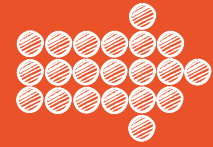# Our People Values

"Putting customer need at the heart of everything we do"

Provide high quality services which meet the express needs of the community by:

- Prioritising customer need
- Treating customers with respect and courtesy
- Consulting customers in the development of services and seeking feedback on the quality and level of service delivery
- Analysing complaints and developing improvement plans
- Act on commitments to customers.
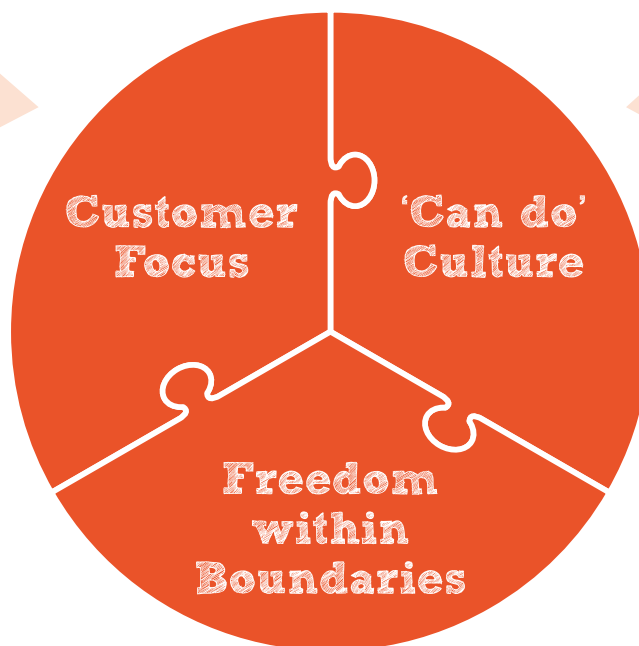
## "Being proactive to achieve excellence"

Finding solutions and creative ways of working not blocked by bureaucracy by:

- Making things happen
- Being innovative and seeking solutions beyond traditional approaches
- Taking managed risks and supporting colleagues to take managed risks
- Using positive language to identify what will happen, rather than that which will not
- Acting on others' long term interests.

Customer Focus · **'Can do' Culture** · **Freedom within Boundaries**

"Courage to make constructive change"

Cohesive decision making, ensuring services are responsive to needs by:

- Taking ownership
- Enabling people to have as much freedom as possible in determining change
- Constructively challenging boundaries where they cause blockages
- Developing professional competence to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Supporting colleagues to achieve excellence.
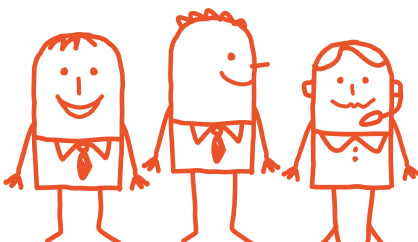
People Make a Great Organisation

Find out more on SID

worcestershire
county council

Customer Focus: Behavioural Descriptors

Prioritising Customer Need

- Accurately identifies customer need, and perceives customer service standards from the customers' perspective
- Anticipates potential service failures and puts in place preventative action
- Ensures consistency in providing a quality, timely and efficient service by agreeing and implementing SMART objectives and targets to achieve required outcomes
- Communicates complex information in a way which is easy to understand and effectively uses a range of communications tools and techniques
- Responds quickly to requests, prioritises action and ensures a satisfactory resolution
- Initiates communication with others, particularly in difficult situations Establishes, implements and communicates internal standards for quality and customer service.

Treating Customers with Respect and Courtesy

- Monitors personal performance and actively seeks customer feedback to identify areas of improvement
- Proactively keeps customers informed of progress by using the most appropriate method and style of communication for the situation and people involved
- Successfully adapts personal style to meet the situation, acting in a fair and unbiased manner.
- Communicates written and oral information clearly and concisely by providing the right information to the right people at the right time
- Listens carefully and asks questions to ensure personal understanding, and checks that others understand.
- Takes into account the impact of any communication on the recipient and maintains confidentiality and security of information where appropriate.

