

Customer Service Policy

Post Consultation Report

1. Introduction:

Defining our approach to our customers is essential to help the organisation achieve its aim towards becoming a successful strategic commissioning authority.

Facing the Challenge, Kent County Council's transformation plan, places a heavy importance on the role of the customer in the work of a commissioning authority: - "By 2020, all KCC services will have a greater customer focus with services organised around the needs of service users and residents".

Facing the Challenge shifts the focus from improving our services through understanding our customers' experience, to a better understanding of our customers' needs by actively engaging them in the design and delivery of services.

In order to create this change in approach, the Council must firstly define and agree its core customer service values and principles.

The endorsement of a corporate Customer Services Policy will provide these principles and is designed to work alongside Kent County Council's Commissioning and Outcomes Frameworks towards the delivery of effective commissioning.

This Policy and its measures will be used alongside the Commissioning Framework, enabling KCC to hold to account all service providers for meeting customer service expectations. KCC will act as a guarantor of standards for service users and acting on their behalf where customer service principles and standards are not met.

The draft Customer Service Policy was agreed at senior officer and Member level within the Council ahead of seeking the views of service users via public consultation. The draft policy is attached to this document as Appendix One.

The final decision on the Policy will be taken by the Policy and Resources Committee in September. The committee will consider the consultation outcomes and the changes to the Equalities Impact Assessment.

2. Consultation process:

In order to seek wider views and comments from service users the draft Customer Service Policy was open public consultation from 10 March 2015 until 12 May 2015.

A questionnaire was developed to capture feedback on the draft policy and this is attached as Appendix Two. This questionnaire and a copy of all relevant supporting documentation was made available online via the 'Consultations' section of KCC's website. This included an 'easy read' version of the draft Policy to ensure of the content was accessible to those that may have found the main policy document difficult to read/understand, and plain text versions for those using document reading/accessibility software.

These documents were available in alternative formats upon request.

In order to raise awareness of the consultation a range of communication measures were taken, including:

- Relevant messages on KCC's 'twitter' feed
- Headline stories on the internal staff website 'Knet' outlining draft policy and encouraging staff participation
- Face to face engagement in Gateways, and advertising on Gateway screens
- Links to the consultation were placed on library computers for a period of 3 weeks
- Community Engagement Officers sent out information to various stakeholders across Kent including district, borough and parish councils, local Voluntary and Community Sector groups and umbrella VCS organisations
- Notifications of the consultation were sent to those that have registered on KCC's consultation directory

As part of the Equalities Impact Assessment process key groups were identified that could potentially be impacted by the Customer Service Policy. In order to ensure that the views of these customers were incorporated into the consultation, a small number of interactive workshops were undertaken across the County where more qualitative discussions and issues were explored. Workshops were undertaken with a BME (Black, Minority and Ethnic) community group, an older peoples forum and two groups of young people including a BME youth forum. A workshop was also held with a disability group – although this fell slightly outside of the consultation period comments have been included to ensure that their views are reflected.

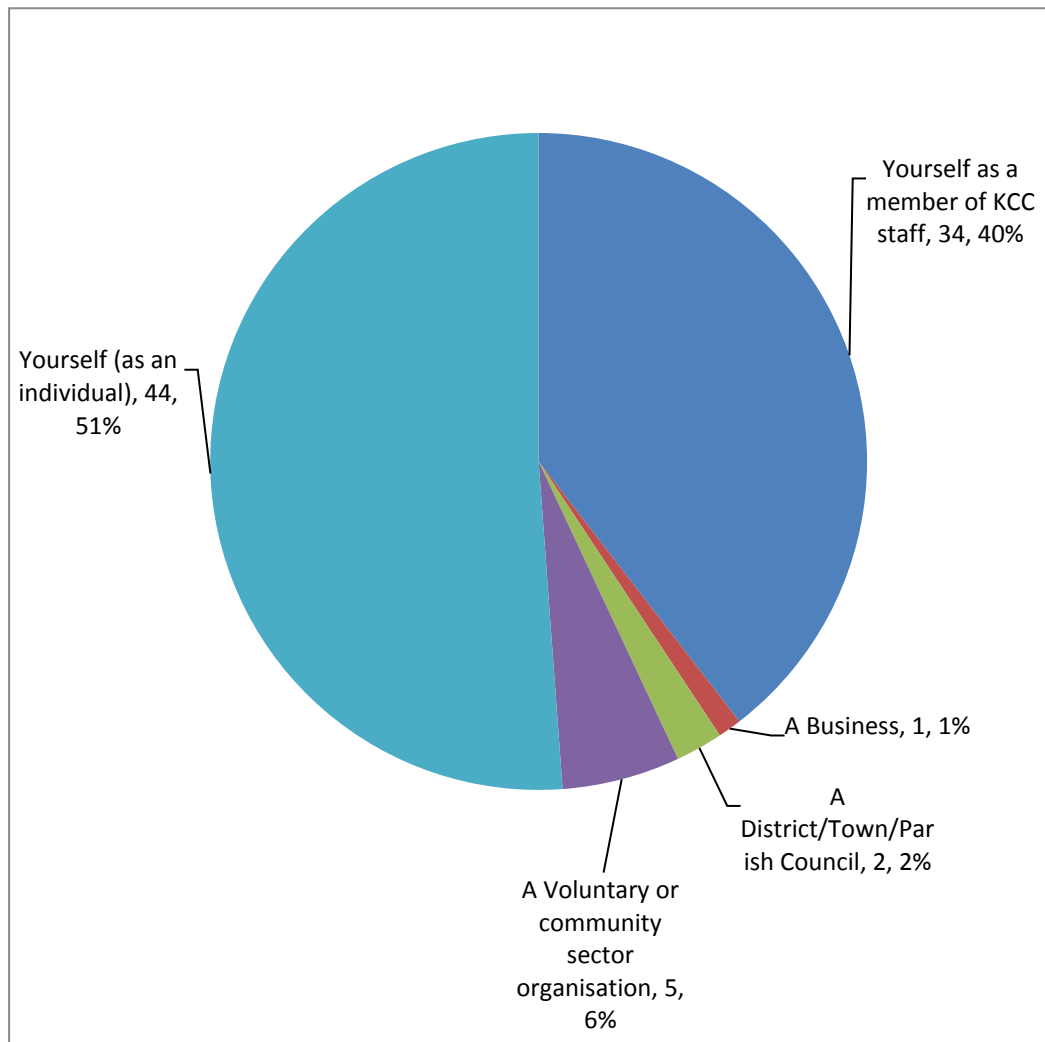
KCC's own representative staff groups were also contacted as part of this process to seek views across all people with protected characteristics, both as KCC officers and customers in their own right. This included UNITE, Rainbow, Level Playing Field and ASPIRE groups.

