

# Overview and Scrutiny Scoping Document

<b>Title of review:</b>	<b>Customer Services</b>
<b>Date scope agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</b>	24 June 2022 <i>(subject to approval)</i> .
<b>Members:</b>	All non-Executive members of the Council have been offered the opportunity to participate in the Task and Finish Group. Members confirmed to date: Cllr Malcolm Grainger Cllr Allan Daniels Cllr Barbara Cannon Cllr Andrew Semple Cllr Peter Kendall
<b>Chair:</b>	Cllr Malcolm Grainger
<b>Reasons for and purpose of review:</b> (key issues and/or reason for doing the review)	<p>The Council has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to change how it operates. This has come after a sustained period of reduced government funding for all councils.</p> <p>Councillors are concerned to ensure that interactions with residents are as effective as possible from the perspective of residents and understand how the Council's Customer Focused strategy has continued to evolve through the current pandemic.</p> <p>The recent local government reorganisation announcement means that Allerdale Borough Council will be replaced by a new unitary local authority in 2023 covering the footprint of Allerdale, Copeland and Carlisle councils. It will be important to consider this context in relation to this review both in terms of transition to the new authority and how it plans to operate in the future.</p>

<p><b>Aims and objectives of the review:</b></p>	<p>The review is intended to focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To consider the impact on residents of appointment only and digital by default models of customer service</li> <li>• To consider how public service delivery hubs as ‘one stop shops’ for public services can be delivered, as detailed in the economic growth strategy.</li> <li>• To hear directly from customer service staff on the needs of residents</li> </ul> <p>The intention is that the review will identify recommendations that can either be implemented by Allerdale Borough Council in the short term or carried forward as recommendations for the new unitary authority to consider.</p>
<p><b>Links to Council Strategy:</b></p>	<p>The review is about interaction with residents, and this relates particularly to the ‘Outstanding local services’ priority theme set out in the Council Strategy. This theme has the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make it easy for customers to contact us</li> <li>▪ Ensure we get it right first time</li> <li>▪ Be bold in our use of technology</li> <li>▪ Look at different and better ways to deliver services.</li> </ul> <p>The Customer Access Strategy is also relevant here as it sets out the Councils approach to how it interacts with residents and businesses in handling queries and issues.</p>
<p><b>Potential barriers/risks/issues:</b></p>	<p>Allerdale Borough Council will be replaced by Cumberland Council on 1 April 2023. This means that there will be limited opportunity for Allerdale Borough Council to implement any recommendations from this review, but as stated above the review recommendations would stand as a reference for the new unitary authority.</p>
<p><b>Timescales for review:</b> (including indicative milestones)</p> <p><b>Committee meeting:</b></p> <p><b>Executive/Council meeting:</b></p>	<p>September - November</p>
<p><b>Methodology/approach:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At their meeting on 27 May 2022 OSC members were supportive of the</li> </ul>

<p>(what types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence and why)</p>	<p>establishment of a task and finish group to consider this review topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed approach is that the TFG use the following methods to gather evidence:</li> <li>• Capture the experience of front line staff using an informal visit or workshop</li> <li>• A report from Council Management on Customer Services;</li> <li>• Residents: hearing directly from residents. Looking at satisfaction surveys following interaction with the council's customer service team</li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible witnesses/participants:</b> (for written and oral evidence)</p> <p>- subject to review as evidence becomes available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected members (Allerdale Borough Council)</li> <li>• Customer service staff (Allerdale Borough Council)</li> <li>• Members and Officers of other local authorities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible sources of documentary information:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice from other authorities</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny Reports from other authorities</li> <li>• Customer Service studies from trade associations and academic institutions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential site visits:</b></p>	<p>To be determined by the TFG.</p>
<p><b>Officer support:</b> (including roles)</p>	<p>Scrutiny support for TFG activity will be provided by the Strategy, Policy and Performance team</p>
<p><b>Resource requirements:</b> (Budget)</p>	<p>No additional budget resource identified – any expenses can be met from existing budgets.</p>
<p><b>Publicity requirements (if applicable):</b></p>	<p>Not at the scoping stage.</p>