



DUBBO REGIONAL
COUNCIL

Customer Experience Strategy

2021 - 2027



Vision of statement

It takes determination to see the world through the customer's eyes and to redesign our services in ways that are truly customer-centric. Customer experience is not only about the quality of individual interactions we have with our customers – it's about their whole experience of Council and their perception of our role within the region. For Dubbo Regional Council (DRC), this is also about building positive experiences with our internal customers - our staff.

We are a diverse region, and our approach to Customer Experience takes into consideration the challenges that some people may face when interacting with DRC, including language barriers and access to technology. The latest statistics from REMPLAN show that the Dubbo Region is home to more than 54,000 people, and of those, approximately 15% are born outside Australia. We have more than 7,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people also living in our community, which makes up 15% of our total population – one of the largest in the state. We have hundreds of people choosing to migrate here every year, either from interstate, another LGA, or directly from overseas, and our services aim to support people who choose to call the Dubbo Region home. We have a roadmap for a better Dubbo Region, and our Customer Experience Strategy will play an important role in getting us to where we want to be. Over the next three years, this strategy is likely to touch every part of our organisation, because it is about the overall interaction of our services, systems and staff, not only those we have traditionally considered 'customer facing'.

Building great experiences for our customers involves many elements – people, service design, service channels, technology and data – but

importantly, it is about how these elements work together to meet customers' needs and leave them highly satisfied. To achieve this integration, we will focus on four key drivers for excellent customer experience; personalisation, connectivity, collaboration and engagement. We are operating in a fast-changing environment and need to grab opportunities as they present themselves and adapt to the challenges of today, but we must also orient our organisation for future change. In an increasingly digital environment, with a diverse range of people living in our community, we have the opportunity to better understand our customers, be clear about our commitment to them and embrace technology to let them do business with us, anytime and anywhere.

Rapid change demands effective measures. Customer Experience is about being measured by the quality of the customer's journey, not just their interaction with individual touchpoints. Under this strategy, we will shift our focus to measure our performance in improving ease of access, increasing convenience, as well as satisfaction and building loyalty.

I look forward to implementing this strategy across our organisation and the benefits it will bring to our community.



A message from the Chief Executive Officer – Murray Wood

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What is the Customer Experience Strategy and why was it developed?

“Our customers want simple, convenient, responsive and seamless service delivery”

The purpose of this strategy is to inform you, our customers, about how the teams and individuals across council are going to work to deliver seamless experiences for residents, businesses and our communities. By placing our customers at the heart of everything we do, and engaging both our staff and customers in planning for the future, council designs and delivers services that not only meet, but anticipate, our customers' diverse and evolving needs.

When you, our customer, use our services, we understand that you have different expectations, many factors can result in you having either a good or bad experience. By identifying and understanding where the problems lie across the end-to-end journey from the moment you recognize your need for our service, right through to the delivery of the service – we can identify ways we can improve those expectations.

Council's first Customer Experience Strategy aims to embody a practical roadmap including learnings from recent reviews which will ensure continual improvement to our customer experiences in the future.

The strategy outlines the customer experience drivers, objectives and guiding principles which council will focus on to deliver the best


experience possible for our customers. It links strongly with our Customer Experience Charter and is based on insights gathered through engagement, research, customer surveys and metrics.

Implementing this strategy will support our corporate vision of creating community for today and tomorrow, which enacts council's values of being Progressive, Sustainable, One Team and acting with Integrity.

“Customer Experience overshadows Customer Service”

A customer experience is the result of a relationship built with a customer during all points of contact. A journey from the customer's first initial awareness of requiring council's services right through to their final thoughts and feelings about how council met their needs. It encompasses the customer's feelings and their perception of the whole journey, whether council has met their expectations and the impression council has left on them.

For DRC, customer experience is a customer-centric approach rather than an organisational approach to our role. This method recognises that **how** we deliver for customers is as significant as **what** we deliver.

A woman with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a green polo shirt with the 'CRC DUBBO REGIONAL COUNCIL' logo, is smiling warmly at a customer. She is seated at a light-colored desk with a computer monitor, keyboard, and a telephone. A clear acrylic plexiglass barrier is positioned between them. The background shows a bright, modern office environment with large windows.

The voice of the customer.
Putting the customer first.

VISION

To make life easier for our residents, businesses and visitors, ensuring your experience is positive, more often.