3. Respondents

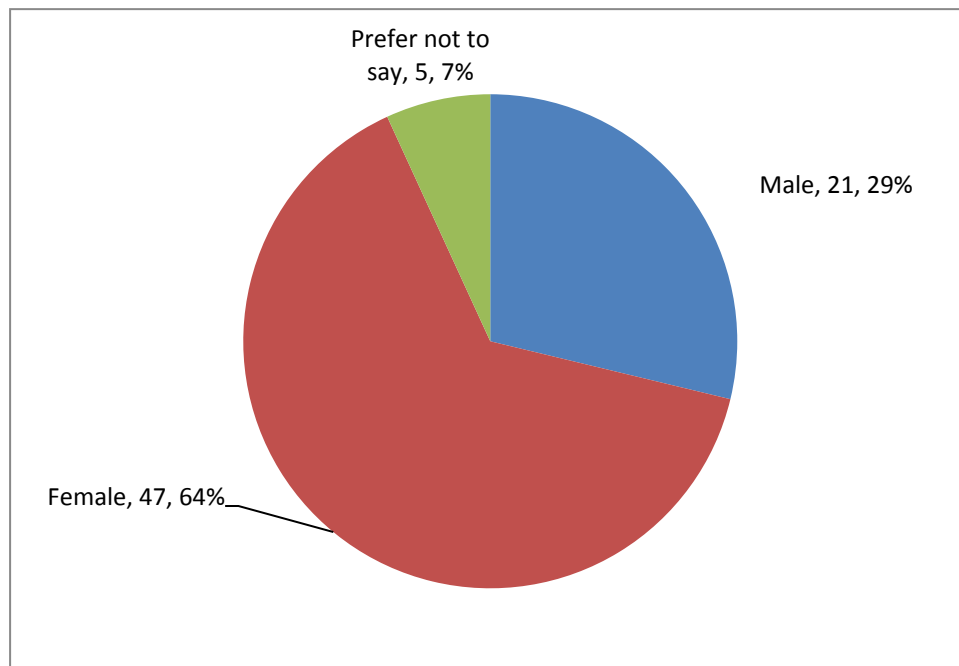
A total of 88 responses to the consultation questionnaire were received including paper copies that were filled in at Gateways. (Note: not all customers completed all the questions, therefore the totals will not add up to 88).

Analysis of the responses received shows the following:

