



Listening & Accessible Council

Thematic Progress Update
October 2022

A Plan for West Devon





Cllr Ric Cheadle
 Lead Member for delivering inclusive and accessible services

Lead Member Introduction

A key element of A Plan for West Devon is delivering inclusive and accessible services to our customers and communities.

This update report sets out the progress the Council has made in achieving the key actions set out in the Thematic Delivery Plan and I am pleased that significant progress has been made across this theme area.

Some of the key achievements are:

- ✓ Consultation & engagement on key Council priorities such as the Homelessness Strategy
- ✓ Attending community events such as the Okehampton show to better understand what residents need and to make the Council more visible to our communities
- ✓ Launching (with South Hams District Council and Plymouth City Council) a My Place engagement platform seeking views from residents on the opportunities and challenges in their local place
- ✓ Development of the Customer Access Strategy and Contact Centre Review to ensure customers can access the information and services that they need

2 Activities on Track and within budget	3 Activities requiring additional intervention or have uncertainties that require managing	0 Activities off track with no current clear plan to resolve	0 Not yet due to start
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Over the coming pages, we set out more in-depth updates for each action along with the wider benefits to our communities.

Cllr Ric Cheadle

Lead Member for Listening & Accessible Council



Action IA 1.1 – Set out clearly what customers can expect from us by delivering a customer charter	
Key Highlights	
<p>This has been carried forward from 21/22 due to an increased demand on Council Services (additional business grants, energy rebates etc) but we are pleased that good progress has now been made with the full engagement of the Listening & Accessible Advisory Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have drafted a Customer Charter as part of the Customer Access Strategy on which Members will be updated at the Hub meeting on 1 November 2022 (see Action IA 1.2 below) • A Contact Centre Review has been carried out and an Implementation Plan drawn up, and an update on progress will be taken to the Hub Committee on 1 November. 	
Key Risks / Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approach across the organisation to services • Putting the customer first and making a difference to the customer 	
Looking ahead to the next 6 months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Customer Charter November 2022 • Implementation of the Contact Centre Review and evidence improvements • Clarity on the opening of Reception 	
Overall Rating	Amber – Slightly off track but a revised plan now in place.

Action IA 1.2 – Enabling customers to access all Council services online but developing plans for all those not online to access the services they need	
Key Highlights and benefits	
<p>This action has been carried forward from 21/22 due to increased demand on resources but we now have a draft Customer Access (Customer Experience) Strategy with identified themes that inform the Strategy, and this is going to Hub on 1 November 2022.</p> <p>We have made significant progress in recent weeks and been in discussion with local papers to develop a programme of features specifically focused on highlighting the support available in response to the increased cost of living. We will be further enhancing this with posters for Town and Parishes to display in community locations signposting to available support.</p>	
Key Risks / Issues	
The key risk is around consistency for access to services and ensuring that we signpost customers to online services where they are able and clearly communicated routes for those that cannot access online so that they have access to the services that they need	
Looking ahead to the next 6 months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of Customer Experience Strategy by Members (November 2022) • Develop and implement the Customer Journeys that inform the strategy • Continue to deliver key Council support messages through newspapers and other offline channels 	
Overall Rating	Green – on track



Action IA .3 – Seek customers’ views when developing proposals by delivering on our consultation and engagement strategy

Key Highlights

Since adopting *A Plan for West Devon*, there have been a number of consultation and engagement activities including:

- Homelessness Strategy Consultation
- Engagement with residents
- Consultation and Engagement portal on the website
- An Officer and Member presence at the Okehampton show
- Participating in the DALC annual conference and re-establishing our Town and Parish Links under the Team West Devon banner to understand better what is happening in our communities

The Communications Team is currently working with officers (and then Lead members) to develop a forward plan of strategic communication activities including consultation and engagement for the coming 12 months, aligned to each of the *A Plan for West Devon* Themes.

As a means of ensuring that our consultation and Engagement Activities are effective, the Council has (along with Plymouth and South Hams) been awarded Government funding to implement a map-based consultation & engagement portal which will enable us to enhance our online engagement presence.

Key Risks / Issues

- If we do not develop the forward plan, we may miss valuable opportunities for our customers and communities to have a say in how we develop our services and strategies
- Government funding for the online engagement portal is for 2 years only. If it is successful, we may wish to consider continuing with the arrangement and identify a budget to support that.

Looking ahead to the next 6 months

- Finalise our 12-month consultation & engagement programme with Lead member input
- Ensure that teams across the Council have a presence at key events across the Borough to engage with our residents

Overall Rating

GREEN – ON TRACK

Action IA 1.4 – Ask customers how they are doing by carrying out an annual residents’ satisfaction survey focusing on West Devon as a Place

Key Highlights

We had intended to carry out an in-depth residents’ satisfaction survey focusing on South Hams and West Devon as a place. This was intended to follow the LGA model survey. The Council (along with South Hams District Council and Plymouth City Council through the JLP) has been successful in securing some time limited funding to trial an engagement software package ‘My Place’ asking residents to plot on a map how they feel about their local area. This is due to run through until November and we will await the output from that engagement activity before designing and delivering a further residents satisfaction survey – we want to avoid ‘survey fatigue’

Subject to the findings of the ‘My Place’ survey the main focus of the residents’ satisfaction survey will be around West Devon as a place to live and work (which differs from the Institute of Customer Service survey that focuses on our processes and services). This insight is incredibly important as we look to deliver future year’s delivery plans for the Plan for West Devon.



Key Risks / Issues	
Capacity to deliver the survey could be challenging as we look to deliver on the Councils' core services.	
Looking ahead to the next 6 months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the response from the joint engagement piece 'My Place' Agree a plan and the questions for the Residents Satisfaction engagement with Lead Member 	
Overall Rating	AMBER: this has slipped from the original timetable, but it makes sense to wait until the data from the 'My Place' survey is available before progressing this action

Action IA 1.5 – we will ensure that our elected Members are accessible and have the knowledge required to help you where needed	
Key Highlights	
This was included in the Delivery Plan for 21/22 whereby we were to undertake a short engagement with our Councillors to ask what they need to effectively support our residents. We are planning to carry this out as part of the planning for the 2023 Election along with the Plans for an in-depth Induction Programme including a lessons-learnt exercise as to what we could have improved learning from the 2019 elections.	
Key Risks / Issues	
Seeking timely views of councillors on what they need to support residents and ensuring that the Election planning runs in a timely and effective way	
Looking ahead to the next 6 months	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member consultation before 2023 Election Planning and Induction Project 	
Overall Rating	AMBER: this action has slipped but we have a plan to get it back on track

This update will be considered by the West Devon Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on Tuesday 4 October 2022.

You can view the meeting by visiting our  **YouTube** channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDZEXV47SxBpXUDR6qbhtiA>

You can find out more about A Plan for West Devon by visiting
www.westdevon.gov.uk/plan-for-west-devon

