

COMMUNICATIONS, CUSTOMER & CULTURE
Service Delivery Plan
2027 – 2030

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Service Area	Communications Customer & Culture	Directorate	Corporate Customer & Community

Introduction

The service plans are a key component of Three Rivers District Council's corporate planning process. They describe our ambitions, priorities, targets and how each service area is working towards delivering the councils' themes detailed in the Council Plan. They are reviewed and updated annually considering budgets, performance, internal and external factors, arising throughout the year.

Service Plans are monitored in the following ways:

- Through regular discussion between, service heads, managers and their teams
- Key Performance Indicators are reviewed by the Corporate Management Team on a quarterly and annual basis
- Mid-year review of service plans alongside PDRs and Council Plan Delivery Plan mid-year review.

SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Communications, Customer & Culture Service is a central corporate service encompassing how our customers interact and engage with the council and all the services we provide. The service is specifically responsible for:

- Corporate Communications & Digital Services
- Customer Service Centre
- Watersmeet Theatre

In addition, the service is responsible for the council wide implementation of the Customer Experience Strategy, which influences the way the council interacts with its customers to deliver a first-rate customer service.

BUDGET

Table to give topline financials. This will be added post the Service Plans and Budget being agreed at Full Council before being published.

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE OVERVIEW cont.

Corporate Communications & Digital Services

Strategic coordination and day to day operational management of proactive and reactive communications both internal and external across all the council's communications channels and platforms.

- Press office - point of contact for media enquiries
- Copywriting and promoting the council's activity and messages
- Guardian of the council's branding and style guidelines
- Managing the council's social media accounts
- Development of the Customer Relationship Management platform and digital transformation
- Customer engagement, public consultation and data analysis
- Website, online services and intranet contract management and content updates

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE OVERVIEW cont.

Customer Service

Provision of a front-line customer enquiry and administrative service for the council on behalf of all departments including:

- Operation of the council's telephone contact centre, general enquiries email and face to face Visitor Centre at Three Rivers House and Healthy Hub services across the district
- To process, handle and manage online enquiries via the council's website and email system
- Support all service departments in identifying and implementing service improvements with customer contact and engagement
- Management of Corporate Compliments & Complaints processes
- Contract Management of the council's outsourced standby (out of hours emergency) service
- Provision of administrative support across council services
- Administration for the council's Freedom of Information (FOI) obligations
- Planning and coordination of council wide Learning & Development

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE OVERVIEW cont.

Watersmeet Theatre

Watersmeet serves as a cultural hub for all our communities through its programme of live theatre, music, comedy, children's performances, films and events.

- The programme is designed to reflect the broad range of tastes and interests of local people
- To be a vibrant entertainment hub for the community
- The venue strives to provide a financially viable and affordable arts entertainment and community hire facility for the residents of Three Rivers and beyond
- Watersmeet delivers an inclusive and engaging programme of events that appeals to a broad demographic

BUDGET

(Table to give topline financials. This will be added post the Service Plans and Budget being agreed at Full Council before being published.

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PURPOSE AND CORE FUNCTIONS

Council Plan Theme	Service's contribution to the Council Plan Theme
	Corporate Communications & Digital Services
Healthy, safe and thriving communities	The Communications and Digital Services Team supports a wide variety of community-based events and activities led by teams within the council and across the district. The team promotes available funding and support to audiences across all its corporate channels. Surveys for customer engagement are produced by the service,– which is also promoted and analysed by the team. The council's website has an accessibility tool, pages are regularly updated and is disability compliant (Regulation WAG2.2) scoring above the sector average.
A green and sustainable future	The Communications and Digital Services Team supports a wide variety of council led environmental policies, initiatives, events and activities through innovative communications including video, audio, text and social. The service continues to improve digital access to council services and digitalisation of paper forms, reducing the carbon footprint of both residents and the council itself. The team promotes available grant funding and support around home and business energy efficiency to audiences across all its corporate channels.

