

STRATHFIELD MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY



August 2024

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## 1. RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY** We acknowledge the Wangal people as the original custodians of the land on which Strathfield Council is located. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and recognize the ongoing stewardship of this land by Aboriginal people. Together we aim for a united community that respects and values the heritage and contributions of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





## 2. Councillors Commitments to Enhancing Customer Experience

At Strathfield Council, our Councillors play a crucial role in delivering exceptional Customer Experience (CX) to our community.

As elected representatives, they serve as the voice of our residents ensuring that the needs and expectations of the community are central to Council's decisions and actions.

Through active engagement, advocacy and leadership, our Councillors foster a culture of excellence in service delivery.

They collaborate closely with Council staff to implement policies and initiatives that enhance the quality and accessibility of our services. By prioritising customer-centric practices, Councillors help build trust, transparency, and satisfaction within the community.

In their strategic oversight role, Councillors are key in setting the vision and direction for Strathfield Council's CX Strategy. They provide valuable insights and feedback, driving continuous improvement and innovation.

Their dedication to listening to and addressing Community concerns ensures that Council remains responsive, accountable, and committed to enhancing the overall customer experience.





### 3. Message from the General Manager

I am excited to share our Customer Experience Strategy which is a significant initiative for our Councillors. It is our very first Customer Experience Strategy, which represents a key step in our ongoing efforts to enhance how we serve our community.

Our objective is to lay a strong foundation that will not only improve our current service offerings but also transform our overall service delivery for the future. By making our services more efficient, accessible, and responsive, we are committed to ensuring that every interaction with the Council is productive.

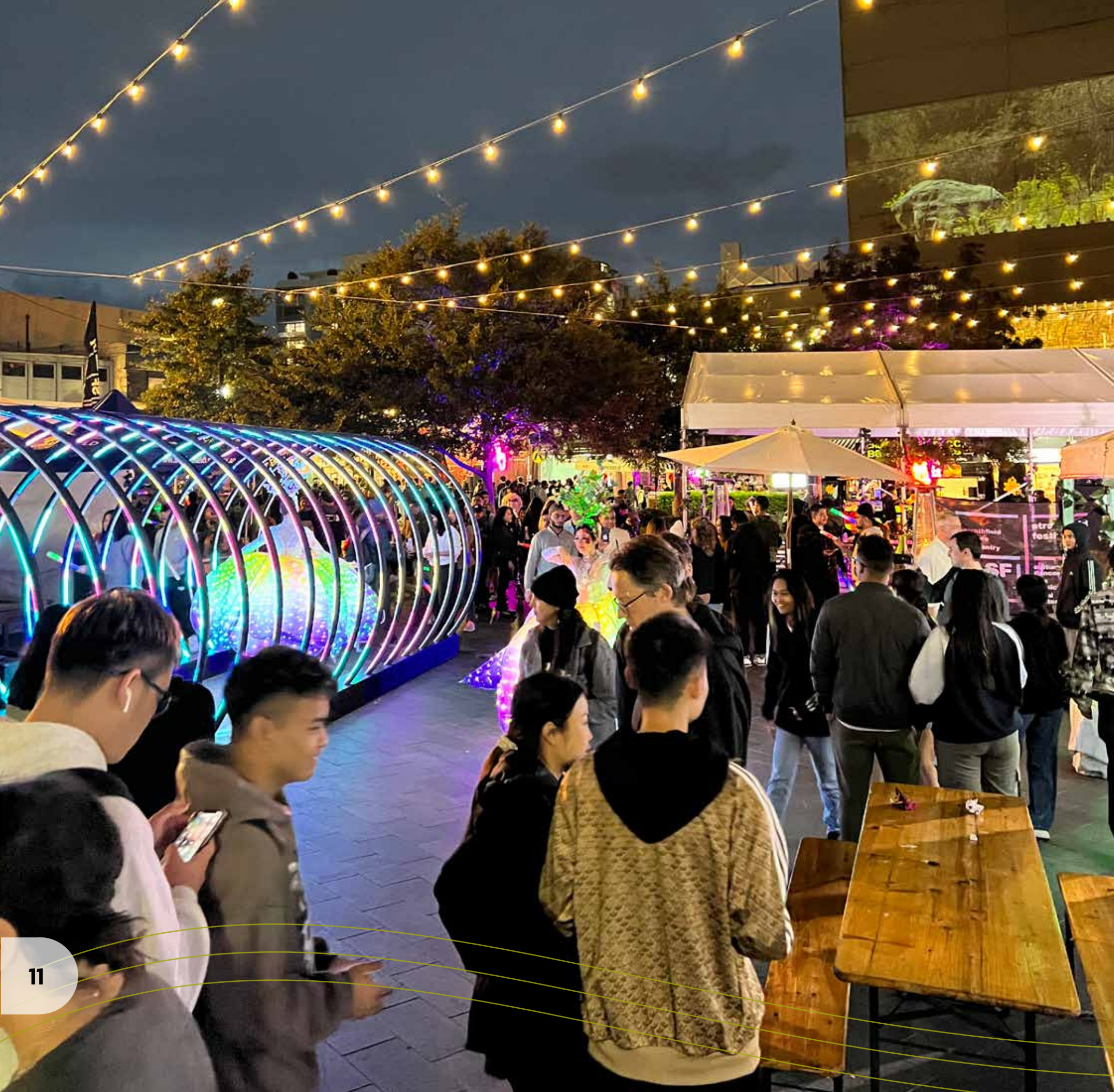
The launch of this strategy is an opportunity for us to redefine our approach and establish new standards of excellence in service. It will involve a comprehensive review of our existing practices, the identification of key areas for improvement, and the integration of innovative solutions tailored to the needs and expectations of our community.



