

Role profile

Job Title:	Assistant Director, Customer Services	Grade:	CB2
Department:	Customer Services	Post no.:	TBC
Directorate:	Resources	Location:	Perceval House

Role reports to:	Strategic Director, Resources
Direct reports:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Director, Financial Assessment • Head of Customer Contact • Head of Registration Services • Service Improvement Manager • Project Manager • Contract and Project Manager – Out of Hours Partnership
Indirect reports:	c150 staff in above teams

Job description

Purpose of role

The Assistant Director of Customer Services provides strategic leadership for customer access and experience across the council working with senior officers, members and other partners on customer access and experience. The role leads the Customer Access Strategy, and related strategies and plans ensuring these are aligned to wider council objectives, including connected communities.

The role will ensure high-quality and inclusive contact channels (digital, phone and face-to-face) driving transformation and continuous improvement through innovation, best practice and emerging technologies to improve outcomes for residents.

The Assistant Director of Customer Services is the council's principal adviser on customer experience to members, the Strategic Leadership Team and their directorates, combining specialist knowledge and creative thinking with practical and pragmatic and operational solutions to ensure consistent customer service standards across the council.

The role is responsible for the strategic vision and leadership and strong operational management and deliver of high-volume contact and activity of the Customer Services department which includes Financial Assessment, Customer Contact, Complaints, Registrars and Out of Hours customer contact.

Role specific accountabilities

- Ensure strong and visible leadership in setting the strategic vision and direction for the customer services both within the department and within the wider council as the key adviser and representative for customer access and experience.
- Champion and drive the council's and service transformation and change programmes and initiatives through innovation, reform, modernisation and continuous review of services.
- Ensure that customer access channels are inclusive and accessible to all residents and other customers across telephones, face to face and digital services, including driving wider digital inclusion as part of the Customer Access Strategy.
- Develop and implement customer elements of the digital strategy working closely with the AD Digital and ICT to deliver an excellent customer experience for the council by developing digital services, exploiting technology to drive customer and resident satisfaction.
- Engage with the Strategic Leadership Team and wider leadership team to understand and support customer experience, supporting them in delivering council wide customer service standards and ensuring services run within the Customer Services department meet their needs.
- Ensure the smooth operation of customer contract services including digital services, customer contact telephone centre, community hubs including the out of hours service.
- Ensure the smooth, efficient and timely processing of housing benefits, social care financial assessment, local welfare assistance, housing payments, council tax support and blue badges.
- Ensure the registrars service operates efficiently and in accordance with the requirements of the General Register Office.
- Ensure an efficient corporate complaints service and consider the development of customer services arising from insight from complaints received.
- Manage the Crisis and Resilience Fund, working across the council and with the Voluntary and Community Sector to improve outcomes for residents.
- Monitor and manage department performance supporting compliance, business operations, scrutinising performance information and data and - making evidence-based decisions which drive continuous service improvement.
- Provide advice to the Strategic Director - Resources on all matters relating to the post, deputising at meetings as required.

People management and development

- Responsible for the recruitment, development, and training of staff and for managing their performance to meet organisational objectives.
- Collaborate and actively seek to share knowledge and experience and develop learning and practice with other members of the wider leadership and resources teams.
- Proactively cultivate relationships with councillors, leadership and directorate teams.
- Ensure the council has a reputation as a great employer through excellent practice in equality, diversity and inclusion and through fair and compassionate leadership and management.

Financial management

- Maintain financial transparency and work with Resources budget holders and the council's finance team to ensure that budgets are accurately set, managed and reported and managed within available budgets, managing pressures and identifying and delivering savings.
- As part of the directorate's management team, ensures that the directorate's overall portfolio of work and funding align with the broader council financial and strategic goals.
- Proactively work with the council's corporate teams (such as workforce, change, digital and ICT and finance, amongst others) to support the council's operating model, organisational structure, risk mitigations and change requirements within a sustainable financial envelope.

Key performance indicators

- Customer Services – key indicators such as customer satisfaction, wait times
- Financial Assessments – key indicators such as processing times
- Crisis and Resilience Fund – proxy indicators for outcomes
- Corporate customer access – resident survey results
- Departmental business plan targets and performance indicators including indicators relating to financial, employee and customer performance.

Key relationships (internal and external)

- Strategic Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer)
- Resources Directorate Management Team, including Finance and Digital & ICT
- Chief Executive
- Strategic Directors and their Departmental Management Teams and other Heads of Service
- Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy, Cabinet Member for Decent Living Incomes and other Cabinet members

- Scrutiny Committee members
- External suppliers including consultants and contractors and other delivery partners
- Regional/ national professional networks
- Partner organisations including Voluntary and Community Sector, NHS organisations, schools, other local authorities and Trade unions / staff representatives
- Government departments, specifically the Department for Work and Pensions
- Local Government Ombudsman

Authority level

- Lead adviser on all matters relating to customer services, customer access and customer experience
- Delegations as set out in the Constitution and Scheme of Delegated Powers including:
 - All aspects of people management including effective recruitment, induction, employee relations, performance management, disciplinary and grievance matters
 - Policy development and implementation subject to Strategic Director, Resources, SLT and Member consultation and approval as appropriate
 - To oversee/monitor and challenge service revenue c£6.6m (excluding Housing Benefit Subsidy), capital and project budgets
 - To manage supplier contracts, primarily out of hours and other contracts
 - To manage grants received by and paid by the department
- Deputise for Strategic Director, Resources where required.

Person specification

Community and partnership working are essential for all roles as are a commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and ensuring Health and Safety at Work for everyone working at Ealing Council.

Recruitment practices to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults apply to this post in addition to the requirement to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Essential knowledge, skills, and abilities

1. Detailed knowledge and understanding of customer service, customer access and experience in a local authority context.
2. Strong leadership and staff management skills including recruitment, selection and induction, team development, performance appraisal and management, mentoring and coaching.
3. Ability to work corporately, across directorates and teams to influence and support integrated and consistent customer services.
4. Ability to think, plan and act strategically and corporately, with a creative approach to problem solving and delivering in challenging circumstances and with competing priorities.
5. Ability to interpret information, manage risks and make recommendations.
6. Exceptional communication and presentation skills with the ability to communicate successfully at all levels to a variety of audiences.
7. Knowledge and understanding of legislation, government guidance, codes of practice, industry standards relating to customer services; complaints, financial assessments, benefits & welfare services and registrars.
8. Demonstrates a high level of political acumen and the ability to provide responsive, impartial advice to councillors, Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet members.

Essential qualification(s) and experience

1. A track record of the strategic leadership, management and change at senior level in customer services.
2. Experience at a senior level of the preparing analysis, advice and strategies, policies and procedures to support strategic objectives and their delivery and implementation.
3. A track record of delivering service improvements in a senior role within a large organisation.
4. Sound operational experience, including leading large teams, within a customer services, benefits and welfare context.

Values and behaviours

Improved life for residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is passionate about making Ealing a better place • Can see and appreciate things from a resident point of view • Understands what people want and need • Encourages change to tackle underlying causes or issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does what they say they will do on time • Is open and honest • Treats all people fairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious and confident in leading partnerships • Offers to share knowledge and ideas • Challenges constructively and respectfully listens to feedback • Overcomes barriers to develop our outcomes for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tries out ways to do things better, faster and for less cost • Brings in ideas from outside to improve performance • Takes calculated risks to improve outcomes • Learns from mistakes and failures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making • Makes things happen • Acts on feedback to improve performance • Works to high standards