SERVICE PURPOSE AND CORE FUNCTIONS

Council Plan Theme	Service's contribution to the Council Plan Theme
	Corporate Communications & Digital Services (continued)
A prosperous and vibrant district	The Communications and Digital Services Team supports all economic development projects led by or involving the council through promotional and technical activities. The service supports local business activities through work with partner organisations, including local chambers of commerce, the Local Enterprise Partnership, other local authorities as well as individual businesses. The service areas produce a Business Newsletter which residents and businesses can subscribe to in order to receive relevant content, in addition to regular content across the council's corporate communications channels including the website, other newsletters and social media platforms. The Communications and Digital Services Team also supports the ongoing development of the Three Rivers Local Plan, through promotion of all key stages of the plan's lifecycle, including public consultations.
A well-run Council	Promoting council led initiatives and activities and ensuring proactive communications whilst reacting quickly and effectively to unforeseen events. Through proactive, innovative and diverse council communications and digital services, the service area shows the Council Plan in action. Providing the council's elected and corporate leadership with communications support for both internal and external platforms to reach a diverse audience across the district and further afield. Providing digital support to corporate leadership teams and elected members as required. Providing communications and digital support for internal communications including leading the regular large-scale Staff Day events and support external meetings between the council and partner organisations. Surveys for customer engagement are produced by the digital service, – which is also promoted and analysed by the team. The Communications and Digital Services Team is instrumental in the development and transition towards Local Government Reorganisation, leading on corporate and internal communication and engagement and working hand in hand with partners across the county, district and borough councils. Supporting development of staff by producing and reporting on responses through the annual PDR process.

SERVICE PURPOSE AND CORE FUNCTIONS

Council Plan Theme	Service's contribution to the Council Plan Theme
	Customer Services
Healthy, safe and thriving communities	Provision of administrative support across council services. Manage the council's outsourced standby (out of hours emergency) service. Service signposting and regular attendance at the Healthy Hubs to assist customers to widen accessibility for the customer experience.
A green and sustainable future	Promoting the website and online services to all customers to reduce the need for customers to contact the council through phone or email as the information is available to them directly. Ensuring customers are aware of the email notification service to reduce the need for hard copies of council information and promotions, thereby reducing postage costs.

SERVICE PURPOSE AND CORE FUNCTIONS

Council Plan Theme	Service's contribution to the Council Plan Theme
	Customer Services (continued)
A prosperous and vibrant district	The Customer Service Centre supports council departments by providing residents and businesses with a clear first point of contact. The team helps with enquiries about local services, opportunities, and events, ensuring that information is accessible to all. In doing so, the customer service team promotes inclusive communities, encourages participation, and supports the council's wider council plan.
A well-run Council	Provide administrative support across council services to assist departments in delivering their service to customers. Continuously review the 'Compliments & Complaints' policy and learning, implementing changes where necessary. Continue to invest in staff development and training and promote CSC Academy. Answering a variety of enquiries via phone, email and face to face regarding council services. Continue to resolve 90%+ of council enquiries at first point of contact. Ensure call wait times are kept to a minimum, not exceeding 10 minutes, improving experience for those who can only use phone contact. Responsible for ensuring that staff request for training and development once approved are booked. In addition, review and update e-Learning for council staff and manage mandatory training for staff to ensure that the council is compliant.

SERVICE PURPOSE AND CORE FUNCTIONS

Council Plan Theme	Service's contribution to the Council Plan Theme
	Watersmeet Theatre
Healthy, safe and thriving communities	Delivering the film programme to include more frequent, relaxed performances, targeting neurodiverse customers, those with additional needs or with disabilities, and those with daytime childcare responsibilities. Delivering a programme that caters for minority groups and underrepresented communities in the district. Maintaining and developing the accessibility provision including, infrared hearing loop system, signed performances, relaxed performances, touch tours, and accessible lift and toilet. Providing local students with work experience opportunities allowing them to develop their knowledge of the industry. Encouraging schools to utilise the venue for their productions or to attend events and films in order to provide a real-life theatre experience to their students. Inspiring local community groups to take advantage of the lower hire rates for charity organisations in order to increase their engagement with the community.
A green and sustainable future	Implementing the venue's sustainability delivery and route to net carbon zero plan. Continuing to invest in sustainable technologies, replacing end of life equipment and infrastructure with energy efficient alternatives. Giving emphasis to procuring sustainable products and sourcing from local suppliers.

