

Community Scrutiny

Customer Services

9th August 2023



Somerset
Council

Customer Services

First point of Contact for Somerset Council – Resolution at FPOC - ask any question

Telephony, Face to Face, Virtual agents, email, SMS and Social Media (FB, webchat)

Customer Champion – challenge practice, celebrate and share good

243+ staff across 5 main hubs: County Hall, Petters Way, Deane House, Bridgwater House and Shape Mendip

Lifeline and Out of Hours

Person centred conversations – promoting independence and enabling self-serve – reduce demand for ASC by over 60%

Customer Complaints and feedback

Customer Culture and Standards

Digital Customer Programme

Customer Panel

LGR journey & Success

Customer Strategy,
Promise &
Standards

Welcome BOT

Single Telephone
Number

Single Telephony
infrastructure

Customer Panel

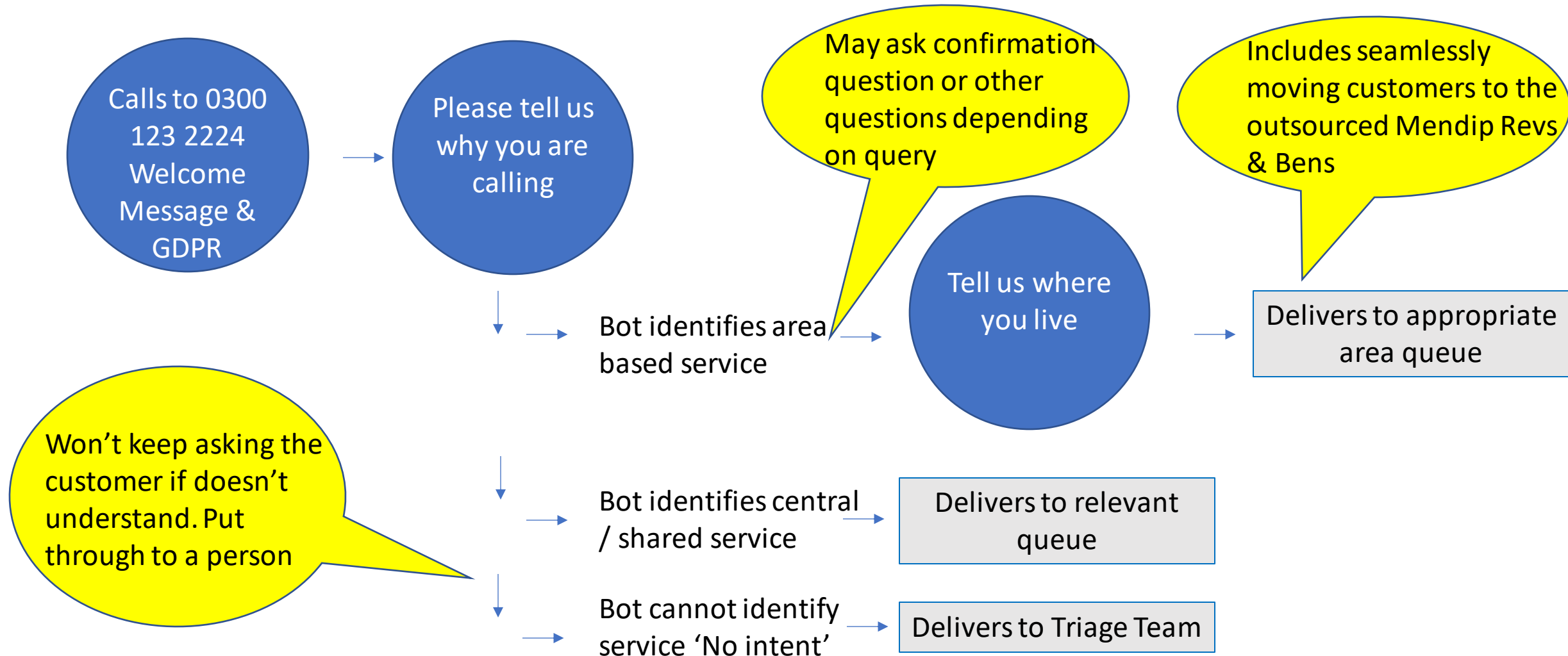
19 Face to Face
Customer Access
Points in each LCN

