Customer Strategy 2016
Working with you to develop excellent, customer focussed services
Big Challenge – Big Change

We must find savings of £74 million over the next 4 years, while continuing to protect the services that our customers value and need. This can only be achieved by changing the way we engage and interact with customers and communities; building self-reliance in communities, supporting customers to use online channels to access a range of information and advice and asking customers to tell us if we are getting it right.

Our vision

“Working with you to deliver customer focussed services”

The way in which our customers access information and services will increasingly be online. By the year 2020, 70% of customer contact will be online, with appropriate support provided for those unable to access online services through the customer service centre or an access point where customers can speak to someone in person. Help to access online information and services will include supporting customers to use their own equipment, such as laptops, tablets and mobile phones, or to use equipment in Council locations, such as local libraries.
Background

Customers’ expectations are changing. Increasingly, customers use on-line channels in all aspects of their lives, with on-line becoming the “channel of choice” for many. On-line services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing access at the most convenient time for customers. We must ensure that we provide easy to use on-line services to meet this changing customer expectation, while maintaining the high standards of services our customers demand through use of constant feedback.

In the future we will be a smaller organisation focused on the delivery of essential, complex services that customers trust. We will work with communities and partners to support the delivery of less complex services. This approach will enable communities to provide services focused on their needs, rather than a “one size fits all” approach.
How will we meet this challenge?

Our commitment is to design services for customers, with customers; working with them to produce services to really meet their needs. This design work will include working with partners and other providers of services to ensure complexity is removed. Customers will be confident about where and how services can be accessed, therefore being encouraged to serve themselves. Constant focus on Customer feedback will enable us to become a learning organisation and will continually refine services or aligning them to customers changing needs.

At work, I use the Council’s online portal, which is a service available to teachers, GPs, health practitioners, etc. The portal lets me request connections with other professionals to discuss specific cases in detail, where a collaborative approach will deliver better outcomes for young people. Also, music teaching is part of my responsibilities at school, and I am able to sign up my students for lessons through the Council’s music service via the website.

Sandra
I use community transport to take me to the local library as I am a keen reader. I recently attended an IT session at the library where I learned to go on to the internet to search for books I am interested in and reserve them. I can also download ebooks using the libraries digital book service, which means I always have my books with me.

Dorothy

Where possible, services will primarily be delivered on-line and other channels (telephone and face-to-face) will provide a safety net for customers who are unable to access on-line services or don’t feel confident doing so. Assisted digital will provide support to those customers who don’t feel confident and give them the skills to be able to access online information and services in the future.
I used the council’s website to research local schools to decide which one was best for my daughter. I was able to apply for a school place online through the website and received an email from the Council to confirm my daughter had been offered a place at our preferred school. The great thing about the Council’s online information and services is that I can check it at any time, using my PC, my laptop or my mobile phone. Because I am busy during the day, I quite often have to research information in the evening and weekends, which means I rely on online information and services being available when I need them to be.

Mike
I recently started to use a tablet to talk to my grandchildren. The staff at the library where I volunteer helped me to set up the tablet and prepare for my first Skype session with my family. I have started to use the computer to get in touch with the Council and the library staff were able to help me set up the tablet so that I can use it even with my poor eyesight. They showed me how to use a special version of the Council’s website just for tablets, which means I can find the things I need much more easily without too much clutter on the page. I also have an account on the Council’s website, which allows me to access my own personal care information to see records of my contact with my social worker and the services I am registered to use.

Irene
My partner, Richard, and I use the internet regularly to plan our holidays; from booking our accommodation through to finding the best walks, local places of interest and local events. We follow the Council on Facebook and Twitter to learn more about local events and, in particular, the impact these may have on travel arrangements and the availability of accommodation. We are planning our wedding for next year and were able to register to get married in North Yorkshire online, which was really helpful as it meant we didn’t need to make a special journey. We have an interest in environmental issues and followed the recent debates around ‘fracking’ in North Yorkshire with interest. We were able to follow the Planning Meeting via the live webstream and get regular updates via Twitter which was exciting and meant we could still be involved!

Patrick
My Leaving Care Advisor helped me to complete my university application form when I was struggling. I booked an appointment on-line and they were able to come out so see me the same day. We used the Advisor’s laptop to complete the online application form so I got it in before the deadline. I have just learned that I got a place at my first choice of university and I am really looking forward to starting in September.

Moving from foster care to living on my own was exciting but a bit scary. Although I work part-time I do get some benefits as well. I initially had some difficulties with my benefits, but my Leaving Care Advisor signposted me to my local library where I booked onto a IT session to complete the benefits application on-line. My Care Advisor also showed me an on-line chat room where I now go to talk to other young people and get help and advice on a wide range of issues, such as education and jobs.

Young person leaving care
How will we know we are doing a good job?

We will provide information on our performance against standards, so customers will know if we are delivering the service we have committed to. Where customers provide feedback on a service, or a suggestion for improvement, we will ensure customers get updates on how the feedback has been used and the changes we have made.

In relation to our work with partners, we will share non-sensitive information about services, demographic information, changing trends or data gathered to satisfy freedom of information requests. All this will be available on-line and customers will be able to access it without the need to make a formal request.

We will regularly review our on-line services and the information we provide to ensure that as many customers as possible are using these and serving themselves without the need to contact us. This will enable us to reduce the cost of delivering services, while maintaining our customers’ expectations.
Our Customer Standards

Right treatment
You can trust us to

• Do what we say we will do
• Be helpful and polite
• Treat you fairly and with respect
• We will look at things from your point of view so we can provide what you need, when you need it
• Protect your personal information

Getting it right
We will

• Provide you with the right information advice and guidance
• Explain things clearly
• Say sorry and put it right if we make a mistake
• Involve you and your community to improve how we do things
• Demonstrate value for money

Keeping you informed
We will

• Deal with your request the first time you contact us, or as soon as we can
• Tell you what will happen next and by when
• Keep you updated with progress
• Consult with you on changes to services

Easy access
We will

• Make more of our services available online to use at a time that suits you
• Explain clearly how to contact us in other ways
• Provide choice for you on how you would like to be contacted by us
• We will make it easy for you to use online services and help you when you need a hand

In return
We need you to...

• Use on-line services where available
• Give us the correct information at the right time
• Tell us when something changes
• Be on time for any appointment
• Treat our staff with respect