SERVICE PURPOSE AND CORE FUNCTIONS

Council Plan Theme	Service's contribution to the Council Plan Theme
	Watersmeet Theatre (continued)
A prosperous and vibrant district	Providing attractive packages to host local business events. Developing relationships with closed user groups such as the MOD to increase sales on those shows that are not performing as well as others. Providing their employees exclusive access to special offers and discounts that are not generally available to the public who may have paid a higher price for their ticket. Working with other council services to expand audience reach. Supporting local community and amateur theatre groups by offering reduced rate packages for multiday hires. Nurturing the relationship with the Friends of Watersmeet to extend volunteering.
A well-run Council	Developing and enhancing customer touchpoints. Expanding package offers that turn a night out into an occasion. Achieving consistently high customer satisfaction results. Responding promptly to customer feedback. Continuing to invest in staff development and training. Delivering against the Customer Experience Strategy action plan objectives.

PROJECTS

Council Plan Theme	Project Title	Project Description & Proposed Outcome(s)	Project Start Date (Month/Year)	Projected End Date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Policy or Strategy	Name of Policy or Strategy	New or existing Policy or Strategy	Renewal date	Additional comments
Strategy	Communication	Existing	1 January 2029	Work to start on updating the three year communication strategy to cover 2029 - 31
Strategy	Watersmeet Business Plan	Existing	February/March 2027	Work to start on the three year Watersmeet Business Plan 2027-30

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO SUPPORT THE COUNCIL PLAN

Key Performance Indicators enable us to track how we are performing against our targets and over time. They are reviewed quarterly and/or annually to ensure accountability and to drive continuous improvement.

KPI Ref	KPI Title	2025/26 Actual	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target	2029/30 Target
CX01	Number of subscribers to GovDelivery Service	48,213	51,500	54,700	57,900	61,100
CX02	Average customer satisfaction score for online services (score 1 - 5) 1= very unsatisifed, 5 = very satisfied	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
CX03	Percentage of customer enquiries submitted via the portal My.ThreeRivers	43%	42%	43%	44%	45%
CX04	Percentage of calls with first point resolution	97%	90%	95%	95%	95%
CX05	Number of tickets sold for co-promoted live shows at Watersmeet (incl. pantomime)	28,619	24,500	25,000	25,500	26,000
CX06	Percentage of complaints received and fully upheld at stage one, stage two and ombudsman (LGSCO)	18%	32%	30%	30%	30%

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO SUPPORT THE COUNCIL PLAN continued

Key Performance Indicators enable us to track how we are performing against our targets and over time. They are reviewed quarterly and/or annually to ensure accountability and to drive continuous improvement.

KPI Ref	KPI Title	2025/26 Actual	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target	2029/30 Target
HR03	Employee Performance Development Review completion rate	93%	100%	100%	100%	100%
HR04	Employee Satisfaction levels	3.2	3	3	3	3
HR05	Employee Motivation levels	3.1	3	3	3	3

SERVICE VOLUMES

These are monitored internally by the individual service area and not reported on externally.

Description	Projected annual volume for 2027/2028	Estimated annual volume for 2028/29	Notes / explanation for estimated change
Total unique visits to website	313,000	300,00	The introduction of live chat and chatbot functions on our website in late 2026 may have an effect on website visits as this new channel of communication is promoted, Also the continued development and growth of AI is changing the way people are obtaining information with many people now obtaining information direct from AI services and not visiting individual websites. Continued monitoring of the website around accessibility and quality assurance is recommended to ensure we comply with WCAG 2.2 AA which is in place to ensure accessibility for all users, including those with disabilities.
Monitoring Call Wait times	1m 30s mean average wait time	1m 20s mean average wait time	Ensure call wait times are kept to a minimum, improving experience for those who can only use phone contact. The introduction of live chat and chatbot functions over is also likely to impact on call wait times.
Number of Subscriptions on GovDelivery Service (email notifications)	110,00	115,000	Annual numbers of subscribers across all newsletters is continuing in a positive direction but has slowed down. However, a greater focus on boosting the number of subscriptions each subscriber holds is a direction of travel that will result in people receiving a wider range of information from the council

RISK MANAGEMENT

Our Risk Register Summary is published on our website and updated quarterly. These include; strategic, operational and climate change risks.