Learning Hub

Single Complaints
policy

Transfer of
Customer Services
from Capita

Welcome Bot - The Customer journey



Queues behind the scenes

65 queues

County	County	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South	SWT	Shared
Accounts Payable	Libraries	Benefits	Benefits	Benefits	Benefits	General Enquiries
Accounts Receivable	Primary Link	Business Rates	Business Rates	Business Rates	Business Rates	Parking PCN
Admissions	Registration Services	Council Tax	Council Tax	Council Tax	Council Tax	Waste Services
Adults	Repair Line	Environmental Health	Environmental Health	Environmental Health	Environmental Health	
Adults Mental Health	SEND	General Enquiries	General Enquiries	General Enquiries	General Enquiries	
Adults Priority	Somerset Lifeline	Housing	Homes In Sedgemoor	Homelessness	Homefinder	
Blue Badge	Transport	Licensing	Housing	Housing	Homelessness	
Childrens		Open Spaces	Licensing	Licensing	Housing	
Childrens Safeguarding		Planning	Open Spaces	Open Spaces	Housing Repairs	
Early Help			Planning	Payments	Licensing	
General Enquiries				Planning	Open Spaces	
Highways					Planning	
Inclusion Advice Line						

Simple for the customer – the Bot is getting the customer to the right queue (advisor with the right skills and system access), without the confusion of multiple layers of menu options (IVR)

As Services transition/transform to single systems/processes, we will have less queues and have a pool of staff working across more areas

Volumes and Performance – June 2023



- 66,978 calls received
- 74% resolved at first point of contact

2 mins 22 secs average wait (*waiting times in queues vary*)

3.5% Service Failure demand

5857 automated payments

2823 payments through advisors



- 4,096 customer surveys completed
- 83% satisfaction

Welcome BOT

- ❖ 85% to the right place
- ❖ Remaining 15% - Staff triaged in 7-12 seconds
 - BOT did not recognise the service
 - Customer went silent
 - Customer asked to speak to particular person



- 470 social media enquiries answered

- 741 website Contact Us forms received



**Customer
Service Point**

- 5,000+ visitors

95% resolved at first point of contact



**Customer
Access Point**

Awards - Somerset Council Winners

Genesys 2023 International Award
for Innovation



2023 South West Forum
Best Transformation



What is the customer panel?

The panel consists of..

Members of the public



Businesses



Local interest groups



Service providers



All of which **volunteer** to **provide feedback** about the new Somerset Council and its services.

Panel members are asked to..

Attend
focus
groups

Attend
interviews

Complete
surveys

Assist with
tests



Current members..

「420+」

What has the customer panel been used for?

1 Website User Testing



[Somerset Council](#)

Panel members were used to successfully test the new **Somerset website**, where they provided **invaluable feedback**

Welcome to
somerset.gov.uk

Discover and access your council services

2 Customer Strategy



[Customer Strategy
\(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

The new **customer strategy**, **promise**, and **standards** were all shaped with help from panel members attending **focus groups**