**Michael Mamo**  
General Manager  
Strathfield Municipal Council







## 4. About this strategy

Our strategy focuses on understanding that customer experience goes beyond standard customer service. It involves how customers perceive their entire interaction with the Council. Our approach is one that focuses on better tailoring our services to meet their specific needs.

Our strategy outlines the customer experience objectives derived from extensive research, reviewing industry trends, surveys, and engagement with both our staff and customers. It outlines the approach we will take to achieve these goals and outlines our metrics for measuring success.

We actively seek and incorporate customer feedback, to pursue our aim in providing remarkable, straightforward services that consistently deliver productive experiences of the highest quality. This commitment applies to all services, regardless of the nature of the request or the method of delivery. It's vital to remember that a person is at the core of each process.

In order to lay the foundations our Strategy focuses on five (5) key areas:

- Customer engagement
- Employee development
- Process improvement
- Digital solutions
- Data analysis and improvement.



## 5. Our customers

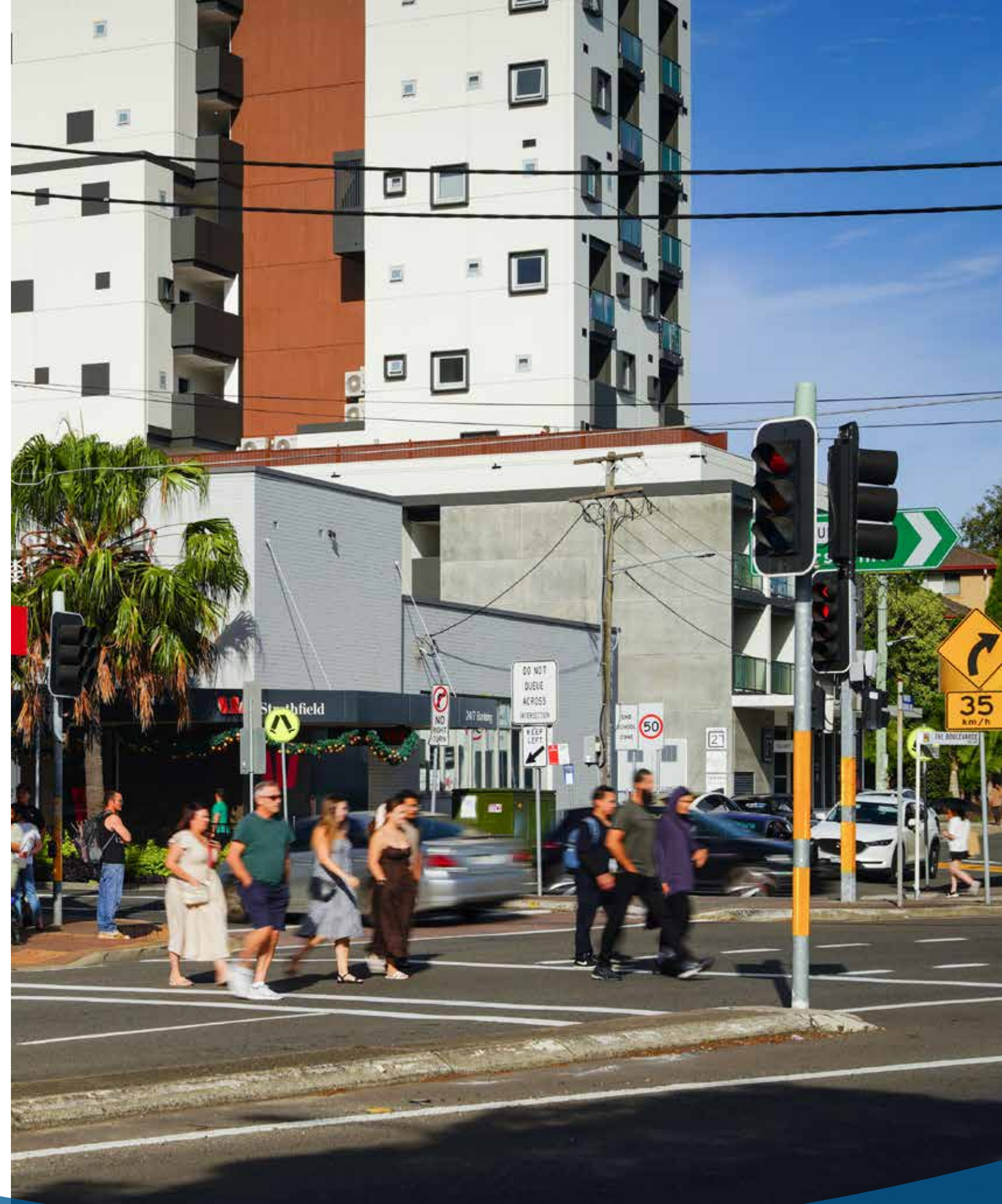
Our customer base is varied, encompassing residents, ratepayers, businesses, visitors, community organisations and developers. They entrust us with meeting their needs and expectations as well as delivering essential services for our community.