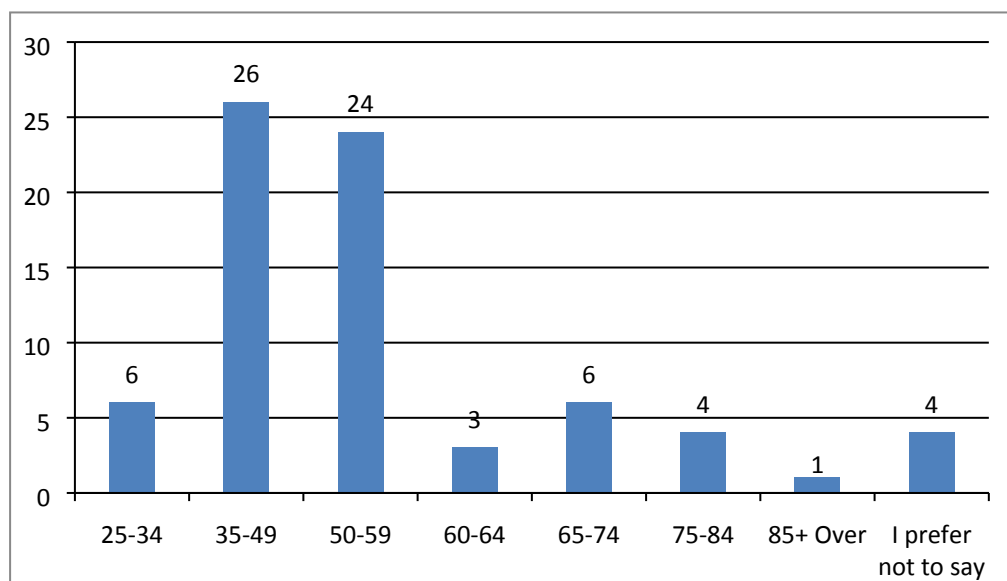
Respondent Type:



Gender:

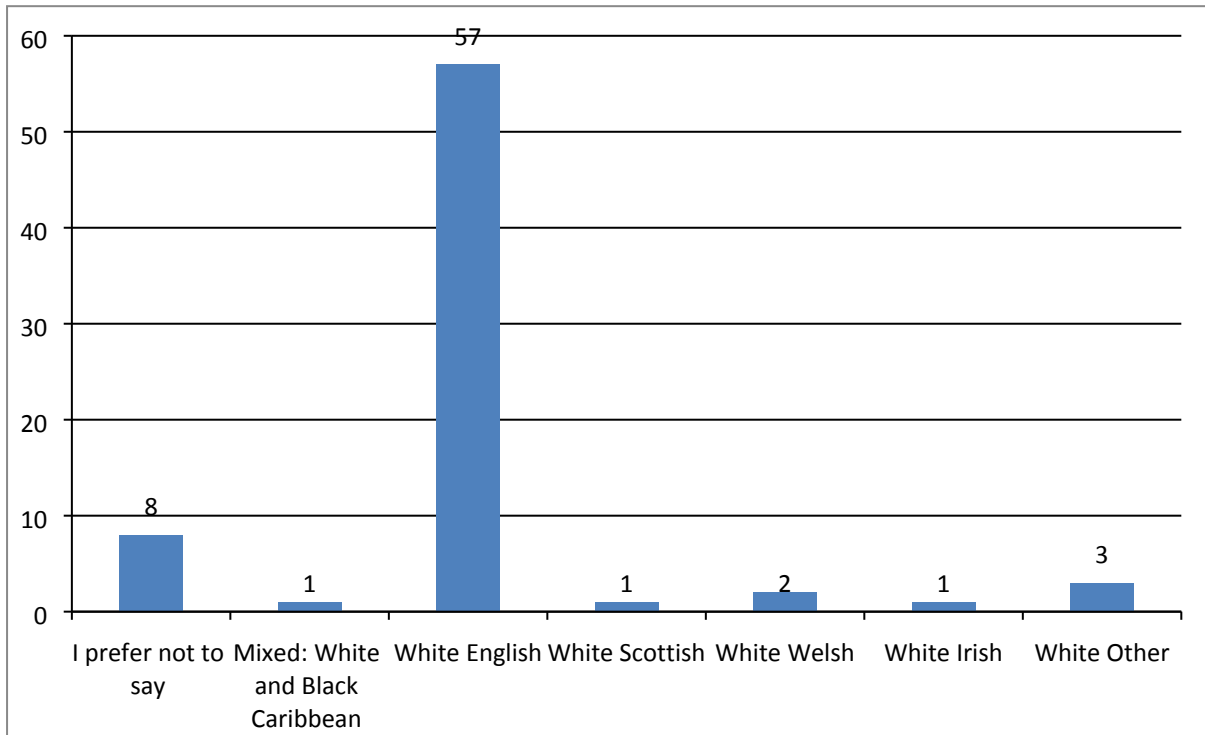


Age:

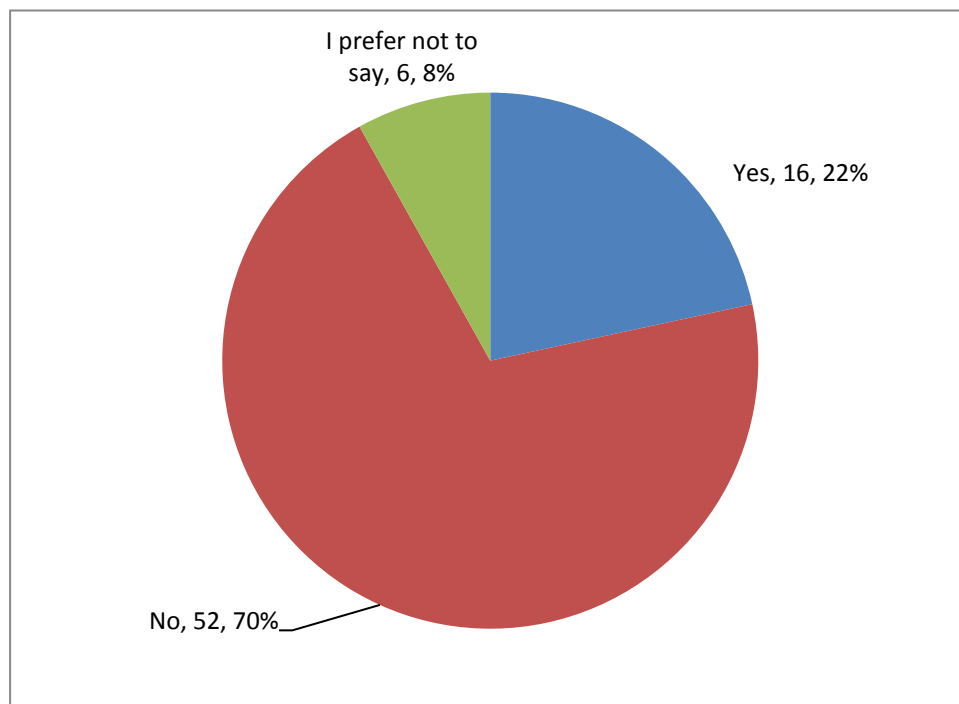


Customers 60 plus expressed concern at being able to access services online and wanted reassurance that services will continue to be delivered by other methods as well.

Ethnicity: Although workshops were undertaken with groups with identified as having protected characteristics (i.e. Race, Disability, age) not all of these participants opted to fill in a separate questionnaire and are therefore not reflected in the charts below.



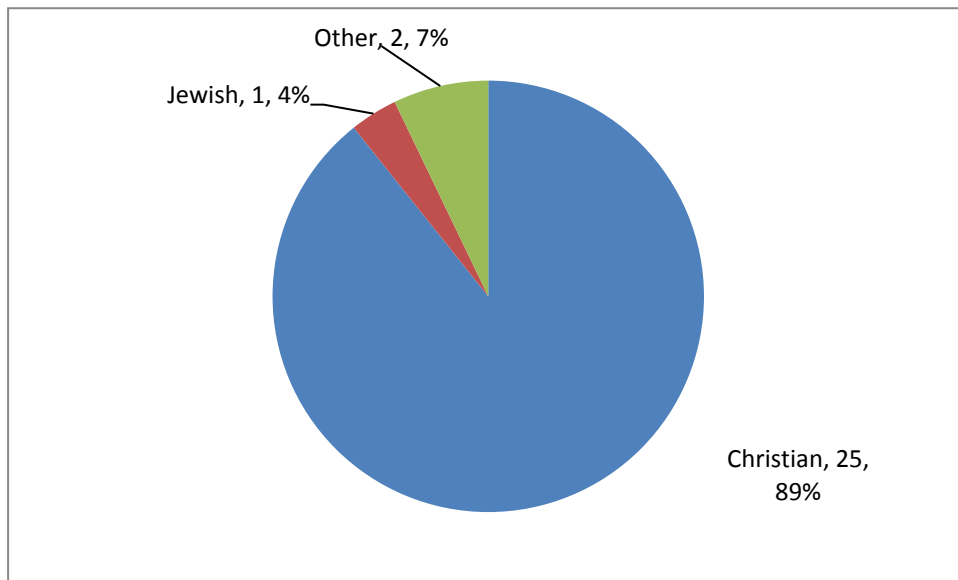
Disability:



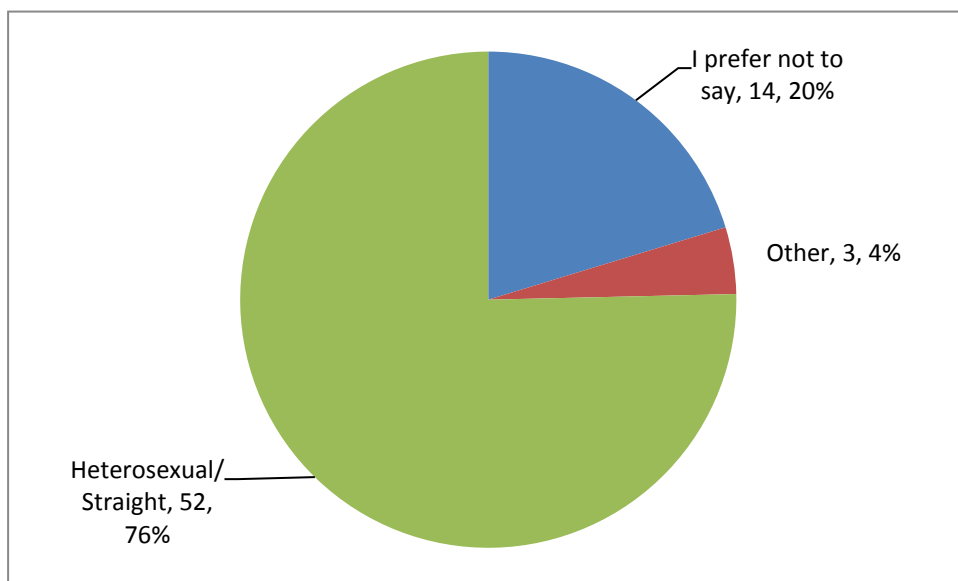
The majority of customers who expressed they had a disability selected the option 'that services provided by KCC are flexible and responsive to customers, and can be