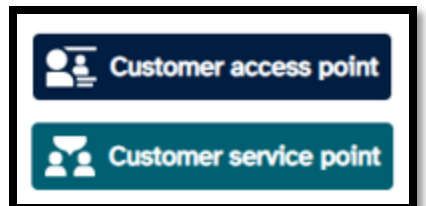


3 Face-to-face branding

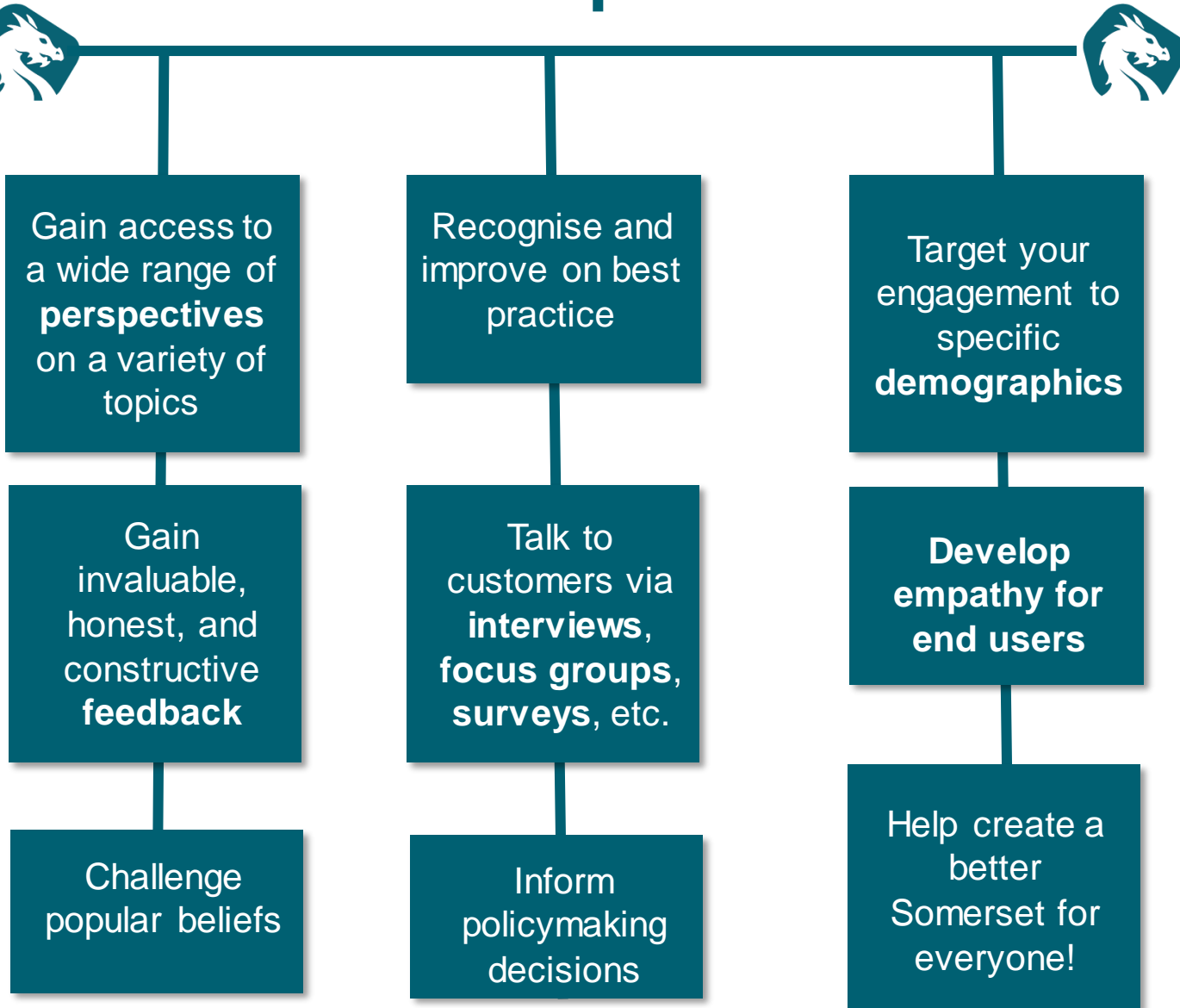


[Our Locations
\(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

Focus groups allowed panel members to assist the face-to-face LGR workstream in deciding on **branding** for the new **customer access/service points**



What are the benefits of using the customer panel?



Webpage

Our customer panel
(someset.gov.uk)



**Volunteer
Online**

Our customer panel (Sign up)



Contacts

Gareth Denslow
Melissa Webb

Customer Promise and Standards

Supporting the [Customer Strategy](#), the [Customer Promise](#) and [Standards](#) were developed to ensure our customers are clear about what they should expect from the Council, through each of our contact channels.

Next Steps

- Report performance to our customers, every quarter. Finalising an Infographic to be published in August.
- Implementation Plan for the Customer Strategy. Refine and the Customer Promise and Standards in year 1 - with our customers, members, services and stakeholders.
- Develop Operational Level Agreements with services to ensure customer focussed delivery and building a customer focussed culture across the Council.



Our Customer Service Standards

The Customer Service Standards have been developed to support the commitments we have made to you in our Customer Promise.

We aim for a positive outcome for any contact experience, across our new council. We will be working behind the scenes to combine the services of our previous councils and we are committed to review these standards with you, our customers, in our first year.

We will measure and publish our results every 3 months.

Complaints

We will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days. You will be told who is investigating and responding to your complaint.
- Respond to complaints within 10 working days, where possible.
- Where issues are more complex, we will aim to respond within 20 working days.
- For more information, please see our Complaints Policy.

Website

We will:

- Aim to have the council website available for 24 hours a day all year round.
- Ensure our online services are accessible, are simple to use and our information is kept up to date.
- Be clear about timescales and next steps when you submit an enquiry.

Telephones

We will:

- Aim to keep average wait times under 5 minutes.
- Do our best to resolve your enquiry the first time you contact us. If we are unable to do this, we will transfer you to the right person or we will take your details and ask someone to contact you.

Customer Experience

- Central team who manage the complaints process on behalf of the council.
- Somerset Council Complaints policy. 2 'local' stages (3 for some CSC complaints) and the option for escalation to the Ombudsman if local resolution cannot be achieved.
- Single corporate iCase system for recording and case managing feedback
- Assist members supporting their constituents with complaints.
- Review and analyse complaints, comments, compliments and adjudications to better understand overall performance & identify opportunities for improvement.

Complaints Performance	May-23	Apr-23	Jun-23
Number Received	286	326	375
Percentage answered in 10 working days	56%	57%	62%
Number Stage 2 escalations	17	36	3
Number Ombudsman escalations	18	9	5
Member casework cases	65	77	30



Somerset
Council



Customer Experience Team

Face to Face services



- Dedicated Somerset Council Customer Services staff
- 5000+ Face to Face interactions since vesting day
- Resolve 95% of customer face to face enquiries regardless of which location they visited.