We define our customers as anyone who engages with Council, Assets, Staff, or its buildings.

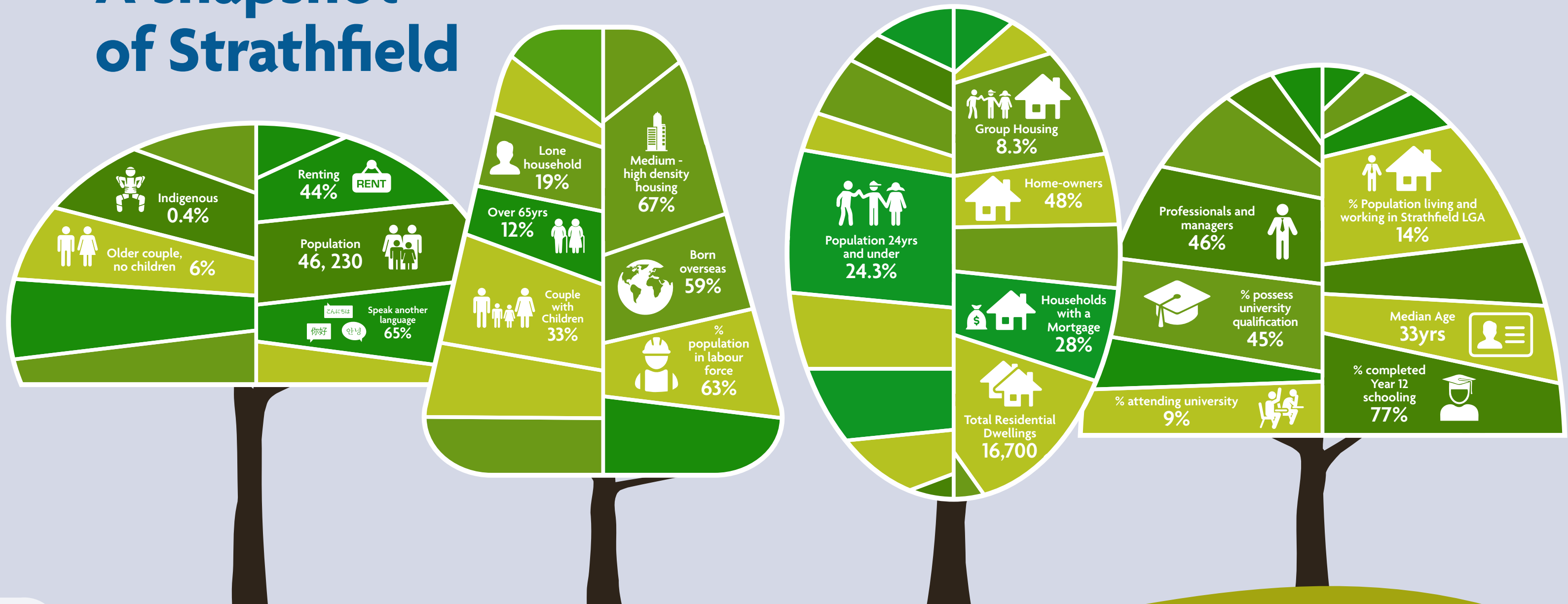
In our Customer Experience strategy, we recognise the significance of addressing both internal and external customers. External customers encompass the residents, businesses, and stakeholders who engage with our services and offerings. For this group our aim is to establish seamless interactions, providing efficient solutions that align with their needs and expectations.