accessed in a range of ways according to need' and that they wanted to feel that KCC was 'putting them at the heart of everything we do'

Religion:



Sexuality:



4. Consultation responses:

The following gives more detailed analysis on each question within the consultation questionnaire.

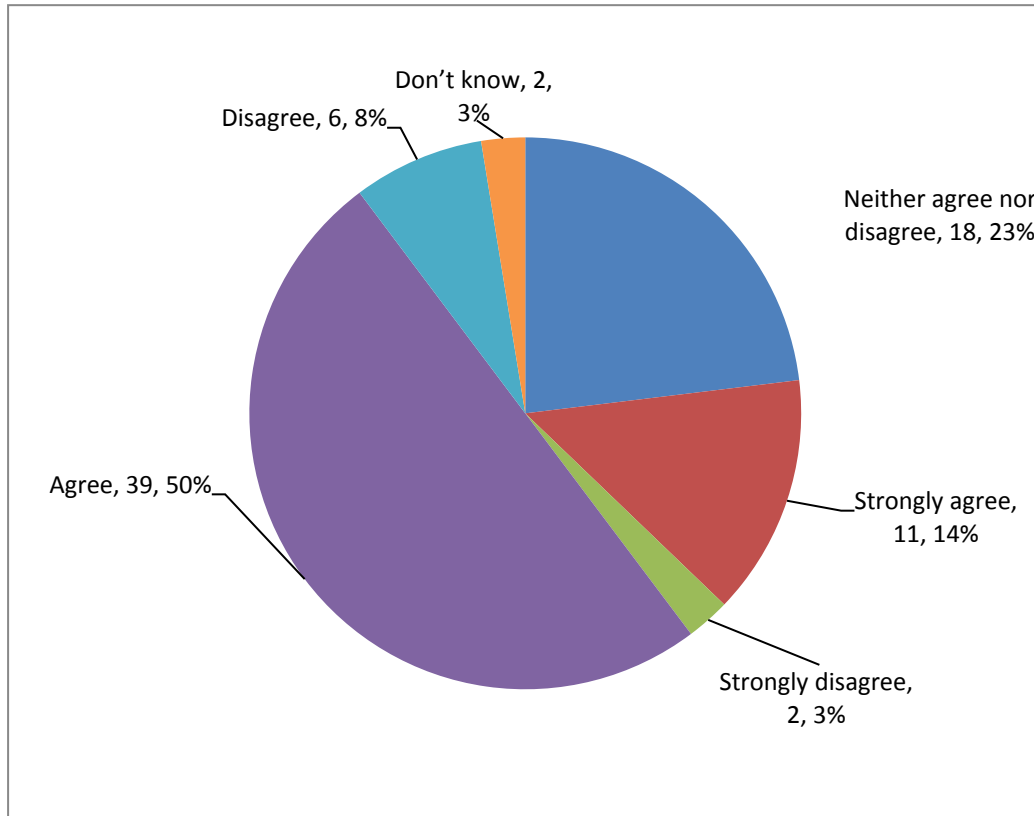
Question 1a – responding of behalf of an Organisation?

Those that completed this field are as listed below:-

- British Disabled Alliance
- Home Start South West Kent
- Thanet Community Networks
- Romney Marsh Website (www.theromneymarsh.net)
- Kent Equality Cohesion Council
- The Film Factory
- Plaxtol Parish Council
- Loose Parish Council

Question 2 - To what extent do you agree or disagree that the principles will help Kent County Council design services that are accessible to you?