PURPOSE

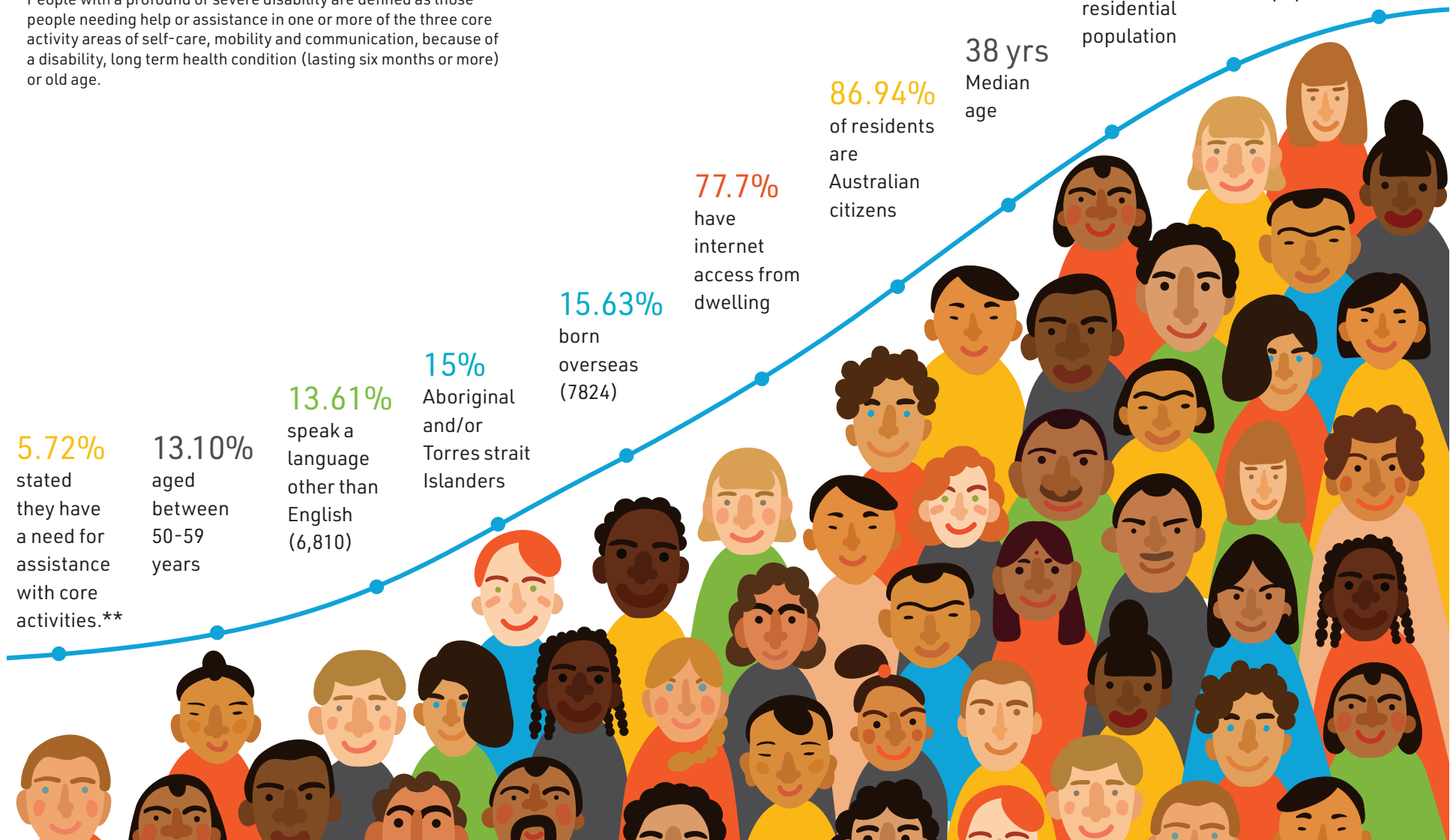
To create seamless and positive experiences by understanding our customers and orienting our organisation to anticipate and respond to their needs. Our purpose is inspired by, the voice of our customer, putting you first.

The present Snapshot Who are our customers?

[Source: Remplan]

** People with a profound or severe disability are defined as those people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition (lasting six months or more) or old age.

By 2036, a further **9,500** people are expected to make the Region home. The number of residents aged 50 years and below is projected to be 65% of the population.

