

Report to Stronger Communities Select Committee

Date of meeting: 02 July 2019

Subject: What are our Customers Telling Us?



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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To note the contents of the report.

Report:

1. This is the first report that officers will bring to each Stronger Communities Select Committee to provide Members with customer feedback on where the Council is meeting customer needs, where there are opportunities for improvements but also recognising positive feedback where it is received. The Council will be developing its customer engagement process as part of a new Customer Service Strategy which will be brought forward to a future meeting. There are elements of engagement across the authority on an on-going but these need to be pulled together to provide a holistic view. This process will increasingly inform the content of future reports and will provide a key resource to enable the Council to design its services around its customers.

2. This report is providing feedback received by customers since 1 April this year. At this stage, prior to a more developed process of customer engagement discussed above, the feedback related to the Govmetric feedback received via contacts through telephone, e-mail and website. The feedback is only possible via Govmetric for the customer contacts that are handled via the Customer Contact centre and Revenues which have the appropriate systems in place. The more services that move into the contact centre environment in the future, the more comprehensive this type of feedback will be. This feedback provides both negative and positive feedback from customers. The other form of feedback is complaints and these will be detailed per service and decision

3. The Govmetric feedback is provided across 3 channels – telephone, web and e-mail and the results are laid out in Appendix 1. The telephone feedback is very pleasing showing a 99% satisfaction rate with the response. This is a clear endorsement of the journey the Council has been on with regards to creating a corporate team to handle customer telephone calls and as stated previously is encouraging when looking forward to the integration of services such as Planning and Housing into the team. The figures also reflect the performance of the Revenues customer contact team and this period covers the peak workload around annual billing. 2019/20 will see the integration of the two customer contact teams.

4. The web feedback remains the area where there 259 instances of negative feedback but it needs to be seen in the context of over 300,000 website visits, since 1st April representing under 1% dissatisfaction. To add some further context the feedback at the launch of the new website between January and March showed over 2,000 poor reviews but as the website matures the amount of negative feedback has fallen substantially. The current feedback identifies issues such as problems around paying rent, or finding how to report or apply for items. This has been recognised and is a development for the coming period with an additional navigation toolbar being added to the homepage to resolve these customer issues.

5. The feedback around responses to e-mails shows a 70% satisfaction rate. Of the 67 negative responses these largely related to waste and recycling, council tax and parking. Only 10 comments were received to provide more information for the rating and no discernible pattern was found. On a positive note there were 18 compliments among the feedback recognising the help provided often quoting individual officers. This is fed back to officers as compliments show us where we are doing things right.

6. Laid out below are details of the complaints the Council received during April and May 2019.

Total number of complaints: 25	
Service Area	Number
Parking	1
Estates	1
Housing	10
Council Tax	2
Debt Recovery	2
Environmental	2
Waste	2
Building Control	1
Planning	2
Total	25

7. Of the complaints above, 23 were resolved as upheld, whilst 2 have progressed to Stage 2, one each relating to Council Tax and Planning. As can be seen the number of complaints across all Council services remains relatively low and these are spread across a range of areas (Housing traditionally generates more complaints within a local authority). No discernible pattern can therefore be observed which would suggest a breakdown in service provision. However, it is important that the complaints are kept under review as they are a piece of the jigsaw of overall customer feedback which helps inform service delivery.

8. Whilst no particular areas of concern or opportunity can specifically be identified from this report, the customer engagement process will be brought together corporately and evolve in the future to bring customer need closer to the heart of future design. This work will be brought back to this Group for Members to scrutinise and make recommendations accordingly.

Reason for decision:

To start the process of consolidating customer feedback to inform Members about current and future service delivery.

Options considered and rejected:

None

Consultation undertaken:

None

Resource implications: None

Budget provision:

Personnel:

Land: