

Brighton & Hove City Council

Strategy, Finance & City Regeneration Committee

Agenda Item 29

Subject: Customer Insight Annual Report 2022/2023

Date of meeting: 13 July 2023

Report of: Executive Director Governance, People & Resources

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Ward(s) affected: All wards

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 Following on from approval of the Customer Experience Strategy at Policy & Resources Committee in 2019, this report has been written to help monitor performance against our Customer Promise and to provide information relating to customer interactions with the council.
- 1.2 This report is compiled with support from the Customer Experience Steering Group (CESG), delivers key management information on customer contact and provides insights into customers' experience with council services. The report also includes information about the size of the customer base and transactional volumes for various services. Data presented in the report should be considered in that context.
- 1.3 Our customers include everyone who lives, works, visits or does business in Brighton & Hove. Customers include those who need to interact with the council as well as those the council must interact with, such as where we have a duty of care.
- 1.4 This report has been created to
 - note the latest customer satisfaction and contact information
 - share trend and data insights with services to support future service development
 - share learning across the council and promote the One Council Approach

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the Customer Insight Annual Report for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 and provides support and challenge to officers to further improve customer experience and customer satisfaction with the council.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 The CESG works together to improve the customer experience, which in turn will improve customer satisfaction. This group consists of all key services across the council.
- 3.2 The CESG has established a Customer Promise and a Customer Vision and an action plan to achieve the vision. This report brings together key information used to monitor progress against these elements.

Summary

- 3.3 The average customer satisfaction with council services in 2022/23 is 59% which has increased from 57% in 2021/22. Although the survey methodology is different, the national benchmark has increased to 60% compared to 56% in 2021/22.
- 3.4 A number of council teams deliver regulatory, enforcement or tax collection services, which may result in the customer not getting the outcome they wanted, for example a Planning Application being rejected. Data from the survey indicates that when customers did not receive the outcome they wanted it directly impacted on how they perceived the standard of service they received during their interactions with the council.
- 3.5 75% of respondents who indicated they received what they needed from their interaction with council services were fairly or very satisfied with the level of customer service, 16% higher than the average of all respondents.
- 3.6 This compares to only 1% of respondents who indicated they didn't receive what they needed from their interaction with council services and 25% satisfaction of respondents who indicated they received some of what they needed from their interaction with council services.
- 3.7 51% of respondents indicated they found council services fairly or very easy to access or use. This is the same result as 2021/22.
- 3.8 Digital is the most used method of contacting the council, 44% of overall contact is through email and 27% through online forms.
- 3.9 Compliments have increased by 1% compared to 2021/22
- 3.10 The volume of Stage 1 complaints has increased by 25% compared to 2021/22, the number of Stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 working days has increased by 4% to 78% against the target of 80%.

- 3.11 The average call waiting time for key council services was 7 minutes 20 seconds against our customer promise of 10 minutes.
- 3.12 Overall, 75% of councillor enquiries were responded to within 5 working days.
- 3.13 The report provides details of the actions that services will be taking in 2023/24 to improve the customer experience and highlights priority areas of focus for the overall customer experience: in person accessibility of council services, a mystery shopping programme and continual improvement of our digital offer.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 Feedback from customers and staff has informed data within this report. Results from Customer Satisfaction surveys are outlined within.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This report enables the council to transparently report progress made to improve customer experience and areas where more work is needed to increase customer satisfaction.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 Individual financial implications for services to further improve their performance will need to be considered as part of the budget setting process going forward.

Finance Officer Consulted: James Hengeveld Date 05/06/23

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The proposals contained in the report are within the Council's powers to implement and will help the Council in discharging its function regarding the promotion of the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area. In addition to improving the customer experience, they will contribute to the achievement of the Council's duties under the Best Value Act 1999.

Lawyer Consulted: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis Date: 07/06/2023

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 These results are taken from responses to the satisfaction survey provided through the corporate consultation portal and do not include results from independent surveys carried out within services or by associated partners. As such, the results presented as average of all respondents will differ to the data presented in overall satisfaction data.

- 9.2 72% (4,175) of respondents to the satisfaction survey agreed to provide equalities data out of a total 5,803 responses.
- 9.3 47% of respondents who provided equalities data (1,975 of 4,175) were satisfied with the level of customer service they received, 6% more than the average of all respondents; 41% (5,803).
- 9.4 51% of respondents who provided equalities data (2,125) found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 6% more than the average of all respondents; 45% (5,803).
- 9.5 Ethnicity
- Respondents who identified as Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) were on average 4% more satisfied (51%) with the level of customer service than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
 - 49% of respondents who identified as BME found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 2% less than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)
- 9.6 Sexual Orientation
- Respondents who identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) were on average 2% less satisfied with the level of customer service (45%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
 - 50% of respondents who identified as LGB found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 1% less than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)
 - 38% of respondents who identified as other were satisfied with the level of customer service, 9% lower than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
 - 44% of respondents who identified as other found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 7% lower than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)
- 9.7 Disability
- Respondents who identified as having their day-to-day activity limited due to health or a disability were on average 1% more satisfied with the level of customer service (48%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
 - 51% of respondents who identified as having their day-to-day activity limited due to health or a disability found council services

fairly easy or very easy to access or use, comparable to the average of all respondents (51%)

9.8 Age

- Respondents who are age 20 to 39 were on average 9% less satisfied (38%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 39% of respondents who are age 20 to 39 found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 12% less than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)

9.9 Gender

- Respondents who identified their gender as 'other' were on average 2% less satisfied (45%) than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (47%)
- 35% of respondents who identified as 'other' found council services fairly easy or very easy to access or use, 16% lower than the average of all respondents who provided equalities information (51%)

The importance of understanding equalities implications is a core part of the awareness raising sessions designed for the Customer Experience Ambassadors across the council and forms part of the Customer Experience council induction briefing sessions.

Supporting Documentation

Appendices

1. Customer Insight Report 2022/23

