**

**Ward(s) affected: All**

## **Notice of Motion**

### **Labour Group Amendment**

That deletions are made as shown with ~~strike through~~ below and additional recommendations are added as shown in **bold italics** below:

This Council:

- 1) Notes the ~~ongoing~~ public dissatisfaction, and high volume of complaints Councillors receive from residents about basic council services from missed refuse and recycling to overgrown weeds; to graffiti and litter on our streets, beaches and in our parks; to the general maintenance, upkeep and cleanliness of our city;
- 2) Notes that ~~according to~~ *in* the **2022-23** Annual Customer Insights Report, the overall customer service satisfaction rate is ~~is~~ **was** 59%, **compared to a national benchmark of 60%**; that only 51% of customers ~~find~~ **found** the service easy to access; that stage 1 complaints ~~have~~ increased by 25% since 2021/22; that face-to-face service **accounted s** for less than 5% of all contact; that contact with customers is ~~is~~ **was** down 22% overall since 2018;
- 3) Notes that a 28% increase in the Brighton & Hove 65+ population is expected in 2030 – from 38,300 to 50,100
- 4) **Notes that a new Customer Experience Strategy, which outlines the continuing work to improve customer service, including improving accessibility by establishing new access points in libraries and family hubs, will be presented to the Strategy, Finance & City Regeneration Committee in December;**
- 5) **Notes that a new mystery shopping exercise reveals current overall satisfaction with council services at 85%.**

This council therefore resolves to:

- ~~Complete a review of face-to-face~~ **Continue to progress its ongoing radical modernisation and renewal programme of** Customer Service & Housing Support provided to Brighton and Hove residents from Hove Town Hall and Brighton Town Hall **and other access points across the wider city;** ~~to~~

- determine the best options for the future of the service, including locating customer service points in libraries throughout the city.
- ~~Consider all council-owned buildings should relocation be determined as the appropriate action;~~
  - Publicise and promote any future changes to the provision widely;
  - ***Continue to improve the digital offer, including an ongoing end-to-end review of council web pages, to make it easier for customers to access all services online, in order to free resources to provide more face-to-face or telephone contact for those who genuinely need it***
  - ***Continue to encourage residents and members to use the online Councillor Enquiry Case Management System which enables residents to contact members 24/7 and streamlines members' contact with relevant officers***
  - ***Request officers to review the operation of these arrangements in 6 months and bring a report outlining the outcome of the review to a future S,F&CR Committee meeting***
  - ~~Return to previous levels of face-to-face service in recognition of the challenges many residents face in accessing email and telephones;~~
  - ~~Increase weekday telephone operating hours until 5.30pm;~~
  - ~~Open face-to-face customer service points at weekends;~~
  - ~~Reach a satisfaction rate of 70% by July 2024.~~

Proposed by: Cllr Stevens Seconded by: Cllr Robinson

### **Recommendations to read if carried:**

This Council:

- 1) Notes the public dissatisfaction and high volume of complaints Councillors receive from residents about basic council services from missed refuse and recycling to overgrown weeds; to graffiti and litter on our streets, beaches and in our parks; to the general maintenance, upkeep and cleanliness of our city;
- 2) Notes that in the 2022-23 Annual Customer Insights Report, the overall customer service satisfaction rate was 59%, compared to a national benchmark of 60%; that only 51% of customers found the service easy to access; that stage 1 complaints increased by 25% since 2021/22; that face-to-face service accounted for less than 5% of all contact; that contact with customers is was down 22% overall since 2018;
- 3) Notes that a 28% increase in the Brighton & Hove 65+ population is expected in 2030 – from 38,300 to 50,100
- 4) Notes that a new Customer Experience Strategy, which outlines the continuing work to improve customer service, including improving accessibility by establishing new access points in libraries and family hubs, will be presented to the Strategy, Finance & City Regeneration Committee in December;

- 5) Notes that a new mystery shopping exercise reveals current overall satisfaction with council services at 85%.

This council therefore resolves to:

- Continue to progress its ongoing radical modernisation and renewal programme of Customer Service & Housing Support provided to Brighton and Hove residents from Hove Town Hall and Brighton Town Hall and other access points across the wider city
- Publicise and promote any future changes to the provision widely;
- Continue to improve the digital offer, including an ongoing end-to-end review of council web pages, to make it easier for customers to access all services online, in order to free resources to provide more face-to-face or telephone contact for those who genuinely need it
- Continue to encourage residents and members to use the online Councillor Enquiry Case Management System which enables residents to contact members 24/7 and streamlines members' contact with relevant officers
- Request officers to review the operation of these arrangements in 6 months and bring a report outlining the outcome of the review to a future S,F&CR Committee meeting

