16. Customer Service

Service Profile

(2026/27)

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Purpose of Plan

This Business Plan provides an overview of the service, and sets out its key priorities, high level objectives, key deliverables, and key performance measures. It will be supported by individual team plans which contain more detail about how teams work towards meeting priorities and measuring success.

The priorities and actions set out in the Business Plan focus only on key areas of development, improvement, and transformation, and does not cover all detailed aspects of service delivery. The identified priorities will link directly into the Council's contribution towards the Community Plan and achievement of productivity and savings targets.

Progress against the service plan will be reviewed on a regular basis within directorate teams, by the Corporate Strategy Team, and in consultation with Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

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1. Service Overview

Service Description

Customer Services aim to deliver an excellent customer experience to residents, business and those visiting or moving to Hull. This includes those life events of births, deaths, marriage and bereavement services. We do this through delivering:

A 24/7 Digital Access to citizens through delivering co-ordinated website access, easy to use webforms an effective solution for Customer Accounts.
Call Centre support for those without access to digital communication, and
Customer Service points in the heart of communities, enabling face to face surgeries to deliver advice, or support digital self service, where this provides the best means of engagement,
Supporting the acquisition of digital skills and ensuring that digital services **meet accessibility standards.**

The customer service operational team respond to circa 35,000 calls, 1000 emails per month, and deliver surgeries face to face at 15 different places in the community every week. The Customer Experience team provide a client liaison role to all council services and some external partners delivering a suite of digital services, including, web services, digital engagement, CRM and customer feedback tools.

Specialist advice services within Customer Services deliver specialist support to some of the most vulnerable residents of the city. The services include the Welfare Rights Services, and the Refugee Integrated Service.

The service leads the coordination of advice through **Sector Connect** and the commissioning of Generalist Advice and Community Navigation, with a focus on food fuel and finance support across the city. Customer Services have delivered housing support fund **(HSF)** monies to those in need, and by supporting local VCS organisations with **Money Matters** training to deliver financial advice to those most in need.

Bereavement Services are responsible for the operational delivery of funeral services, including cremations and burial services. The service is also responsible for the delivery of a burial service at 5 open cemeteries around the city, and the maintenance of the cemetery grounds, which is delivered by the grounds maintenance function within Streetscene services. The Hull Funeral Service provides a simple low cost direct funeral service delivered from the crematorium, as an alternative choice to bereaved families.

Hull District Local Registration Service (LRS) provides the statutory duty of the registration of births, deaths and civil marriage on behalf of the General Register Office (GRO) within the Home Office. The service also provides non statutory duties such as a EU Settlement Service and other celebratory services. The Registration Act 1953 places a duty on each local authority to provide a registration service, adhering to the General Register Office guidance.

The Coroner's Office provides administrative support to the Senior Coroner for the Hull and East Riding District. The Coroners Act 2008 places the duty on the local authority to provide appoint a Coroner for the named district and provide administrative support. This

service also includes the management of the City Mortuary which is a joint operation in partnership with the HEY Trust.

Strategic Direction / Future Plans

The Customer Engagement Strategy 2025/27 sets out our approach to the next stages of our digital journey, as we understand in more detail the behaviour of our customers and the need to maintain a high level of self service functionality. To deliver a 'customer first' digital customer service, for the high number of residents that engage with us online, and to make best use of the '**My Communities'** website and email registration facility to promote local services, activities and events to local residents.

There is a cohort of customers that we know are online but do not do business with us. The strategy highlights the focus required to promote online services regularly through the creation of a regular communications plan. Leading to the third customer profile of those that are digitally excluded and the need for alternative methods of communications and the development of **community hubs** to provide local advice.

The Customer Programme Board focuses on the development of the Granicus solutions (CRM, Gov Service) to improve the digital offer for residents, businesses through the development of the business account, and for visitors to promote events effectively in the city. The corporate telephony solution **Cirrus Omni** to be explored further to provide a high spec solution for call handling for external engagement with customers**.**

Customer Services have developed a **Digital Inclusion Strategy**, which aligns to the Community Plan aspirations and commitment of the Combined Authority. A Board of local authority officers and partners has been created to move forward the objectives of the strategy, linking to the Digital Skills Partnership and Connect to Work.

Overall Service Priorities

Service Priority	**Strategic Driver (Community Plan Ambition, Government, Organisational, etc)**
Encourage and enhance customer self-service.	Community Plan Ambition - Fairer Hull. Ensuring residents have access to the services they need. Portfolio Holder Priority – Assist residents in accessing services quickly and efficiently by continually assessing common journeys taken by residents and building on their feedback to create a more accessible service.
To implement the Digital Inclusion strategy with partners.	Community Plan Ambition – Fairer Hull. Reducing health inequalities and promoting independence. Community Plan Ambition – Economic Growth. Developing digital skills for all ages and improving access to work.
To develop third sector partnership working, to build support and welfare services for local residents.	Community Plan Ambition - Fairer Hull. Working together to deliver better services. Community Plan Ambition – Economic Growth. Investment in local centres.

	Portfolio Holder Priority. Enabling residents to seek support at the places they already attend rather than corporate buildings, delivering support at place.
To promote affordable and high-quality bereavement services to local residents	Portfolio Holder Priority - Families across Hull should have access to a wide range of affordable and high-quality service offers when it comes to losing their loved ones.

2. Service Resources and Assets

Staffing and Financial Resources (including grants)

Budget 2026/27	**£000'**		
Staff Costs	7,249	**Budget Changes**	**£000's**
Other Expenditure	2,099	26/27 Efficiency Savings	
Gross Expenditure	**9,348**		
Fees & Charges	-3,382	25/26 Savings undelivered	
Grant Income	-1,913		
Other Income	-1,132		
Gross Income	**-6,426**		
		Investments	355
Net Expenditure	**2,921**	Funding of Base Pressures	