

# Equalities Monitoring – Services

## Appendix D – Customer Services

**Annual Report - 2016-17**



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# 1. Introduction

Customer Services is the first point of contact for the public with the Council and provides access to the Council across a number of channels - face to face, website, email, and telephone. The service deals with around 80% of enquiries to the Council including general enquiries from the public for information and services, requests about a range of services, including waste and recycling, landscaping and trees, highways and licensing.

The purpose of equalities monitoring is to ensure the Council is providing a fair and equitable service to all residents.

To ensure the service is fair and equitable within Customer Services, monitoring has been undertaken in terms of:

- Access to the service
- Satisfaction with the service
- Performance

It has been analysed by the following equality groups:

- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Disability
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual Orientation

The data below has been taken from:

- Customer Satisfaction Survey 2016-17. The data covers the period commencing 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 inclusive. An email link is sent to customers who have interacted with Customer Services through the channels mentioned above. In addition, the survey is also available in hard copy at the Customer Services reception at the Council's Time Square office.

## 2. Access to the service

Access to the service is open to all members of the public via calling in to reception, telephone calls, online and email.

Not all users of the Council's services will have English as their first language, however staff make every effort to meet the needs of individuals. If there is difficulty in communicating with a non-English speaking customer, the 'Language and Interpretation system' (LIPS) may be used. There may also be occasions when an interpreter or translator is required.

Bracknell Forest Council has a number of volunteer members of staff who speak other languages and also has accounts with several companies if needed to provide translation or interpretation services.

There are also access support arrangements for people who are deaf to aid communication, for example, induction loops, the BT Typetalk service or British Sign Language Interpreters.

People who can experience difficulty with accessing text information include people with learning difficulties, partially sighted people and, of course, blind people. Bracknell Forest Council makes all information available in large print, in Braille and on audiotape when requested.

To continue to provide excellent customer service a regular review of the changing needs of the community is needed to ensure fair and appropriate access to services, tailored to meet the individual needs of the borough's residents and diverse communities.

### 3. Satisfaction

The information on satisfaction below has been taken from Customer Services satisfaction survey responses in 2016-17 for the period 1st April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 inclusive. A total of 2086 forms were sent out to customers who had contacted the Council through Customer Services during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31 March 2017. A total of 229 customers (11%) responded. The data from this survey has been analysed to see if there is any difference in satisfaction rates in terms of the person's sex, age, race, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

#### Age

There were 220 people who responded to the survey who included their age, (9 did not state their age). From the results of the survey the table below shows the satisfaction results by age from the people who responded.

**Table 1: Satisfaction by Age**

Age Group	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total
<18	2 (100%)	0	2
18-34	14 (58%)	10 (42%)	24
35-49	41 (80%)	10(20%)	51
50-64	57 (75%)	19 (25%)	76
65-79	55 (90%)	6 (10%)	61
80+	6 (100%)	0	6
Not Answered			9 (4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>175 (76%)</b>	<b>45(20%)</b>	<b>229</b>

#### Comment

The table shows that generally satisfaction levels by age group are high for most groups. People aged 18 to 34 years had the highest dissatisfaction rate with 42% of this group being dissatisfied. Further analysis may be needed to understand the reasons for this age group being less satisfied, but this may relate to the experience of some of our online services, or the inability to access some services online. Work is underway to develop improved customer experience of our online services, but there are a number of challenges in this area, in particular relating to third party applications. For those aged under 18 and over 80 years satisfaction is shown at 100%, although the numbers responding for these groups is very low.

## **Sex**

The table below shows satisfaction rates for men and women.

**Table 2: Satisfaction rates by sex**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Not Satisfied</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	84(81%)	20(19%)	104
Female	91(77%)	27(23%)	118
Not Answered			7 (3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>175 (76%)</b>	<b>47(21%)</b>	<b>229</b>

## **Comment**

Women seem to be less satisfied than men with a satisfaction rating of 77% compared to 81% for men.

## **Disability**

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of whether the customer has a disability.

**Table 3: Satisfaction rates by disability**

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Not Satisfied</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	40 (87%)	6 (13%)	46
No	129 (78%)	37(22%)	166
Not answered			17 (7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>169(74%)</b>	<b>43(19%)</b>	<b>229</b>

## **Comment**

46 respondents advised that they had a disability. A large proportion of these customers were satisfied with the service they had received (87%). The satisfaction rate for customers without a disability was also high at 78%.

## **Race**

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of the customers' race.

**Table 4: Satisfaction rates by race**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Not Satisfied</b>	<b>Total</b>
White	162(79%)	44(21%)	206
Black & Minority Ethnic groups	10 (77%)	3(23%)	13
Not Answered			10(4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>172 (75%)</b>	<b>47(21%)</b>	<b>229</b>

## Comment

The table shows no significant difference to satisfaction rates in terms of the person's race. The majority of respondents from Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) groups were satisfied with the service they had received i.e. 77%, compared to 79% satisfaction for the White Ethnic group.

## Religion/Belief

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of the customers' religion/belief.

**Table 5: Satisfaction rates by religion/belief**

Religion/Belief	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total
None	48(71%)	20(29%)	68
Christian	117(87%)	17(13%)	134
Buddhist	0	0	0
Hindu	1 (50%)	1(50%)	2
Muslim	1(50%)	1(50%)	2
Sikh	0	0	0
Jewish	0	0	0
Other	2(50%)	2 (50%)	4
Not Answered			19 (8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>169(74%)</b>	<b>41(18%)</b>	<b>229</b>

## Comment

The table above shows the majority of customer's answering this question are Christian, with 87% satisfied with the service they had received.

68 respondents advised that they had no religion/belief and a further 19 respondents did not answer the question. The numbers of people stating their religion as Hindu, Muslim or Other are so small that any differences in levels of satisfaction should not be viewed as statistically significant.

## Sexual Orientation

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of the customers' sexual orientation.

**Table 6: Satisfaction rates by sexual orientation**

Sexual Orientation	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total
Heterosexual/Straight	152(82%)	33(18%)	185
Gay Man	1(100%)	0	1
Lesbian/Gay Women	0	0	0
Bisexual	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	14(74%)	5 (26%)	19
Not Answered			24 (10%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>167(73%)</b>	<b>38(17%)</b>	<b>229</b>

## **Comment**

The table shows that the majority of customers' answering this question were heterosexual/straight, with 82% of this group satisfied with the service they had received.

1 customer advised that he was a gay man and was satisfied with the service received. 19 customers preferred 'not to say', 14 of whom were satisfied with the service received. 24 did not answer the question.

## **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, whilst sample size is relatively low for this survey, overall satisfaction is reasonably high and there are no major differences relating to the various equalities groups.

In 2014-15 the survey was made available on-line, and in 2015-16 the survey was modified to try and capture more detailed information about the channels used to contact the council. Further work is underway to encourage take-up of the survey by customers across all channels, to enable more meaningful data to be collected.

## **5. Recommendations**

A review of the customer service satisfaction survey should be undertaken as part of the Council's transformation programme; this will ensure that the survey is aligned and relevant to strategic goals. The review will take place at an appropriate time within the programme of work.