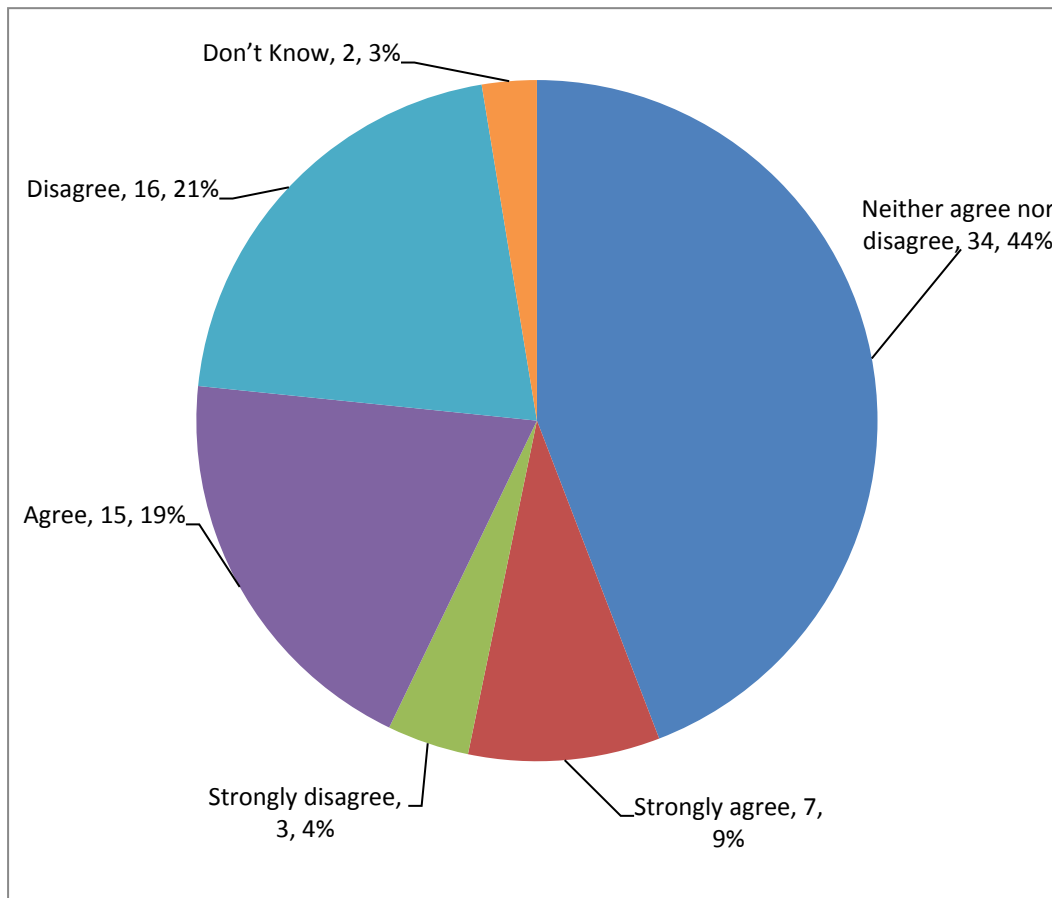
Respondents were given the opportunity to rank on scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, as well as the opportunity to express that they do not know.



This feedback suggests that the majority of respondents (64%) feel the principles outlined in the customer service policy will help KCC design accessible services.

Question 3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree that the principles will help Kent County Council deliver services at lower cost?

Respondents were given the opportunity to select a response on scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, as well as the opportunity to express that they do not know.



Responses to this question were less conclusive and spread almost equally across the possible answers. It is worthy of note that the highest proportion (44%) went for the 'neither agree nor disagree' option, suggesting further work will be required to help customers understand the potential for cost saving whilst protecting customer service principles.

Question 4 – How do you think the customer service principles could improve services for you?

Respondents were given the opportunity to enter their comments in response to this question. This question generated 61 responses. Examples of comments received include the following:

“By being applied ... a customer service policy of this type requires radical re-shaping of services and an investment in process. I recall previous stated ambitions towards a customer centred approach. This requires business intelligence and an understanding of performance metrics that services just

don't have. Change will I'm afraid remain driven by complaints rather than operational analysis. Also, once a service provider has a contract, and no matter how badly they serve this policy, there is no appetite or mechanism for challenge."

This response is not untypical of the sentiment expressed by other respondents i.e. that KCC must follow through with its promises and ensure delivery is driven by this policy. A number of respondents are sceptical as to whether this will happen.

Recommendation: We must actively consult and communicate with our customers throughout the implementation of the policy, so that they can see the impact of both their feedback and the implementation of the standards expressed in the policy

"Put them in plain English. What does "Customers have a clear escalation path for any comments or complaints that cannot be easily resolved by service providers" (Q5 below} actually mean?"

"There should be new campaign for clear English in all council correspondence including internal documents and legal notices"

Recommendation: These comments remind us that we should remember to use plain English wherever possible. The language used in the Customer Service Policy has been reviewed to ensure as simple and clear as possible, and this approach should be taken forward into delivery.

"Improved monitoring of organisations/services which receive funding to ensure that they deliver a more effective customer service."