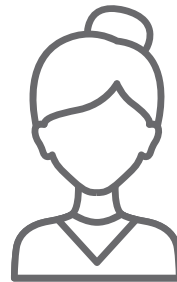


How our customers interact with us – Customer Experience Centre's



51,596

Customer calls received



8,359

Counter enquiries



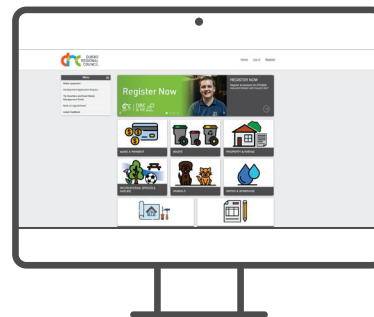
6,902

Customer emails received



193,000

Website visits,
unique page views



1,286

Service requests via
DRC&ME online portal

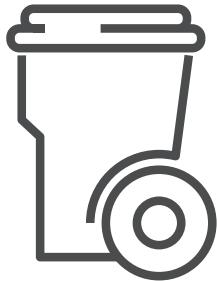


58,645

Service requests

* Statistics are for the 2020 calendar reporting period. COVID-19 may have had impact on these statistics.

Why our customers interact with us – Customer Experience Centre's



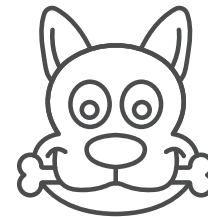
6,380

Waste enquiries



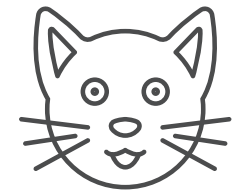
4,346

Water & sewerage enquiries



6,207

Animal related
- ranger enquiries



456

Animal registrations
lodged over the counter



11,379

Rates enquiries



394

DA's lodged at the counter



1392

Road related enquiries/calls



1007

Tree related enquiries/calls

* Statistics are for the 2020 calendar reporting period. COVID-19 may have had impact on these statistics.

Our Facilities & Businesses – How our customers interact with us



* Statistics are for the 2020 calendar reporting period. COVID-19 may have had impact on these statistics.

Trends and opportunities



An emerging & changing region

Our region's population is projected to grow by 9,500 people by 2036, creating significantly higher demand for our services.

To successfully manage this increasing demand, we must maintain and enhance access to these services, as well as driving cost effective service channels and technology.

Our region's culturally diverse community is growing. We are committed to providing appropriate, equitable and accessible services for all our customers. Access and inclusion is critical.



Customer expectations

Our customers' expectations and abilities are evolving. Increasingly, our customers expect to be engaged in the design of our services, and that our services adapt to change.

We will respond by creating opportunities to co-design services with our customers and respond to their ever-changing technical abilities. A seamless experience through any communication channel will be non-negotiable, while personal connection will be paramount. We will need to react to feedback with agility to predict our customers' future needs and expectations.



Technological change

Technological change will continue to transform the way we live, work, communicate and innovate.

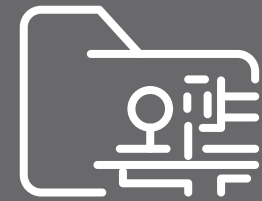
Keeping pace with these changes will be a key challenge for our council.

The way we capture, access, share and use data from these technologies is critical to that evolving transformation.



Staying human in a digital age

With new technologies enabling more automated and self-service options, we need to ensure that we work with our customers to achieve human-centred design. We need to look at a service from the perspective of the person using it, and then develop a suitable solution. Our service design and delivery will need to be intelligent and customised to build meaningful personal connections. We know our customers expect to interact with us through different channels, whether making online payments or sitting down with a staff member to discuss their home plans. Listening to our customers, engaging them in the design of our services and channels, and offering tailored solutions will be increasingly important over the course of this strategy and beyond.