Analysing complaints and developing improvement plans

- Monitors and evaluates compliance with quality, safety and customer service standards across the service to ensure the issue is rectified before the problem occurs
- Actively learns from customer complaints, developing responsive action plans
- Providing feedback to complainants regarding progress through WCC procedures as appropriate, and final outcome
- Actively shares learning from complaints with colleagues as appropriate
- Consults colleagues in the development of improvement plans
- Actively supports the review of improvement plans, continuously developing practice.

Act on Commitments to Customers

- Deals effectively with service issues/failures and puts in place corrective measures to ensure they do not happen again
- Accepts personal responsibility for own customer service and quality ensuring commitments are delivered
- Takes proactive action to prevent poor quality and service standards
- Tackles unpopular tasks in order to achieve agreed outcomes, and actively works to overcome personal differences
- Considers wider team issues when taking the customer's needs into account and consults with colleagues regarding appropriate responses.
- Proactively approaches other teams to build and strengthen relationships.

Consulting Customers in the Development of Services and Seeking Feedback on the Quality and Level of Service Delivery

- Ensures effective communication and organisational channels are in place to obtain and respond to customer feedback
- Supports local mechanisms to enable customer feedback and airing of concerns
- Encourage customers to participate in setting organisational standards and objectives and are involved in evaluating the impact.
- Documents customer feedback in order to develop and implement remedial action plans
- Supports a customer-led outcome-focused model
- Seeks out and acts on constructive feedback.

Unhelpful behaviours for Customer Focus:

- Fails to communicate effectively
- Interrupts and/or talks over others
- Is rude and insensitive
- Responds defensively
- Writes ungrammatical and/or illogical communications
- Uses aggressive or inappropriate body language
- Uses jargon
- Dramatises communication or uses emotion inappropriately
- Does not comply with organisational procedures and legal requirements
- Does not listen to customers, or assuming knowledge of what the customer wants
- Makes promises that cannot be delivered
- Is unresponsive, unhelpful and inflexible with customers
- Ignores service failure, or takes a 'superior professional view'
- Allows an unsafe working environment.

'Can do' Culture: Behavioural Descriptors

Making things happen

- Works collaboratively with internal and external partners to ensure quality excellence and customer service
- Personal objectives and action plans demonstrably align with organisational vision and strategy.
- Challenges and investigates where expected results are not being achieved
- Develops, implements and measures progress and achievement of local work plans
- Applies sound professional judgement to resolve customers' issues
- Consults appropriately and accepts responsibility for own actions.

Use positive language to identify what will happen, rather than that which will not

- Actively seeks solutions to identified problems, adopting a positive approach to achieving outcomes
- Communicates achievement of personal outcomes and good practice to further customer delivery, applying knowledge and skills to achieve team and individual goals
- Confronts unethical or inappropriate behaviour providing alternative positive behaviours
- Keeps up-to-date with knowledge and skill developments in service area
- Encourages others to reflect on and learn from their work experiences in a process of continuous improvement
- Participates in all required learning and development activities.

Being innovative and seeking solutions beyond traditional approaches

- Actively seeks external benchmarks for excellence
- Contributes to an environment where ideas and suggestions are encouraged and nurtured, being aware of resource implications
- Finds different and innovative ways of involving customers in service provision
- Exploits best practice and new thinking being prepared to adopt the unconventional and take calculated risks
- Builds commitment and enthusiasm to change amongst other team members, encouraging others to challenge their pre-conceived ideas
- Reflects on own actions and considers ways to improve.

Taking managed risks and supporting colleagues to take managed risks

- Balances achieving organisational outcomes with managing risks
- Demonstrates proficient knowledge in own area of work to identify and assess risk appropriately taking into account probability and severity
- Factors risk-management into all activities consulting team members as appropriate
- Takes action to avoid or mitigate potential risks
- Uses own judgement when the decision is not clear cut
- Documents risk assessment and mitigating actions for evidence.