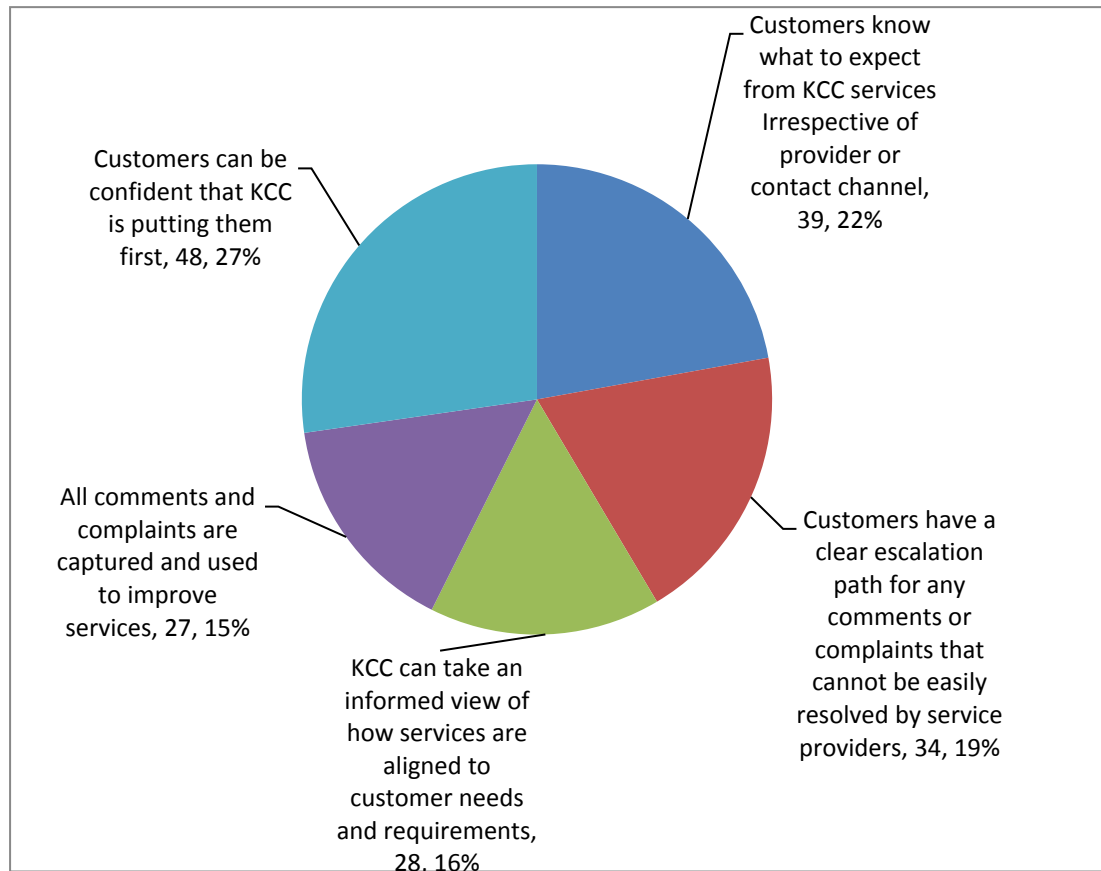
Recommendation: We must develop standards that can be monitored to ensure that there is a consistent approach toward achieving Customer Service outcomes throughout the supply chain.

"I want effective on line access; to be able to complete my enquiry at my convenience. I like the fact that your principles tell me there will be better digital access and that you are bothered about service standards and quality whether you deliver the service I need or someone else does."

A range of responses echoed this sentiment.

**Question 5 – Which of the following outcomes is most important to you?
(Relating to Principle 1: Delivering Quality)**

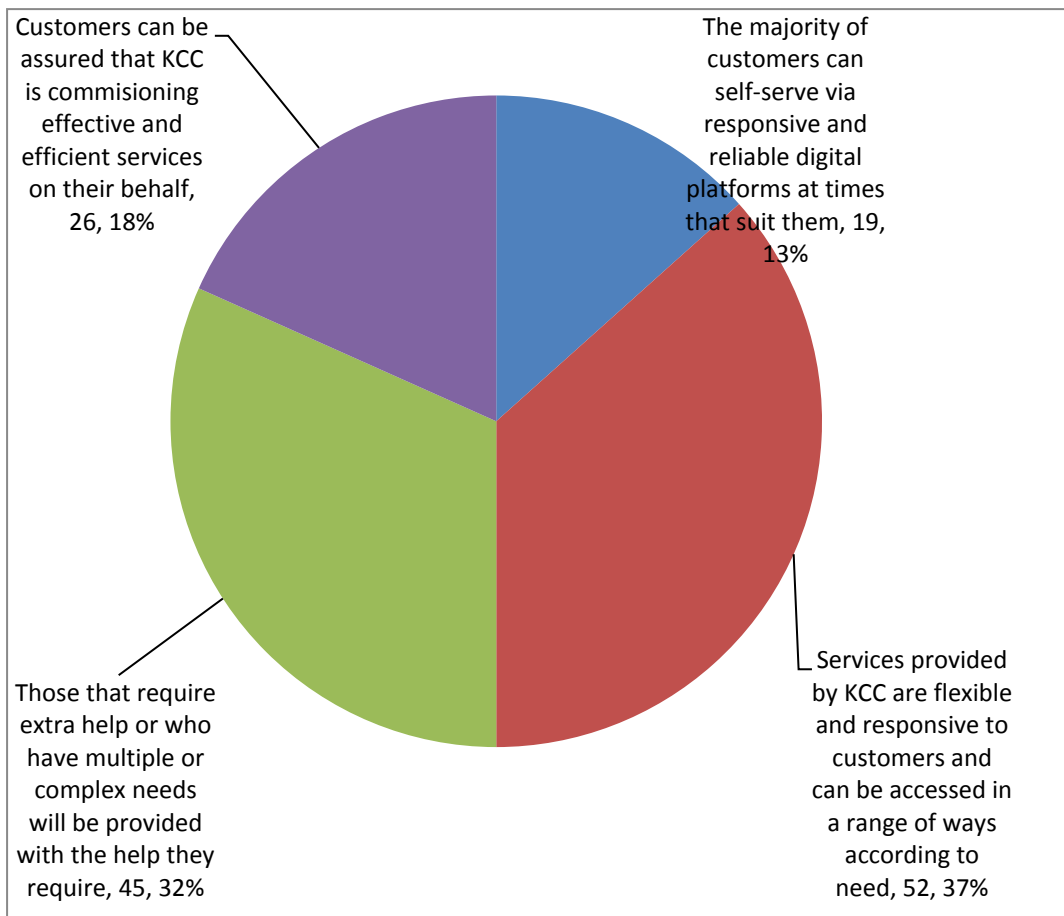
Respondents were asked to choose a maximum of three outcomes that were most important to them.



