

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2026-29

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 08 OCTOBER 2026

PART I

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2026-2029

(ADCCC)

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 for consideration by the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 1.2 The strategy sets out the Council's vision, principles and commitments for delivering consistently excellent, fair and accessible services to residents, businesses, visitors, community groups and partners over the next three years. It supports delivery of the Council Plan and reflects changing customer expectations and greater use of digital services.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That: Policy & Resources Committee agree and adopt the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029.

Report prepared by: Mandy Baker (Customer Services Manager) & Carl Harris (Digital Development Manager)

3 Details

- 3.1 The Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 has been developed to provide a clear framework for how the Council designs, delivers and improves services for its customers.
- 3.2 The strategy supports the Council Plan and aligns customer experience improvements with the Council's four strategic themes:
- Healthy, Safe and Thriving Communities
 - A Green and Sustainable Future
 - A Vibrant and Prosperous District
 - A Well-Run Council
- 3.3 The strategy recognises that customer expectations continue to evolve, with increasing demand for services that are accessible, responsive, personalised and available through a range of communication channels.
- 3.4 The proposed Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 includes:
- 3.4.1 Customer Experience Vision
- "To deliver consistently excellent, fair, and accessible services for all our residents, businesses, partners, visitors and community groups, ensuring every interaction with Three Rivers District Council is inclusive, responsive, and meets the diverse needs of our community."
- 3.4.2 Strategic Principles

3.4.3 The strategy is built around four key principles:

3.4.4 Customer Centred

- Services designed around customer needs.
- Providing access through a variety of channels.
- Expanding digital self-service opportunities.

3.4.5 Transparent and Efficient

- Delivering clear and consistent communications.
- Designing efficient customer journeys.
- Using data and customer feedback to improve services.

3.4.6 Data-Driven

- Using insight and engagement to inform decision making.
- Strengthening partnerships with communities and businesses.
- Supporting cultural, economic and community wellbeing.

3.4.7 Accessible and Inclusive

- Ensuring services are accessible to all customers.
- Listening and responding to customer feedback.
- Providing alternative access routes for those unable to use digital services.

3.5 Customer Commitments

3.5.1 The strategy establishes a series of commitments to customers, including:

- Treating customers with respect and dignity
- Being friendly and helpful
- Being open and honest
- Providing timely responses
- Striving to resolve enquiries at the first point of contact
- Protecting personal information
- Regularly training staff
- Learning from customer feedback and complaints

3.6 The strategy includes a range of measurable actions and performance indicators to monitor progress and improve customer satisfaction throughout the life of the strategy.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The recommendations contained in this report support the Council Plan and its strategic objectives.

4.2 Adoption of the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 will replace the Customer Experience Strategy 2023-2026 and provide the framework for customer experience activity over the next three years.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

5.1 The recommendations in this report are not within the Council's agreed policy but are within existing budgets.

5.2 The purpose of this strategy is to establish clear and consistent customer experience and interactions across all council services.

5.3 The strategy will continue to contribute to achieving the current customer experience performance indicators.

5.4 There are no budget implications arising from approval of this strategy. The actions contained within the strategy will be delivered through existing budgets.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications in adopting this strategy, any specific projects will follow the normal budget setting process.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from approval of this strategy.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

8.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required? The relevance test concluded that a full Equality Impact Assessment was not required. The Customer Experience Strategy is designed to improve access to services for all customers and does not introduce any changes that would have an adverse impact on individuals or groups with protected characteristics. Equality considerations have, however, been embedded throughout the development of the Strategy.	No

8.2 Impact Assessment

8.3 The strategy sets out the Council's vision, principles and commitments for delivering consistently excellent, fair and accessible services to residents, businesses, visitors, community groups and partners over the next three years. It supports delivery of the Council Plan and reflects changing customer expectations and greater use of digital services. The equalities impact assessment is attached at appendix 2.

9 Staffing Implications

9.1 The Customer Service Working Group met to review and provide feedback and will continue to meet regularly to monitor progress and identify opportunities for improvement.

10 Environmental Implications

10.1 The digital first approach helps to reduce paper use and limits people travelling to visit the council offices, so is positive for sustainability.

10.2 The Climate & Sustainability impact summary is set out below and the full impact assessment is attached at appendix 3.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	0.00
Travel	0.00
Goods and Consumption	0.00
Biodiversity & Nature	0.00
Adaptation	0.00
Engagement and Influence	3
Total Overall Average Score	0.5

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no Community Safety implications arising from approval of this strategy.

12 Public Health implications

- 12.1 There are no Public Health implications arising from approval of this strategy.

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

- 13.1 To continue to deliver consistently excellent, fair, and accessible services for all our residents, businesses, partners, visitors and community groups, ensuring every interaction with Three Rivers District Council is inclusive, responsive, and meets the diverse needs of our community by following the four updated key principles arising from approval of this strategy.

14 Communications and Website Implications

- 14.1 If the 2026-29 Customer Experience Strategy is approved, the Strategy will be published on the Council's website and promoted through a range of digital and non-digital communication channels to ensure residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders are aware of its objectives and benefits.

15 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 15.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 15.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Customer Experience service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
Council does not agree the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29	There is no clear direction for the council's approach to customers	Council to agree the strategy so there is a clear and consistent approach across all services	Tolerate	6

- 15.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely Likelihood ▼ Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact Low ► Unacceptable			

Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)
 3 (Critical)
 2 (Significant)
 1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
 3 (Likely (21-79%))
 2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
 1 (Remote (≤5%))

- 15.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Council Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

Description of the risk	Service Plan
Council does not agree the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29	Communications, Customer & Culture

Data Quality

Data sources:

Website engagement statistics

Social media engagement statistics

Customer Interaction statistics

ONS 2024 data

Data checked by:

Mandy Baker (Customer Services Manager) & Carl Harris (Digital Development Manager)

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

Background Papers

Current Customer Experience Strategy 2023-26

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 Climate & Sustainability impact assessment