Privacy and open data

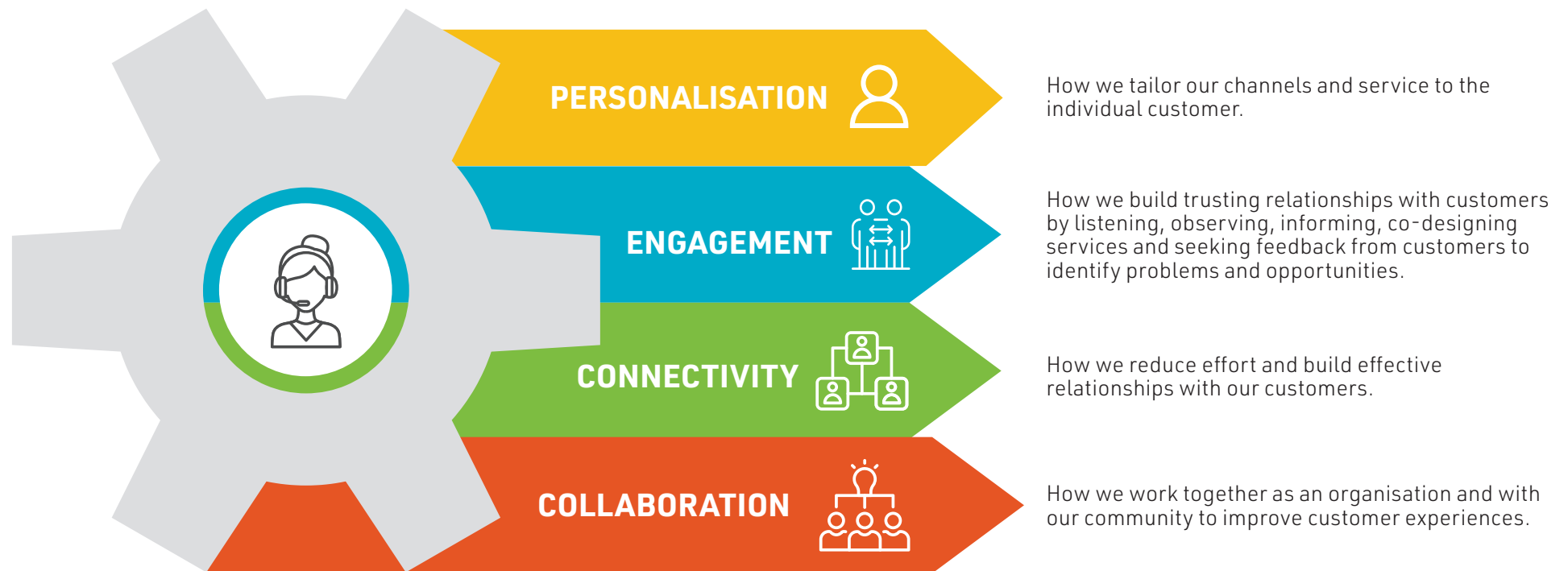
Customers want their data to be secure and kept private, but they also want a quick and easy experience that meets their unique needs.

This means we must remain vigilant in managing cyber security risks.

We often need to use a customer's personal data to provide a tailored experience, and trust must be maintained to ensure customers are comfortable providing information to us.

Customer experience drivers

We have identified four drivers for an excellent customer experience:

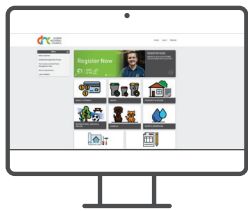


OUR CUSTOMERS

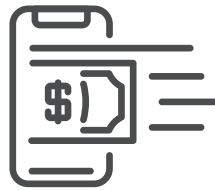
What our customers have told us:

We sourced feedback from a number of different areas that included our customer service quality assurance program, our community satisfaction survey, previous community consultation and feedback received through multiple channels including, face to face surveying, phone surveying and email surveys including all forms of compliments and complaints.

What our customers have said they want:



More online self-service options



More payment options



Jargon-free language and a dedicated channel for feedback across all services



Multi Channel Support for the community. Customers want to choose the channel that works for them, whether it's phone, email, social media, live chat, in person, mail or online



