

# Equalities Monitoring Customer Services

**Annual Report - 2023-24**



Published:

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# 1. Introduction

Customer Services provides a first point of contact for the public with the Council, via several communication channels - telephone, email, website providing online forms, webchat, social media, and face to face at the reception desk in the Time Square office. The service deals with many different types of enquiries from the public for information and service requests, for example, waste and recycling, street cleaning and grounds maintenance, parks and countryside and highways.

## 2. Public sector equality duty

The purpose of equalities monitoring is to ensure the Council is providing an **accountable, fair, and equitable** service to all residents.

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

- Access and inclusivity to the service
- Satisfaction with the service

It has been analysed by the following equality groups:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

The data below has been taken from:

- The Customer Satisfaction Survey 2023-24. The data covers the period commencing 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 inclusive.

## 3. Access and inclusivity to the service

Access to the service is open to all members of the public via several communication channels: telephone calls, email, online forms, webchat, social media and by visiting the reception at the Council's Time Square office.

Customer Services provides a central point of contact for customers who need a reasonable adjustment to communicate with the Council:

- Not all users of the Council's customers will have English as their first language, however, staff make every effort to meet the needs of individuals. There may be occasions when an interpreter or translator is required and the Council has several volunteer members of staff who speak other languages,

and 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.
- Documents and publications can be provided in alternative formats for people who have difficulty with accessing text information, including people with learning difficulties, partially sighted people, and blind people.

## 4. Satisfaction with the service – views of our customers/service users

The information on satisfaction below has been taken from the Customer Services satisfaction survey for 2023-24, covering the period 1st April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 inclusive. An email link to the survey is sent to customers who have made a service request, following an interaction with Customer Services. A total of 359 customers returned surveys, which is a 32% increase on the 2022-23 reporting period.

The data has been analysed to see if there is any difference in satisfaction rates in terms of the person's gender, age, race, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation. The definition for satisfied has been set at all respondents who reported satisfaction of excellent or good. The definition for not satisfied has been set at all respondents who reported satisfaction of fair or poor.

### Age

There were 342 people who responded to the survey and included their age, (17 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	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5 (1%)
35-49	16 (52%)	15 (48%)	31 (9%)
50-64	50 (60%)	34 (40%)	84 (23%)
65-79	146 (82%)	32 (18%)	178 (50%)
80+	36 (82%)	8 (18%)	44 (12%)
<b>Total Answered</b>	<b>252 (74%)</b>	<b>90 (26%)</b>	<b>342</b>
Not Answered			17 (5%)
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>359</b>

### **Comment**

Satisfaction levels by age group are relatively high for most groups. People aged 65 to 79 and people aged over 80 had the highest satisfaction levels at 82% for each

group. People aged 35 to 49 had the highest dissatisfaction rate at 48%, although the sample size consisted of just 9% of the total audience.

## **Gender**

The table below shows satisfaction rates for men and women, 341 customers responded to this question.

**Table 2: Satisfaction rates by gender**

Gender	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Male	98 (68%)	46 (32%)	144 (40%)
Female	156 (79%)	41 (21%)	197 (55%)
<b>Total Answered</b>	<b>254 (74%)</b>	<b>87 (26%)</b>	<b>341</b>
Not Answered			18 (5%)
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>359</b>

## **Comment**

The data shows that whilst there were more female respondents than male respondents, the satisfaction rates were relatively positive across both groups, particularly amongst female respondents at 79%. Male respondents had higher dissatisfaction rate at 32%.

## **Disability**

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of whether the customer has a disability, 337 customers responded to this question.

**Table 3: Satisfaction rates by disability**

Disability?	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Yes	83 (75%)	27 (25%)	110 (31%)
No	165 (73%)	62 (27%)	227 (63%)
<b>Total Answered</b>	<b>248 (74%)</b>	<b>89 (26%)</b>	<b>337</b>
Not Answered			22 (6%)
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>359</b>

## **Comment**

The data shows that 110 (31%) of the overall respondents advised that they had a disability. A large proportion of these customers were satisfied with the service they received (75%). The satisfaction rate for customers without a disability, was 73%, which is lower in comparison to those customers with a disability, however, the numbers of customers in this group is much higher at 63% of respondents.

### Ethnicity

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of the customers' ethnicity, 340 customers responded to this question.

**Table 4: Satisfaction rates by race**

Race	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
White	246 (75%)	84 (25%)	330 (92%)
Black & Minority Ethnic groups	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	10 (3%)
<b>Total Answered</b>	<b>252 (74%)</b>	<b>88 (26%)</b>	<b>340</b>
Not Answered			19 (5%)
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>359</b>

### **Comment**

The table shows that the satisfaction rate for the White Ethnic group is 75% compared with 60% for the Black & Minority Ethnic groups. However, the total number of customers who responded to this question in the Black & Minority Ethnic groups is relatively small at 10 (3% of total respondents.)

### Religion or Belief

The table below shows the satisfaction rates in terms of the customers' religion or belief, 331 customers responded to this question.

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

Religion/Belief	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Total
None	84 (69%)	38 (31%)	122 (34%)
Christian	152 (78%)	43 (22%)	195 (54%)
Buddhist	0	0	0
Hindu	1 (100%)	0	1 (0.2%)
Muslim	3 (100%)	0	3 (0.8%)
Sikh	0	0	0
Jewish	1 (100%)	0	1 (0.2%)
Other	4 (44%)	5 (55%)	9 (3%)
<b>Total Answered</b>	<b>245 (74%)</b>	<b>86 (26%)</b>	<b>331</b>
Not Answered			28 (7.8%)
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>359</b>

### **Comment**

The table above shows that the majority of customer's answering this question are Christian (54%), with 78% satisfied with the service they had received. Respondents advising that they had no religion or belief (34%) are the next most satisfied group at 69%.

The number of people stating their religion as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Jewish or Other is very small, therefore 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, 322 customers responded to this question.

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

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Not satisfied</b>	<b>Total</b>
Heterosexual/Straight	220 (76%)	70 (24%)	290 (81%)
Gay Man	0	0	0
Lesbian/Gay Women	2 (100%)	0	2 (0.5%)
Bisexual	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (1%)
Prefer not to say	13 (48%)	14 (52%)	27 (7.5%)
<b>Total Answered</b>	<b>237 (74%)</b>	<b>85 (26%)</b>	<b>322</b>
Not Answered			37 (10%)
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>359</b>

### **Comment**

The table shows that most customers' answering this question were heterosexual/straight (81%), with 76% of this group satisfied with the service they had received. 7.5% of customers preferred not to advise their sexuality and a further 10% did not answer the question. The numbers for other groups are so small that any differences in levels of satisfaction should not be viewed as statistically significant.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, overall satisfaction is quite high and there are no major differences relating to the various equality groups. However, the survey returns, 359, whilst up on the responses received in 2022-23 remain low. 270 responses were received in 2022-23, 399 responses in 2021-22 and 486 responses received in 2020-21. Customers have a choice in the communication channel best suited to their needs, with access to telephone, email, online forms, webchat, social media and by visiting the reception at the Council's Time Square office. Customer Services also provides a central point of contact for customers who need a reasonable adjustment to communicate with the Council.

## **6. Recommendations**

Continue efforts to increase the take-up of customer satisfaction surveys to help provide more meaningful data.

Implement the Quality Assurance management tool, which will be available in the customer contact management system used by Customer Services, to help provide more information on customer satisfaction.