

Equalities Monitoring – Services

Appendix D – Customer Services

Annual Report - 2017-18



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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 service requests, 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 2017/18. The data covers the period commencing 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 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 access to several specialist 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 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 2017/18 for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 inclusive. A total of 506 customers 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 486 people who responded to the survey and included their age, (20 did not state their age). 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	0	0	0
18-34	14 (70%)	6 (30%)	20
35-49	61 (76%)	19 (24%)	80
50-64	133 (83%)	28 (17%)	161
65-79	160 (86%)	27 (14%)	187
80+	35 (92%)	3 (8%)	38
Not Answered			20 (4%)
Total	403 (80%)	83 (16%)	506

Comment

Satisfaction levels by age group are generally high for most groups. People aged 18 to 34 years had the highest dissatisfaction rate with 30% of this group being dissatisfied; however, the total sample size of this age group compared to other groups is very small. Further analysis may be needed to understand the reasons for this age group being less satisfied. The table also shows that satisfaction levels improve with age.

Sex

The table below shows satisfaction rates for men and women.

Table 2: Satisfaction rates by sex

Sex	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Male	178 (82%)	40 (18%)	218
Female	224 (83%)	45 (17%)	269
Not Answered			19 (4%)
Total	402 (79%)	85 (17%)	506

Comment

The data shows very little difference between satisfaction rates for men and women, although the sample shows that slightly more women answered this question.

Disability

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

Table 3: Satisfaction rates by disability

Disability?	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Yes	105 (85%)	18 (15%)	123
No	288 (82%)	63 (18%)	351
Not answered			32 (6%)
Total	393 (78%)	81 (16%)	506

Comment

123 respondents advised that they had a disability. A large proportion of these customers were satisfied with the service they had received (85%). The satisfaction rate for customers without a disability was also high at 82%.

Race

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

Table 4: Satisfaction rates by race

Race	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
White	386 (84%)	76 (16%)	462
Black & Minority Ethnic groups	16 (76%)	5 (24%)	21
Not Answered			23 (5%)
Total	402 (79%)	81 (16%)	506

Comment

The table shows that satisfaction rates for the White Ethnic group are slightly higher (84%) than for Black & Minority Ethnic groups (76%). However, the sample size for this latter group was very small.

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	128 (78%)	36 (22%)	164
Christian	249 (87%)	36 (13%)	285
Buddhist	1 (100%)	0	1
Hindu	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	4
Muslim	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
Sikh	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4
Jewish	1 (100%)	0	1
Other	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	10
Not Answered			35 (7%)
Total	394 (78%)	77 (15%)	506

Comment

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

164 respondents advised that they had no religion/belief and a further 35 respondents did not answer the question. The numbers of people stating their religion as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Jewish 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 customer's sexual orientation.

Table 6: Satisfaction rates by sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total
Heterosexual/Straight	348 (85%)	61 (15%)	409
Gay Man	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4
Lesbian/Gay Women	0	1 (100%)	1
Bisexual	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3
Prefer not to say	30 (67%)	10 (33%)	40
Not Answered			49 (10%)
Total	382 (75%)	75 (15%)	506

Comment

The table shows that the majority of customers answering this question were heterosexual/straight, with 85% of this group satisfied with the service they had received. The numbers for other groups are so small that any differences in levels of satisfaction should not be viewed as statistically significant.

40 customers preferred 'not to say', 30 of whom were satisfied with the service received. 49 did not answer the question.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, overall satisfaction is reasonably high and there are no major differences relating to the various equalities groups. Whilst sample size is relatively low for this survey, there has been an upturn in responses received when compared to the previous year; the survey return of 506 for 2017/18 was significantly higher than the previous year of 229 for 2016/17. This increase may be due to the survey now being available on-line and linked to various on-line forms. Efforts will continue to encourage further take-up and so 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.