

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

17 June 2026

**COUNCILLOR L WITHINGTON - CABINET MEMBER FOR
COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

For the period April to June 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Customer Services and The Digital Mailroom

The Customer Services and Digital Mailroom teams have had a busy and productive start to the year, managing a high volume of enquiries as we process new Council Tax billing, Benefit notification letters, and continue Garden Bin subscription renewals. Additionally, the Norfolk County Council elections in May further contributed to increased contact volumes, as residents sought information and support, adding to the overall demand on our services during an already busy period. Our advisors have worked tirelessly to support residents, ensuring queries are handled as quickly and efficiently as possible during this peak period.

Customer Contact Trends and Channel Shift

When reviewing customer contact across face-to-face, telephony, and online services, there continues to be clear growth in overall demand, alongside a noticeable shift towards digital channels.

The combined total number of contacts increased from 9,302 in April/May 2025 to 10,955 in April/May 2026, representing an overall rise of 1,653 contacts, or 17.8% across all channels.

Traditional contact channels have declined during this period. Face-to-face contacts reduced from 1,389 to 1,113 (down 19.9%), while telephony contacts decreased slightly from 7,808 to 7,726 (down 1.1%).

In contrast, online usage has shown steady and sustained growth. Contacts increased from 10,137 in 2024 to 12,809 in 2025 (an increase of 26.4%), and further to 14,321 in 2026 (a further rise of 11.8%). This represents an overall increase of approximately 41.3% since 2024.

This trend highlights a continued and accelerating shift in customer behaviour towards digital services.

The increase in online usage has also contributed to reduced demand across

traditional channels, particularly face-to-face interactions. As fewer customers attend in person, Customer Service Advisors have been able to redirect their time more effectively towards telephony. This shift in resource allocation has improved call handling capacity, enabling more staff to focus on answering calls.

This is reflected in performance, with the average telephony wait time reducing from 12:02 in April/May 2025 to 08:04 in the same period for 2026, a 33% reduction in wait time. Overall, the growth in digital engagement is helping to rebalance service delivery and improve efficiency across all channels.

Update – Fakenham Connect

Following the withdrawal of Customer Services from Fakenham Connect at the end of March 2026, the transition has been implemented smoothly. There has been no customer feedback received since the change, indicating that alternative access channels, including online, telephone, and Cromer-based face-to-face services, are meeting customer needs effectively.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction remains strong across all measures, with 84.77% overall satisfaction. Advisor support continues to be a key strength, with 94.55% of customers finding staff helpful. Satisfaction with advice stands at 89.29%, while 85.71% of customers report it was easy to make contact. Overall, these results reflect a consistently positive customer experience.

Survey Completion Rates

Year	Month	Issued	Completed	Completed %
2026	April	2053	293	14.27%
2026	May	1777	239	13.45%
Total		3830	532	13.89%

How easy did you find it to contact the council?

Year	Month	% Satisfied
2026	April	82.94%
2026	May	89.12%
Total		85.71%

How helpful did you find the csa who dealt with your enquiry?

Year	Month	% Satisfied
2026	April	93.86%
2026	May	95.40%
Total		94.55%

How pleased were you with the advice you were given?

Year	Month	% Satisfied
2026	April	88.40%
2026	May	90.38%
Total		89.29%

How satisfied are you with your overall experience with us?

Year	Month	% Satisfied
2026	April	82.94%
2026	May	87.03%
Total		84.77%

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Digital Service Development Context

The continued increase in digital uptake reflects the success of targeted digital initiatives delivered over recent months. The improved online "Contact Us" form triage approach has now been successfully developed and implemented across 12 key service areas, embedding a consistent and streamlined way for customers to efficiently access services online. To build on this success targeted SMS messaging is also now being introduced to further promote the use of online contact methods, helping to drive awareness and encourage digital engagement. Ongoing analysis of customer contact data is being used to identify trends and ensure that future digital development and engagement activity is focused where it will have the greatest impact.

3 Meetings attended

