

JULY 2020

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2020-21

MOORABOOL SHIRE COUNCIL

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Message from the Mayor and CEO

Moorabool Shire is growing fast. Our picturesque surrounds, vibrant community, and great location are attracting new residents and investment, and our population is set to double over the next twenty years.

At the same time that our population is growing, our world is changing significantly. Trends like urban sprawl, the prevalence and use of digital technology, extreme climate events, and higher expectations from customers are all contributing to the need to redesign our services.

If we are to create a safe and prosperous future for Moorabool Shire we need to work together – to understand the needs and aspirations of residents, businesses and visitors so that Moorabool Shire Council can provide the services and advocacy that are needed, and do that in an inclusive, consistent, reliable, efficient and seamless way.

This Customer Experience Strategy is a step forward in understanding our customers. It marks the start of a journey of transforming the delivery of services to further support the healthy growth of Moorabool. It outlines what we have learned to date, and our plans for the immediate future.

Cr David Edwards
Mayor

Derek Madden
CEO

How this strategy was developed

This Customer Experience Strategy was developed between February and June 2020. The strategy is based on a number of different pieces of research that were consolidated and synthesised in order to develop findings, recommendations, and a plan of action.

The research which informed this strategy includes:

- 444 interviews with customers who have used Moorabool Shire Council services in the previous 9 months (Customer & services survey 2020)
- a survey of 400 Moorabool Shire residents (Community Satisfaction Survey 2020)
- 146 responses to a survey of all Moorabool Shire Council employees, plus in-depth interviews with Moorabool Shire frontline staff
- A workshop with the Moorabool Shire Council executive team

Analysis was also conducted to better understand the number of, type of and channel used for customer enquiries and requests, and the cost of providing customer service was modelled for several frequently used Council services.



The infographic is divided into four panels. The top-left panel shows two people standing next to a large glowing lightbulb. The top-right panel has a dark background with two columns of text. The bottom-left panel has a pink background with text. The bottom-right panel shows three people holding a large purple megaphone.

WHAT IS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

Customer experience is the overall experience customers have of Council. Customer experience is affected by everything we do, including customer service, customer communications, the services we offer and how we offer them.

WHO ARE OUR CUSTOMERS?

Our customers are anyone who interacts with us or uses our services – that includes residents, ratepayers, businesses, investors and visitors.

WHY DO WE NEED A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY?

The Customer Experience Strategy defines how Council will design and deliver service experiences that are consistent, reliable, inclusive, easy to use, and meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

Our customers



Pridhee & Amit are a couple in their thirties who have moved to Moorabool to raise their young family. Their eldest child attends Darley Kindergarten and they use occasional care for their youngest when Amit and Pridhee are rostered on at the same time. They love going to the park or playground as a family but are concerned that sometimes dog owners do not leash their dogs in the area.

Shae is a single Mum in her forties with a teenage daughter. She moved to Ballan for the lifestyle and lower cost-of-living. She spends a lot of time on the road driving her daughter to activities and is concerned about the state of the roads between Bacchus Marsh/Ballan and her home. Her daughter has been struggling and Shae is keen to get help but does not know where to go.



Dora is a widow living in Bacchus Marsh. Her children have all moved out of the area so she gets help with day-to-day tasks around the home through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, which is delivered by Moorabool Shire Council.

Robyn & John have a hobby farm near Bungaree. Since their kids left home, Robyn and John have spent more time getting involved with the local community. Robyn is the events coordinator with her local small business networking group and is responsible for liaising with the Council for use of community rooms. John has set up a side business restoring farm machinery.



What we have learned

We have spoken to over 800 customers and 150 Council employees to understand what we need to do to transform the delivery of Council services and support the healthy growth of Moorabool Shire. What we learned includes:

Our responses to customer enquiries are not always clear, responsive, consistent or empathetic

Customers told us that we do not always provide clear or consistent responses to requests or follow up when we say we will, and that almost half the time they need to contact us more than once or be transferred between departments to resolve an issue. They also say they do not always feel we care about them and their situation, and we take too long to action requests.¹

We do not have good online options for our services

About 40% of customers would prefer to interact with us online, but only 6% do because we do not offer that option for all services. When we do offer a digital option, it is often not very user-friendly.²

Our staff do not have the tools and training they need

Our staff care deeply about our customers, and customers tell us that they like dealing with our staff. What holds us back is that our staff do not always have the right technology and tools to allow them to focus on the important part of a customer interaction – delivering a great customer experience.³

No one is responsible for collecting and analysing customer insights

Many areas of our organisation are dealing with customers and we have several software systems which collect customer information, but no one is responsible for collecting all of this information into one place and analysing it so that we can provide better services.