Acting in others' long term interests

- Accurately identifies and documents customers' needs
- Takes responsibility for others only after reasoned consideration that it would increase the likelihood of inappropriate harm if action was not to be taken
- Consistently looks for the optimum use of resources across teams/projects
- States and upholds Worcestershire County Council's expectations and relevant professional standards
- Actively seeks feedback to identify behaviours, standards and performance need, addressing and promptly acts to take remedial action
- Effectively balances short term results with medium term strategy.

Unhelpful behaviours for 'Can do' Culture:

- Unwilling to see things from others' perspectives
- Always finds a reason for not doing something new and unwilling to try new things and give them a chance
- Says "we've always done it this way" to block new ideas and options. Blocks change
- Is inflexible and unable to adapt personal style.
- Harbours grudges
- Does not complete required learning and development activities
- Discourages new thinking or ways of working and uses resources inefficiently
- Does not keep others informed. Consistently fails to meet agreed objectives
- Takes inappropriate risks. Takes decisions without considering the consequences
- Endangers the health & safety of self and others.
- Creates barriers to effective performance.

Freedom within Boundaries: Behavioural Descriptors

Taking ownership

- Proactively drives excellence by keeping up to date with current practice standards, and implementing evidence-based practice.
- Ensures own tasks are completed on time, within budget and to the required standards
- Achieves personal objectives and contributes to team or service targets
- Remains motivated and energised at work when under pressure or when faced with setbacks, recognising the impact of own actions, behaviour and language on others
- Consistently reflects on and evaluates own performance
- In conflict situations, open to consider own part in the process.

Enabling people to have as much freedom as possible in determining change

- Creates, builds and maintains enduring partnerships across internal and external boundaries
- Contributes to a 'one-team' spirit and a common alignment of purpose
- Actively contributes to all internal and external partnerships to ensure they support Worcestershire County Council's strategic plan/direction
- Places the team agenda before own personal agenda
- Maintains a professional work-focused relationship at all times even through difficult times of change
- Collaborates with others to explore common opportunities and/or resolve challenges, demonstrating a willingness to compromise, respecting individual differences and contribution.

Supporting colleagues to achieve excellence

- Actively supports the team to have and maintain a safe working environment
- Encourages and motivates others to strive for the highest standards of customer service
- Supports meeting team objectives within budget and time parameters
- Regularly volunteers to help others achieve outcomes, willingly assisting others to learn and develop
- Actively champions Worcestershire County Council's vision and values across the organisation
- Actively champions a culture of learning and development across the organisation.

Constructively challenging boundaries where they cause blockages

- Uses knowledge to develop best practice and make suggestions for implementation
- Identifies barriers to achieving excellence and provides solutions and where necessary consults and seeks assistance to overcome barriers
- Challenges the need for activities that that do not contribute positively to agreed outcomes
- Supports the use of resources to maximise value for money
- Challenges out-of-date practices and proposes best practice
- Takes the difficult or unpopular decisions.

Developing professional competence to improve efficiency and effectiveness

- Identifies personal skill or resource shortages and takes action to resolve them
- Identifies and highlights key messages for communicating within the team
- Produces communications that are brief, to the point and contain accurate and relevant content
- Ensures that the content and style of any communication is well researched, thoroughly prepared and appropriate to the audience
- Actively consults and seeks others' views regarding practice development
- Effectively represents and articulates others' view points.

Unhelpful behaviours for Freedom within Boundaries:

- Undermines Worcestershire County Council
- Does not lead by example
- Does not keep up-to-date with development in own professional area
- Restricts opportunities for others to learn and develop
- Blames others for own mistakes
- Avoids involving others
- Displays unethical behaviour
- Commits beyond own remit
- Avoids sharing knowledge and skills
- Fails to link knowledge and skills to job performance
- Creates an unpleasant working environment for others
- Allows personal agendas to override others.