

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

25 March 2026

COUNCILLOR L WITHINGTON - CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH (CUSTOMER SERVICES)

For the period February to March 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Customer Services

As we approach a busy time of year, the Customer Services team is managing increasing demand from Council Tax bills, Benefits award letters, and subscription renewals. Looking ahead, Norfolk County Council election work will begin over the next month, with poll cards soon to be issued.

Customer Transactions and Digital Take-up

February saw continued growth in customer activity, with increasing adoption of online services:

- Total transactions: 8,779 (+19% on Feb 2024)
- Traditional contact: 4,732 (-9% on Feb 2024)
- Online transactions: 4,047 (+47% on Feb 2024) of which self-service made up for 3,173 transactions (+9% on Feb 2024)

These figures highlight rising demand and a strong shift toward digital self-service, enabling faster response times and more efficient use of staff resources.

Garden Bin Subscriptions

The Garden Bin service was running at a 95% Direct Debit level for 2025/26, with 1,227 customers on one-off payments.

Early indications show that more customers are switching to Direct Debit: 143 of the 543 non-DD customers who have renewed so far this year have moved over to DD.

The ongoing shift toward Direct Debit continues to streamline administration, reduce manual processing, and improve efficiency.

Car Parking Permits Update (2 months live)

Since the launch on 26 January, the improved parking permit process continues to perform strongly:

- Total transactions: 1,192
- Digital: 1,002 (84%)
- Traditional: 190 (16%)

The majority of customers now use the online service, further reducing administrative workload, speeding up processing, and lowering costs.

Feedback indicates faster turnaround times, fewer errors, and greater convenience for residents, while staff benefit from more efficient workflows and reduced repetitive tasks.

These results demonstrate that the new arrangements are delivering sustainable, resilient, and resident focused improvements, building on the initial success reported in the first three weeks after launch.

CS Performance Overview - February

- Customer satisfaction survey response rate: 14.96%
 - Satisfied with ability to contact the Council: 87.20%
 - Satisfied with helpfulness of CSA: 95.80%
 - Satisfied with advice given: 91.98%
 - Satisfied with overall experience: 90.08%

Themes from Recent Feedback

Recent customer feedback highlights the professionalism, helpfulness, and friendliness of the Customer Services team:

- Politeness and empathy: “The advisor I spoke to was kind, polite and very helpful.” “Contacted council after our father died...could not have been more kind and helpful.”
- Knowledgeable guidance: “Explained the process and signposted to other services.” “Guided me through the website and was very patient.”
- Efficient problem resolution: “Very helpful and quick to resolve my query.” “Made a mistake in payment of council tax but the lady helped me promptly.”
- Support with new or complex processes: “I didn’t know the parking permit procedure had changed, but the person on duty explained it all and sorted it out.”

These comments demonstrate the value of the Customer Services team in delivering friendly, knowledgeable, and effective support, while also highlighting the importance of clear guidance for customers using online

services and new processes.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Fakenham Connect

From April 2026, Customer Services will be withdrawing its presence at Fakenham Connect. This decision follows a review of service demand, operational effectiveness, and costs.

The majority of visitors to Fakenham Connect use Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or other non-NNDC services, while the relatively small volume of NNDC enquiries can be effectively managed online or by telephone. Face-to-face support for NNDC services will continue at Cromer.

This change allows NNDC to focus CS resources where demand is highest, improving efficiency while maintaining full access to council services for residents. The DWP will use the former NNDC reception space and provide informal signposting, supporting residents during the transition. Clear signage and communications will guide people to alternative access channels.

3 Meetings attended