However, our focus extends beyond external customers alone. We understand that internal Council customers (comprising our staff and team members) play a pivotal role in delivering exceptional external customer experiences. By fostering a supportive and collaborative environment for our internal customers, we empower them to deliver their best, thus contributing to an enhanced external customer experience.

This dual emphasis ensures a holistic approach, where the satisfaction and engagement of both external and internal customers collectively drive our pursuit of excellence in customer experience.



# A snapshot of Strathfield





## 6. Our vision

### Where we are going

Committed to improving our community we prioritise sustainability, engagement and resident well-being. Our skilled professionals are more than just employees – they're your neighbours and partners, working together to create a welcoming and inclusive environment that benefits everyone in Strathfield.

Strathfield Council's Customer Service Vision Statement: *"Working Together For A Better Tomorrow."*

*"At Strathfield Council, we believe that a better tomorrow begins with collective effort. We are dedicated to working closely with our community and staff, listening to ideas then taking the required action to create positive change. Together we will tackle challenges, drive progress in an aim to build a more prosperous and inclusive future for all."*

Our five (5) year Customer Experience Strategy aligns with Strathfield Council's Customer Vision statement, "Working Together for a Better Tomorrow!"

The future of customer experience at Strathfield Council is one of innovation, inclusivity and seamless interaction. We envision a future where every touchpoint is intuitive and responsive, providing a personalised and engaging experience for all Community Members. Our focus will also be on enhancing accessibility and ensuring that our services are easy to navigate for everyone, regardless of their abilities. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and leveraging real-time data insights, we aim to create a dynamic and adaptable customer experience framework that evolves with our community's needs.

### How we will get there

This Customer Experience vision is closely aligned to Council's overarching organisational Cultural Vision Statement:



A Pleasure to Live • A Place to Achieve • A Passion to Thrive

## Proud to be Strathfield

Our commitment to a superior customer experience aligns seamlessly with this broader goal, as we strive to make Strathfield a place where living, achieving and thriving are not just aspirations but everyday realities.

By ensuring that every interaction is a pleasure, every service is accessible, and every community member feels valued, we proudly contribute to making Strathfield a community where everyone can truly say they are "Proud to be Strathfield."



## 7. Our services

### Corporate and Community

- Administrative support
- Strathfield Connector Bus
- Community & Small Grants Programs Library & Art Exhibitions
- JP Services
- Community Events & Activities
- Volunteer Opportunities

### Planning and Environment

- Building Approvals
- Urban Planning (for both now & future Community needs)
- Health & Safety
- Rangers patrols to ensure parking & building regulations are being obeyed
- Health Inspections
- Managing Golf Driving Range

### Engineering and Operations

- Waste Services
- Tree & Park Care
- Rent a Community Hall
- Shared Community Areas Upkeep
- Improving Parks & Facilities
- Maintenance of Parks & Gardens
- Roads Maintenance & Improvements
- Street Sweeping

### General Manager's Unit

- Organising Community Events & Festivals
- Communications with Customers
- Council Legal Advisor
- Policy & Strategy Development





## 8. Our commitments



### Respectful Treatment

We treat our Customers with respect, professionalism and genuine care, ensuring a positive and courteous experience that makes residents feel valued and heard. Fostering trust and satisfaction.

For Council, it improves community connections and confidence, contributing to a stronger and more cohesive municipality.