- Assisted digital access via Attend anywhere
- 7 New Customer access points introduced for Vesting day alongside the existing 12 aligned to the LCN areas
- Slow start to the use of our Customer Access Points by customers. Promotion being planned.
- Simple model being rolled out to all libraries and exploring partnership spaces.



- New CAPs**
- A Minehead Library - TA24 5DJ
 - B Dulverton Library - TA22 9EX
 - C Wellington Library - TA21 8AQ
 - D Nether Stowey Community Library - TA5 1LN
 - E North Petherton Community Library - TA6 6QA
 - F Burnham-on-Sea Library - TA8 1EH
 - G Cheddar Library - BS27 3NB

- Existing CAP**
- H Lace Mill - Chard, TA20 2YA
 - I Langport Library - Langport, TA10 9RA
 - J Town Hall - Crewkerne, TA18 7LN
 - K Balsam Centre - Wincanton, BA9 9HB



- Existing CSP**
- L Petters House - Yeovil, BA20 1AS
 - M West Somerset House - Williton, TA4 4QA
 - N Deane House - Taunton, TA1 1HE
 - O County Hall - Taunton, TA1 4DY
 - P Bridgwater House - Bridgwater, TA6 3AR
 - Q Council Offices - Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT
 - R Crispin Community Centre - Street, BA16 0HA
 - S Glastonbury Library - Glastonbury, BA6 9JB
 - T Town Hall - Wells, BA5 2RB
 - U Frome Library - Frome, BA11 1BE

Somerset Lifeline



Emergency response system offering 24-hour, 7 days a week service.

Offer peace of mind to help older, frail or disabled people to live independently in their own home.

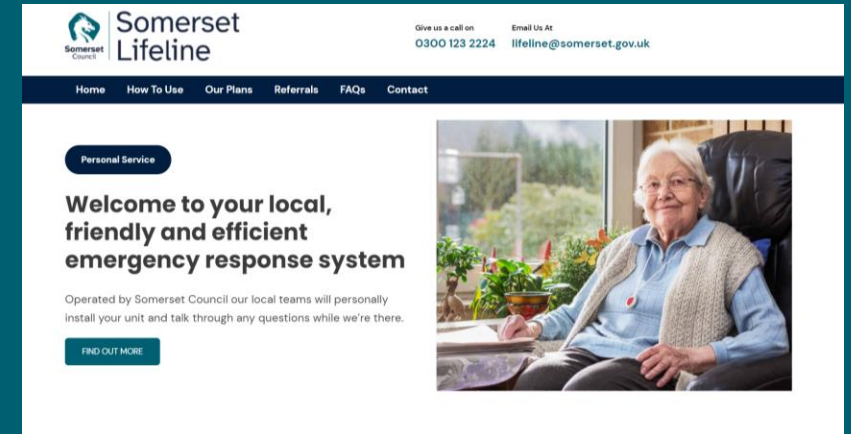
At the touch of a button our customers are connected to our team in the contact centre.

Customer Needs are assessed:
Reassurance, contact a keyholder, dispatch Emergency Response Team or calling the Emergency services.

Somerset Lifeline Performance	May-23	Apr-23
Calls Received	24,734	22,591
Calls answered within 60 seconds	95.9%	96.7%
Installations	161	204
Emergency Response \Call Outs	273	275

300,000+ calls received per year
13,000+ Lifeline connections
3000+ Emergency Call Outs

One Somerset Lifeline Website



One Somerset Lifeline Virtual Call Centre



Opportunities & Challenges



Champion good Customer Service – for the whole organisation

- Challenging areas where we can improve Customer Service by doing deep dives
- To have a conversation about the rich data that we collect at the front door to seek improvement
- To reduce service failure demand and avoid the avoidable
- To establish better mechanisms to learn from customer complaints
- Use of the Customer panel



Resolving more at the Front door

- Only as good as the information provided
- Opportunity to rationalise – rethink processes, systems, where the front door hands over to the service
- Opportunity to rethink if services need their own telephony, helpline or receptions
- Review of Out of Hours



Review Face to Face Customer Service points

- Creating Customer Hubs with other services – Petters Way in Yeovil and Provision in Taunton
- Exploring models of locality delivery with LCN's and key partners such as Citizens Advice
- Rethink with services how we deal with customers at the physical front door – consistent, clear pathway for customers
- Extend the use of Attend Anywhere virtual agent. Ability to connect customers in a dynamic working arrangement



Digital Customer

- Digital Customer Programme – Report a fault on the highway
- Transition activities
- Transformation activities – BOT AI developments, Customer Engagement Platform

The background is a vertical gradient from teal on the right to grey on the left. It is decorated with numerous question marks of varying sizes and opacities, some enclosed in circles. A thin horizontal teal line is positioned near the top left. In the bottom right corner, there are several light blue wavy lines.

Questions....