A guarantee that information on our website is always up to date and accurate

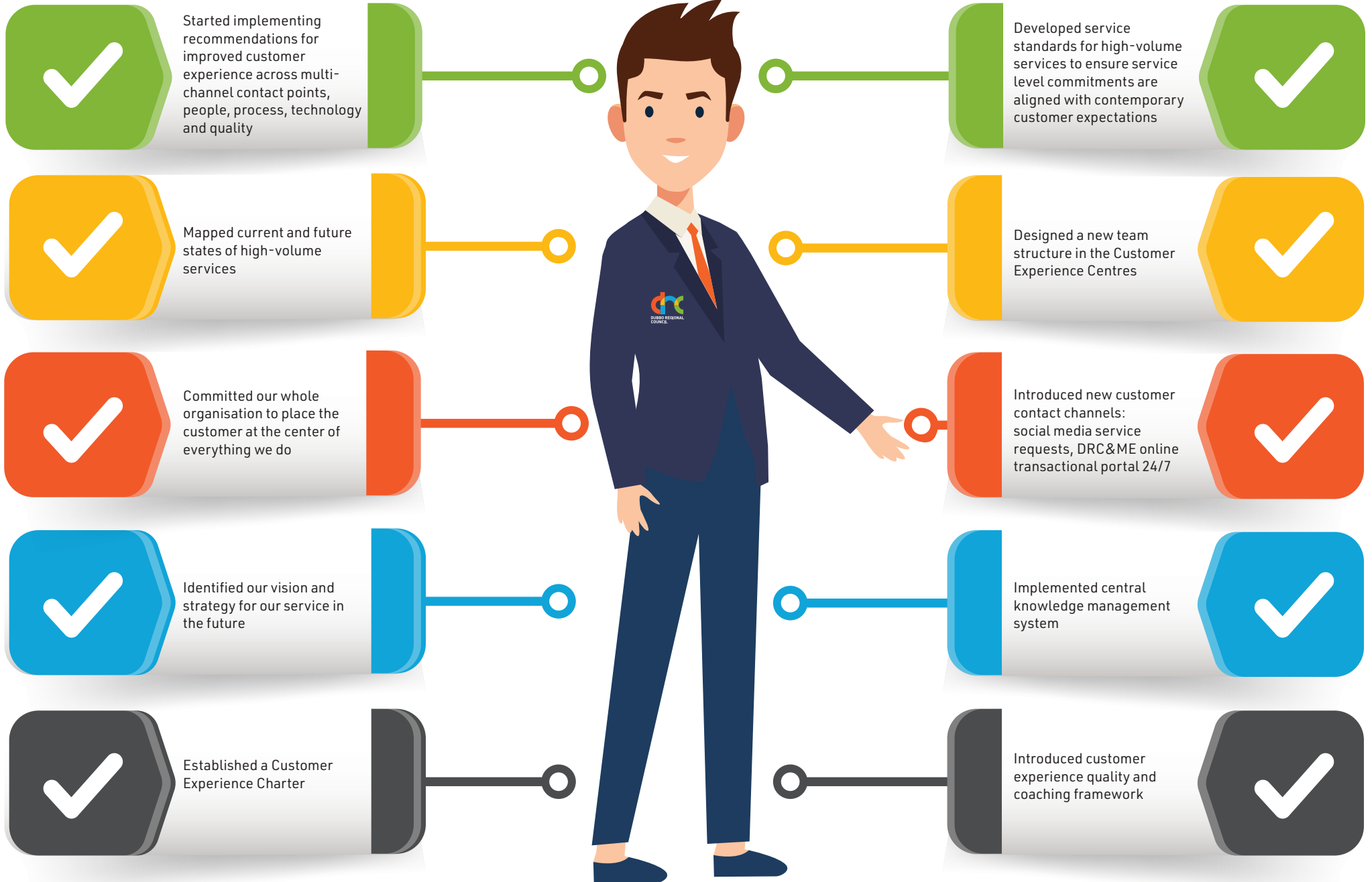


A commitment to acknowledge issues and deliver customer service within a set time whilst advising on progress