### Information and accessibility

We offer quality information and services that are accessible to our Customers, working together to find solutions that improve accessibility. This helps our Customers access the resources they need, whenever they need them.

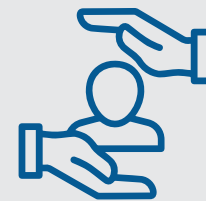


### Clear communication

We keep our Customers informed and seek to understand their needs. Communicating openly and closing the loop during interactions.

### Taking Ownership

All of our knowledgeable and dedicated teams takes ownership of our Customers concerns, providing empathetic assistance tailored to their needs.



### Timeliness

We prioritise prompt resolution, striving to address our Customers requests and complaints as soon as possible.



### Transparency

We maintain clear communication and provide options for engagement, ensuring transparency and keeping our Customers informed.



## 9. Our team

Strathfield Council is dedicated to providing the best possible experience for all our Customers, both in the local community and further abroad. Through the teams' daily interactions and with our commitments in mind, Strathfield Councillors and Council staff approach every call, email, and inquiry with a solution-oriented mindset ensuring prompt, effective, and satisfactory outcomes.

*“Strathfield Council staff approach every call, email, and inquiry with a solution-oriented mindset ensuring prompt, effective, and satisfactory outcomes.”*

with any customer request. Each action taken by our Council team is a step towards building more effective relationships and contributing to Strathfield as a connected, well-informed, and resilient community. Our people play the critical role in delivering our customer experience vision.

Whether our Customers engage with planning business support officers, our traffic engineers, the customer service team, or the library staff, the customer experience remains central to our approach when dealing







## 1. Customer Engagement

### 10. Customer Experience: Focus Areas and Goals

Our approach to enhancing our Customers experience focuses on five (5) key areas, each with clear goals as shown in the table below.

Our decision to focus on these five (5) areas for our CX strategy stemmed from a thorough analysis of various factors as follows:

- We sought insights from industry peers and market trends to understand emerging best practices.
- We conducted multiple focus groups with staff members to gather firsthand perspectives on areas needing improvement.
- Feedback provided from our customers through the performance survey also played a role, providing valuable insights into customer needs and preferences.

#### Focus areas

- Understanding customer needs.
- Providing clear, simple, and timely communications  
Facilitating easy engagement.

#### Outcome from findings

We recognised the importance of clear and timely communication, which emerged as a consistent theme from both internal and external sources.

#### Objective

- Unify customer service charter for clear standards and expectations.
- Enhance customer engagement via improved communication and event awareness.
- Simplify customer-facing information for accessibility and comprehension.
- Align digital channels with community needs and encourage self-service utilisation.



# 10. Customer Experience: Focus Areas and Goals

(continued)

## 2. Employee Development

### Focus areas

- Acknowledging the vital role of our team in shaping customer experiences.
- Equipping staff with appropriate skills and training.

### Outcome from findings

We acknowledged the critical role our team plays in shaping customer experiences.

### Objective

- Make customer service a key requirement in hiring and training for customer-facing roles, using tools like job descriptions and mentoring.
- Offer regular organisation-wide customer experience training and targeted sessions to improve staff understanding and engagement.
- Emphasise customer service in performance evaluations and recognise staff contributions to a customer-focused culture.
- Empower leaders to lead by example and guide staff in delivering our customer experience goals.

## 3. Process Improvement

### Focus areas

- Regularly reviewing and refining processes.
- Ensuring processes are customer-centric and efficient.

### Outcome from findings

A need was identified through regular reviews and the need to ensure our processes are customer-centric and efficient.

### Objective

- Enhance customer-facing processes for improved efficiency. Simplify processes to be more user-friendly.
- Conduct customer journey mapping for key areas.
- Review and enhance the complaint management framework. Provide consistent and fair handling of complaints.
- Enhance resources supporting staff in customer interactions.
- Develop staff knowledge management repository for accuracy and quality information.



# 10. Customer Experience: Focus Areas and Goals

(continued)

## 4. Digital Solutions

### Focus areas

- Implementing suitable technology solutions
- Accommodating customer preferences for engagement methods and timings.

### Outcome from findings

Arose from the increasing demand for technology-driven engagement methods, aligning with customer preferences and industry peers.

### Objective

- Explore automation and integration opportunities for enhanced workflow efficiency.
- Implement a single customer request system for improved customer interaction management.
- Refresh and optimise the Council's website for better user experience and self-service capabilities.
- Enhance staff mobility with technology tailored to their needs, including field workers.