We do not track how we are performing in terms of customer satisfaction

Our staff say they do not know how they and the organisation are performing in terms of customer service and customer satisfaction because we do not measure and communicate this or set targets for improvement.⁴

“The customer service person did the best she could, but she had to keep going back and forth”

“They could have been more understanding towards me”

“They put me through a lot of different departments to deal with my enquiry”

“The website is not intuitive or user friendly and I couldn't pay online”

“I was assured I would get a phone call. I have not received the phone call or any contact at all, and the issue has not been resolved”

“When I applied, they said it would take ten business days, but it took over a month”

“I spoke to three different people on three different occasions and got three different answers”

41% of customers would prefer to interact with



Council online if the option was available, but today 83% of contact is via the phone or in-person



Customers rate our overall performance at 66 out of 100, slightly below other Victorian councils



Customers appreciate our front-line staff; customer satisfaction is highest for face-to-face interactions (78% of customers satisfied) and lowest for email (60% satisfied)

35% of customers say we need to do better at providing clear & timely responses



Moorabool has fewer residents under 18 or over 65 than the Victorian average

Road maintenance is the area of Council performance most commonly cited by residents as needing improvement



Customers tell us our performance has worsened slightly when it comes to community advocacy and engagement

What we are going to do

Our key focus areas for 2020-21

We have taken what we have learned and developed a strategy to guide our activities over the next financial year.

Our focus areas for 2020-21 are:

1. **Listen:** Listen and understand our customers through research and community consultation
2. **Design:** Design and improve services by prioritising insights, needs, and areas for improvements
3. **Deliver:** Deliver every day on our customer promise and provide a consistent experience across all channels
4. **Measure:** Measure and communicate our performance
5. **Build culture:** Build and sustain a customer centric culture worth celebrating

The principles that will guide us:

- **Customer-centric design:** we will use the insights we get from listening deeply to customers and use them to redesign our services, processes, documentation, information and communication channels
- **Choice:** we will improve the breadth, quality, accessibility and useability of our online information and services so that customers can choose to interact with us digitally instead of being forced to call, write or visit us in person
- **Transparency and accountability:** we will measure, monitor and report on our progress towards becoming more customer-centric (see “How we will measure our progress”)
- **Collaboration:** we will establish formal mechanisms to ensure that we collaborate across the organisation to solve customers' problems, showcase results and foster culture change
- **Staff well-being:** we will design our services to provide a good employee experience, as well as a good customer experience.

Our goal: to provide services that are consistent, reliable, inclusive, easy to use, and meet the needs of our customers.

Our action plan

Focus area	Initiative	Target completion date
1. Listen	Develop a fact base of insights	Aug 2020
	Implement a Voice of Customer innovation framework	Apr 2021
	Enable a single view of customer / single ID across council	Ongoing
	Develop a 'Customer data and insights' centre of excellence	Jun 2021
2. Design	Set up the CX and innovation team	July 2020
	Prioritise insights, identify areas for improvements and test solutions	Ongoing
	Develop an omni-channel customer experience strategy	Dec 2020
	Drive digital uptake	Ongoing
3. Deliver	Set up an omni-channel contact centre	July 2020
	Develop and implement a quality assurance framework	Dec 2020
	Provide training and coaching to Customer Service staff	Ongoing
	Build and sustain a knowledge database	Ongoing
	Roll out live chat and social media for Customer Service officers	Completed
4. Measure	Develop customer performance dashboard	Aug 2020
	Develop a digitisation dashboard	Aug 2020
	Provide easy access to dashboard for front line and service managers	Mar 2021
	Report and communicate on performance	Mar 2021
5. Build culture	Develop and roll out a 'Customer First' training program for all staff	Jun 2021
	Align performance management to 'Customer First' skills	Jun 2021
	Communicate internally: celebrate successes and share customer insights and stories	Ongoing

How we will measure our progress

To ensure we are on the right track, we are going to track our progress in the following areas. Some areas we monitor already, but for others we will need to develop methods for tracking and reporting. We will start reporting our progress on those new measures when data is available.

Areas we can track immediately

Area of focus	Measurement to be used	Baseline ⁵
User satisfaction with overall Council performance	% of surveyed users satisfied or very satisfied with overall Council performance	56%
User satisfaction with most frequently used services	% of surveyed users satisfied or very satisfied with the service	69%
User satisfaction with customer service	% of surveyed users satisfied or very satisfied with the customer service they received	74%
First contact resolution	% customer interactions resolved at the first point of contact	53%

Areas we will develop measures for

- **Timeliness:** how quickly we respond to customer requests
- **Follow-up:** whether we are following up with customers when we say we will
- **Availability of digital services:** what % of our services are available online
- **Staff engagement:** whether or not we are providing staff with the tools and training they need to deliver great customer service
- **Cost-to-serve:** the labour and other costs associated with completing a customer request or enquiry.

Notes and references

1. Moorabool Shire Council Customer Satisfaction Survey May 2020, conducted by newfocus, hereafter abbreviated to “Customer & services survey 2020”
2. Verint 2016, “The Digital Tipping Point: How do Organisations in Australia and New Zealand Balance the Demands for Digital and Human Customer Service?”, hereafter abbreviated to “Verint 2016”
3. Customer service team interviews, March/April 2020
4. Customer service team interviews, March/April 2020
5. Customer & services survey 2020. Note: an alternative real-time way to measure these may be developed.



THANK
YOU

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