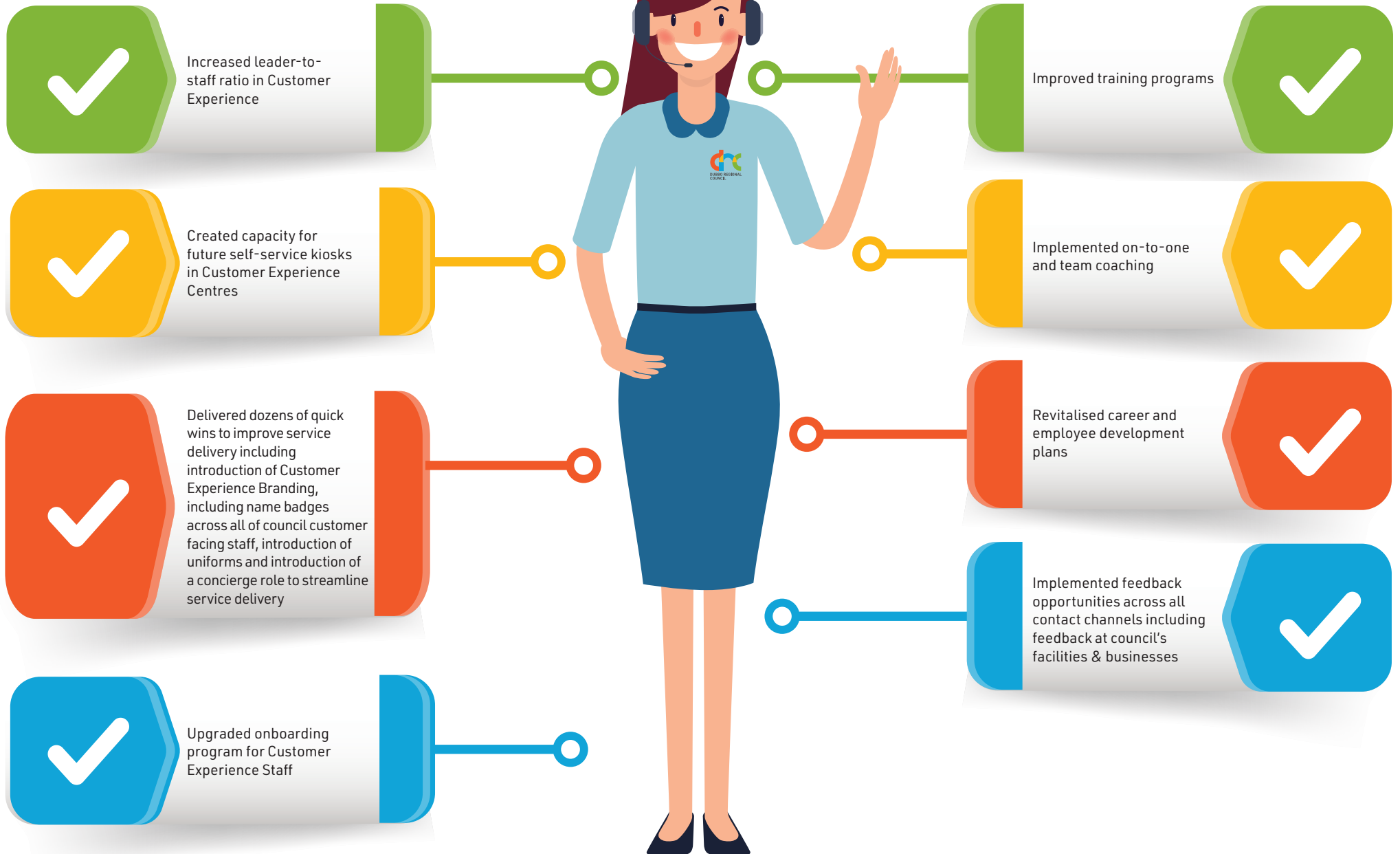


Clear expectations of the customer and what they can expect from staff including consistent communications

What we have already done



What we have already done



What we are working towards

It is time for our organisation to take the next step in creating better experiences for our customers and develop a Customer Experience Strategy that focuses on not just the interactions that we have with our customers, but the entire relationship we have with them.

Customer experience is championed across all functions of our diverse organisation.

Quality customer experiences, for internal and external, is critical to our day-to-day operations

Customer data and insights are used to make informed strategic and operational decisions



Strategy

We aim to deliver more positive customer experiences. Delivering improvements across each of the four customer experience drivers will improve our customer satisfaction. To achieve this, four principles will guide our efforts;

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



JOURNEY

Consider the customer journey and ensure a personalised customer experience is at the centre of everything we do, across all functions.



PROCESSES

Understand how our processes impact the customer, and work collaboratively to create seamless experiences



DATA

Ensure data is captured in real time, accessible to our customers and connected through the organisation so that we can continuously update our knowledge of customers' needs.



INNOVATION

Embed practices that enable us to engage with, understand and advocate for the voice of the customer, creating products and services to customers.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DRIVERS



PERSONALISATION

How we tailor our channels and service to the individual customer.



ENGAGEMENT

How we build trusting relationships with customers by listening, observing, informing, co-designing services and seeking feedback from customers to identify problems and opportunities.



CONNECTIVITY

How we reduce effort and build effective relationships with our customers.



COLLABORATION

How we work together as an organisation and with our community to improve customer experiences.

Action plan



PERSONALISATION

Consider the customer journey and ensure a personalised customer experience is at the centre of everything we do

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PROJECTS	WHEN
Measure the experience we are providing through our customer satisfaction feedback and metrics	Review the existing quality assurance program to streamline how we receive customer feedback	Year one
Implement intelligence-led customer improvement practices across the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a customer insights program to understand trends and anticipate emerging and future needs Investigate customer insight software programs that allow us to efficiently and easily locate customer insights within the information we have available 	Year two
Align and improve customer channels to give customers more ways to engage with us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of customer contact channels by implementing web chat Review current website and functionality for user experiences Review current forms to align council's branding, including replacing PDF forms with interactive online services 	Year one Year two Year one

Action plan



ENGAGEMENT

Adopt measures and practices that enable us to engage with, understand and advocate for the Voice of the Customer.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PROJECTS	WHEN
Employ a combination of measurements (to measure effort, satisfaction and loyalty) to provide a complete view of the customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a Customer Effort Score measurement that compliments our existing measures for Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) and for loyalty through the Net Promoter Score (NPS) 	Year three
Ensure staff performance reviews include measured, customer-centric performance expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include customer satisfaction scores into staff performance reviews 	Year two
Embed the Voice of the Customer into everyday practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Voice of the customer reporting in service design to build services that meet our customers' expectations and preferences Revise the Customer Experience Charter and Service Level Agreements to ensure that they still meet our customers' expectations 	Year two Year three

