

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Report of: Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report: Citizen Experience Strategy

| Summary and recommendations | |
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| Purpose of report: | To present Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision |
| Key decision: | No |
| Scrutiny Lead Member: | Councillor Lucy Pegg, Scrutiny Committee Chair |
| Cabinet Member: | Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies |
| Corporate Priority: | All |
| Policy Framework: | Council Strategy 2020-24 |
| Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report. | |

| Appendices | |
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| Appendix A | Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee |

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 04 July 2023 to consider a report concerning the Citizen Experience Strategy. The report, which is due for Cabinet consideration on 12 July 2023, recommends that Cabinet approves the Citizen Experience Strategy.
2. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Chapman (Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies), Helen Bishop (Head of Business Improvement) and Vicki Galvin (Senior Programme Manager for Customer Experience) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies introduced the report. The Citizen Experience Strategy outlined

the approach the Council will be taking to provide a positive experience for all of Oxford's citizens in accessing its services and engaging with it as a provider of them. The strategy sought to align all Council services with the approach and embrace other organisations and community groups so that the right support could be provided for anyone living in, working in, or visiting Oxford.

4. The Committee asked a range of questions, including questions relating to consultation methodology; use of language and terminology; customer satisfaction statistics; how the Council works with partners; managing citizen expectations; digital opportunities and digital exclusion; and the Council's direction of travel in terms of diverting contact online rather than face-to-face or via telephone.
5. In particular, the Committee discussed the choice of the word 'citizen' and whether that was an accurate descriptor. The Committee noted the difficulty in finding one word to describe a number of different groups, but agreed that the word 'citizen' was quite emotive and could exclude a number of different groups. There was consensus that the use of the word 'citizen' within the strategy in its current form need not be changed, but that ongoing feedback should be sought so that language could be adjusted as necessary in future iterations of the strategy.

Recommendation 1: That the Council seeks ongoing feedback on how individuals and groups engage with the strategy and whether they feel excluded by the use of the term 'citizen'; and listens to and reflects on this feedback with a view to adjusting the language accordingly in future iterations of the strategy.

6. During further discussion on the use of the word 'citizen', the Committee noted the current context that a number of groups and individuals were feeling excluded generally and agreed that this should be drawn out in the strategy.

Recommendation 2: That the Council contextualises the strategy by drawing out the general feelings of exclusion felt by many groups and individuals in the current climate.

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