

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES

CUSTOMER SERVICE – UK SATISFACTION INDEX

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the results of the independent review of Nottinghamshire residents by the Institute of Customer Services and the level of customer satisfaction with the service provided by the Customer Service Centre and how this compares with other public and private sector organisations taking part.

Information and Advice

2. The Customer Service Centre was opened in September 2007. Originally it dealt with inquiries for a small number of council services, the largest being Highways and Adult Social Care. A plan was then put in place to add more services over time, centralising the front door of Nottinghamshire County Council to improve satisfaction levels and ease of access to services, enable back office savings and improve first contact resolution rates.
3. Since that time additional services have been moved with a centralised approach to all enquiry handling via the Customer Service Centre front door. The centre now manages in excess of 600,000 enquiries per annum for over 400 NCC services including Social Care, Highways, Waste, Blue Badges, Social Care payments, Travel and Transport, Registration, School enquiries and, more recently, flood enquiries and hardship claims.
4. Since opening there has been an ongoing efficiency and change programme working closely with front line services that has provided resource capacity for the Customer Services Centre to take on more services and more complex work. 78% of all adult social care enquires are now resolved at the first point of contact within the customer services team. This enables Adult Social Care staff to focus on more complex work.
5. This programme of work has resulted in an increase of over 240% in terms of enquiry volumes against a backdrop of a 48% reduction in the Customer Service budget. Although budgets have reduced and volumes have increased, the department is still performing to a consistently high level in terms of customer satisfaction.
6. The Institute of Customer Service undertakes the UK's largest independent cross-sector (public and private sector) benchmarking study of customer satisfaction. It covers:

- Over 10,000 customers providing over 45,000 responses
 - 13 business sectors covering both private and public sectors
 - 26 metrics are used to measure customer experience
 - Questions are also asked about the channel used and the satisfaction across each complaint handling (if appropriate or applicable to customers surveyed).
7. Information from the study is used by the Institute to create the UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI). In this year's review Nottinghamshire County Council's Customer Service Centre was given a score of **87.1 out of 100**.

Customer Service Performance

8.

Budget and Enquiry Volumes		
Financial Year	2009 / 2010	2019/20
Budget	£5.63m	£2.91m
Enquiry Volumes	256,848	612,339
UK Customer Service Index 2019 – Results		
UKCSI Category	Average/Range - all organisations taking part	NCC score
Overall Satisfaction rating	77.7	87.1%
Helpfulness of staff	66-87%	89%
Competence of staff	66-87%	89%
Speed of response	62-84%	85%
Preferred channel is available	69-85%	86%
Cares about the customer	61-84%	86%
Net Promoter Score	22.4	67
Customer Effort	5.0	2.8

Note:

Net Promoter Score (NPS) = The percentage of customers who are likely to promote the services provided by NCC

A higher score signifies there is greater satisfaction and a higher likelihood of promotion

Customer Effort = The amount of effort it took to complete an enquiry or request (1-10 scale). A low score is good and signifies less effort required on the part of the customer

Scores

9. Overall the scores for the County Council were very positive including:
- NCC had the highest Net Promoter Score of all organisations taking part across the local public and private sector (overall average 22.4 against an NCC score of 67).

- NCC scored over 10 points higher than the average across all sectors in the UK.
 - NCC was the highest scoring public sector organisation – scoring a full 12.6 points higher than the overall averages across the public sector.
 - NCC scored higher than the all sector average and local public services average in relation to:
 - Customer experience
 - Customer ethos
 - Ethics
 - Emotional connection with customers
 - In the following areas NCC scored 2 points higher than the highest average of some large high-profile commercial organisations (including John Lewis and First Direct), these were:
 - Helpfulness of staff
 - Staff competence
 - Customer care
10. There were a small number of areas that have been highlighted as areas that need further work. These include overall price/cost and billing for services. Work is ongoing with services in relation to these issues. The only area where the County Council did not outscore other providers was in relation to the handling of complaints - where there is no score recorded for the Council. This is because of all the people surveyed by the Institute none had made a complaint.

Other Options Considered

11. No other options were considered.

Reasons for Recommendation

12. To inform members about the performance and customer satisfaction levels of the service provided by the Customer Service team.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

14. There are no implications arising directly from the contents of this report. All responses and data used in the review is anonymised.

Financial Implications

15. There are no financial implications arising directly from the contents of the report.

Human Resources Implications

16. Recognising and celebrating good performance is a key part of the Council's approach to employee engagement.

Implications for Service Users

17. Feedback from customers and service users in relation to the enquiry handling provided by the Customer Service Centre has resulted in an 87% satisfaction rating by the people using its services. This reflects how professional, friendly and helpful staff are; whether inquiries were resolved at first point of contact and improved outcomes for service users. This feedback and work on the areas for development will be used to continue to improve the service provided to our customers.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That members congratulate the Customer Services Centre on the high levels of customer service and customer satisfaction in the UK Customer Satisfaction Index and agree to this being communicated internally and externally.

Marjorie Toward

**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees
Chief Executives Department**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SS 25/02/20)

18. Personnel Committee is the correct Committee to report these results to.

Financial Comments (SES 25/02/20)

19. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

HR Comments (JP 26/02/20)

20. The HR implications are noted at paragraph 15 in respect of employee engagement and recognising good performance.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Full UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) results

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All