Action plan



CONNECTIVITY

Ensure data is captured in real time, accessible to our customers and connected throughout the organisation so that we can continuously update our knowledge of customer needs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PROJECTS	WHEN
Create and maintain a seamless single view of customers across all service delivery touchpoints, including history of interactions	• Implement software to allow our systems to integrate and provide single view of the customer	Year one
	• Streamline our communications to offer our customers tailored and relevant content	Year two
Maintain community confidence in security of all personal data obtained and held by Council	• Council update and implement Cyber Security Strategy and action plan	Year one
Activate an organisation-wide knowledge sharing program to encourage the flow of information and collaboration between departments	• Develop and build a knowledge sharing capability within the organisation by creating Customer Experience Knowledge champion groups	Year two
Employ technology and build adaptable systems and processes to meet customers' changing needs	• Investigate telephony systems that will provide data capture options and Omni-channel functionality	Year two

Action plan



COLLABORATION

Understand how our processes impact the customer, and work collaboratively to create positive experiences.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PROJECTS	WHEN
Work collaboratively across relevant departments and teams to identify opportunities and find solutions to improve channels and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot automated workforce solutions for rates enquiries to reduce administration burden and increase service turnaround times Customer request management review of all services and finding efficiencies in the way we respond to and manage service requests 	<p>Year two</p> <p>Year two</p>
Provide flexibility, so our workforce is scalable and can adjust to any location or task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement mobile technology solutions so that our staff can work anywhere and at any time Develop a council-wide approach to recruitment for customer-facing roles to ensure talent retainment. 	Year three
Collaborate with customers in co-design processes to ensure their needs and requirements are incorporated in service design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include service design projects in council's community engagement activities 	Year three

Measuring our progress

ONGOING

Customer Satisfaction Survey

We will measure customer satisfaction at the close of each request for service through all survey channels provided.

MONTHLY

Performance Reporting

We will measure our progress against our corporate customer satisfaction key performance indicators

WEEKLY

Customer Insights

We will provide feedback to departments on identified customer insights

Voice of the Customer

We will conduct quarterly reviews in alignment with our quality assurance program, including a review of complaints and regular feedback to allow us to identify gaps in customer experience delivery

QUARTERLY

Employee Feedback

We will conduct an employee survey yearly to identify any gaps or improvement suggestions. We will also include customer compliment and complaint feedback in staff performance reviews.

ANNUALLY



Customer Experience Measures

Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT)

CSAT measures a customer's satisfaction at the time of interaction and is represented as a score between one and 10. This metric focuses on a specific point in the customer's journey.

Customer Effort Score (CES)

CES measures the ease of interacting with our organisation. It measures the amount of effort a customer has to go through when seeking help, sourcing information or having a problem solved. Customer effort is directly linked to the overall customer experience.

Net Promoter Score (NPS)

NPS is used to measure customer loyalty. This score can range between -100 to 100 and is calculated based on the percentage difference between three categories of customers;

- Detractors – who are unhappy with our organisation or service and highly unlikely to recommend to a friend or family member
- Passives – Who are mostly satisfied and could easily be persuaded to become a promoter or detractor
- Promoter- who are loyal and enthusiastic, have had a great customer experience and will recommend us to a friend or family member



Did you know?

Last year we surveyed 12 thousand customers via our contact centre to gauge their satisfaction with recent interactions with us.

Our customer Satisfaction overall score was 94.4%

What will implementation of the strategy look like for you?

Design and deliver the right services



You may not think about the services we deliver very often – rubbish bins, roads, water and child care for example – but we think about your experiences using these services a lot. We are going to use your feedback to design and deliver the right services based on what matters most to you.

Co-design service experiences with you



We've been designing services for a long time and we recognise that there is no one better placed than you to tell us how you want our services to work for you. When we are redesigning service experiences, we're going to get you to help us by co-designing it with you. This will include ensuring we talk to people of all ages and cultural backgrounds.

You choose how you want to contact us



We know how frustrating it is to have only one option to contact us. We understand that some customers value human interaction whilst some prefer the convenience of digital options. We're going to ensure consistency of information across our website, forms and brochures so it's clear to you.

You'll only tell us once



Have you ever called us multiple times and had to repeat yourself every time? We're going to try to make that a thing of the past. We want you to only have to tell us once. The next time you contact us, we want to be able to remember why you're getting back in touch and anticipate how we can make this future contact as easy as possible.

Next Steps

To support delivery of this strategy, we will implement the following actions:

Implementation Support

Our Customer Experience team will elicit Managers to align their annual department business plan actions to the Customer Experience Strategy including the strategy incorporated in the 2040 Community Strategy Plan. The team will check-in with the departments on a quarterly basis to monitor their progress against the actions they have aligned to the strategy, with a primary focus on our more visible, customer facing departments.