## 5. Data analysis and improvement

### Focus areas

- Utilising customer feedback and performance data for continuous improvement  
Ensuring data security and privacy.

### Outcome from findings

Prioritised to leverage customer feedback and performance data for continuous enhancement, while ensuring stringent data security and privacy measures are in place.

### Objective

- Utilise customer data reporting for enhanced customer engagement and proactive service delivery.
- Simplify, standardise and centralise reporting capabilities for improved customer experience and data security.
- Develop mechanisms for gathering customer feedback through regular touchpoints.
- Utilise customer feedback for continuous improvement and decision-making.
- Review key performance indicators (KPIs) to prioritise customer satisfaction and experience.
- Ensure KPIs are realistic with clear accountability and staff buy-in to drive customer-centric behaviour.





## 11. Review and our future

Regular reviews and refinements of processes will be undertaken in relation to this Strategy to ensure customer-centricity and efficiency. Implementing suitable digital solutions will cater to evolving customer preferences and engagement. Additionally, leveraging customer feedback and performance data will drive continuous improvement.

This comprehensive strategy reflects our commitment to collaboration and proactive action in building a prosperous and inclusive future for all stakeholders, in line with our Customer Vision Statement.

Our five (5) year Customer Experience Strategy aligns with Strathfield Council's Customer Vision statement, "Working Together for a Better Tomorrow!"

  
**WORKING  
TOGETHER**  
**FOR A BETTER  
TOMORROW!**



## 12. Our action plan

The below action plan outlines the key actions Council is committed to over the next 12 – 24 Months which align with Council’s broader Customer Experience Strategy and Community Strategic Plan. The Action plan will be updated as Council progresses the actions outlined.

Key Area	Action	Timeframe	How will we measure our success?
<b>Customer Engagement</b>	Refresh Council’s Website to better interface with Customers and access information	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Feedback from customers that efficient access to information</li> <li>Increased uptake of Council online services</li> </ul>
	Refresh Council’s Customer Charter as part of the Customer Communications	2024 - 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Increased clarity and understanding of customer rights and services</li> </ul>
	Heighten engagement with customers through improved communications about our services and upcoming events. This also includes increasing awareness about the different ways customers can engage with us, including using the interpreter service.	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Increased uptake of Council online services</li> <li>Increase in compliment volumes and positive feedback</li> </ul>
<b>Employee Development</b>	Develop Service Catalogues for all Council Departments	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved efficiency of service delivery</li> <li>Cohesive and collaborative staff</li> <li>Efficient access to information</li> </ul>
	Undertake full staff engagement on customer centricity, and develop shared approaches to address customer centricity internally and externally	2025 – 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved employee morale</li> <li>Cohesive and collaborative staff</li> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> </ul>
	Develop a customer experience toolkit for all staff to assist staff with customer interactions	2025 – 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Cohesive and collaborative staff</li> <li>Improved efficiency of service delivery</li> </ul>
	Customer Experience Training Deliver regular Council-wide Customer experience training as well as targeted customer experience training for specific areas.	2025 – 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Improved employee morale</li> <li>Cohesive and collaborative staff</li> </ul>
<b>Process Improvement</b>	Compliments and Complaints process improvement	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in complaints</li> <li>More efficient handling of service delivery requests</li> </ul>
	Review of Council wide customer experience KPIs	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in response times for customer enquiries and complaints</li> <li>Increased percentage of KPIs meeting or exceeding targets</li> </ul>
	Implement KPI process improvement Council wide	2025 - 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in average service delivery time</li> <li>Decrease in operational costs by</li> <li>Increase in customer satisfaction scores</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Solutions</b>	Launch Strathfield Hub – Venue bookings	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased uptake of Council online services</li> <li>Improved efficiency of service delivery</li> <li>Reduced error rate and double handling</li> </ul>
	Launch Strathfield Hub – Waste services	2024 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased uptake of Council online services</li> <li>More efficient handling of service delivery requests</li> <li>Improved integration of systems</li> </ul>
	Launch Strathfield Hub – Compliments and Complaints	2025 – 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in complaints</li> <li>Increase in compliment volumes</li> <li>Increased uptake of Council online services</li> </ul>
<b>Data Improvement and Analysis</b>	Analyse customer feedback data and improve data analysis outcomes	2025 – 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Reduced error handling and rework</li> </ul>



STRATHFIELD MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

*August 2024*



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