Performance reporting

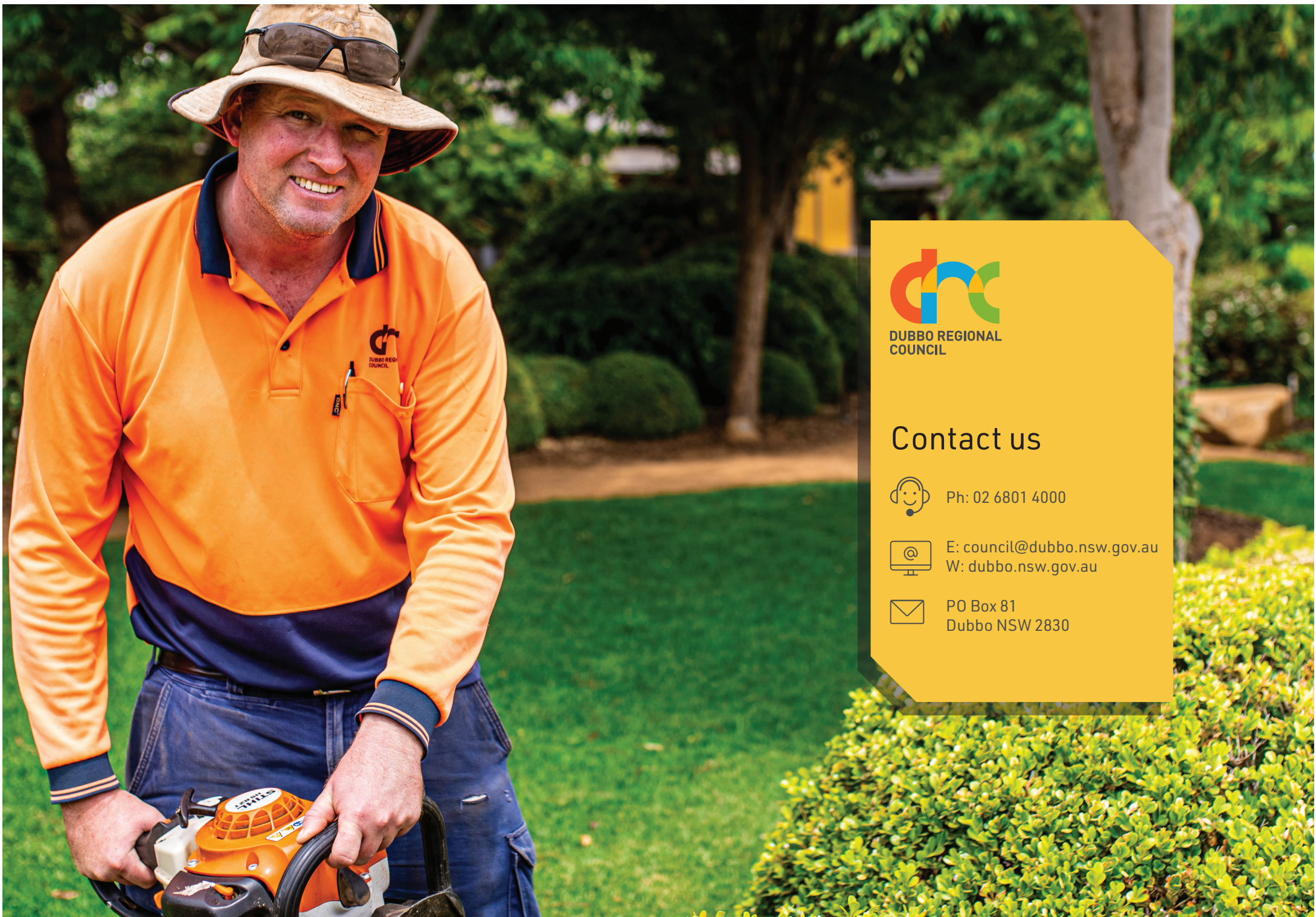
Customer-focused actions aligned to this strategy will be included in the department business plans. Achievements will be assessed as part of the quarterly reporting cycles to determine whether we are meeting our success measures and where adjustments may be required.

Championing the Strategy


The Head of Customer Experience will champion implementation of the Customer Experience strategy and monitor our success measures. Customer-facing teams will be equip with the right technology and emotional intelligence training to deliver the best possible Customer Experience.


Community Engagement


Continue to review the customer journey process and identify improvement opportunities as they are presented. Modify the Customer Experience Strategy as required following consultation with all stakeholders.



Contact us

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