There is a fairly even spread across the outcomes described however expressing little preference between them. This also demonstrates that the Policy aims reflect customer expectations.

**Question 6 – Which of the following outcomes is most important to you?
(Relating to Principle 2: Customer Focused Services)**

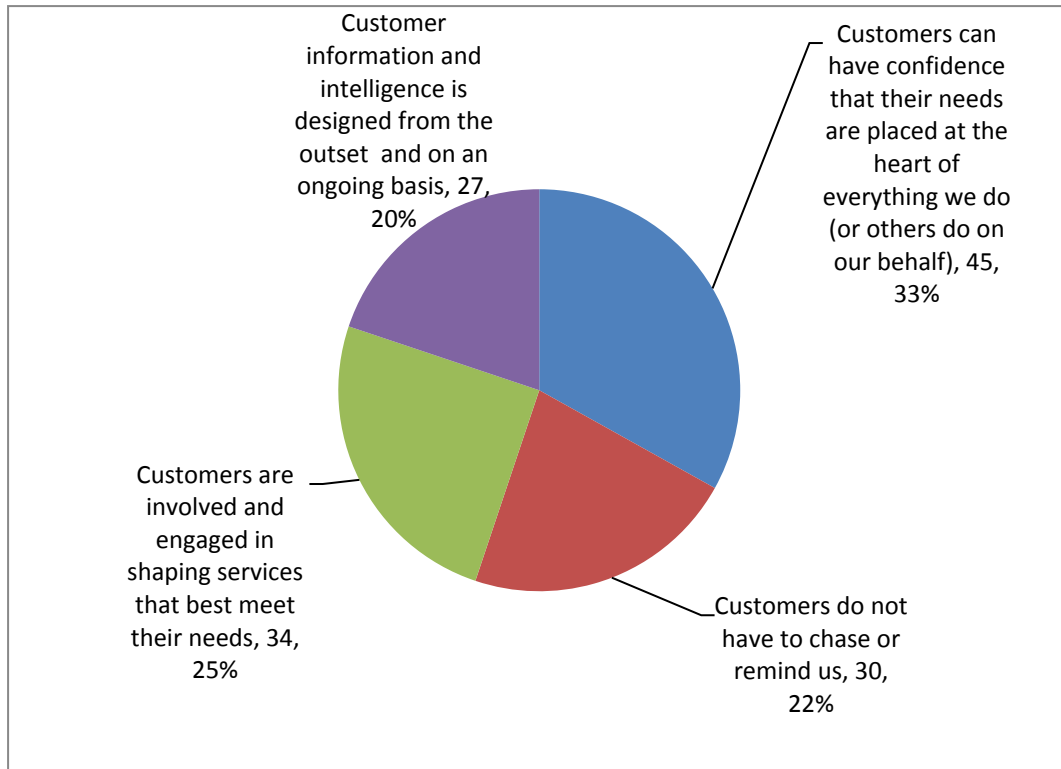
Respondents were asked to choose a maximum of two outcomes that were most important to them.



A clear preference can be seen towards the provision of services that are flexible and responsive to customer needs and that can be accessed in a range of ways alongside ensuring those that require additional support continuing to receive the help that they require. Self service via digital platforms ranked lowest with 13% of respondents prioritising this indicating that there is more work to do to establish the digital channel as a channel of first choice.

**Question 7 – Which of the following outcomes is most important to you?
(Relating to Principle 3: Intelligent Commissioning)**

Respondents were asked to select the two outcomes they felt were most important.



A fairly even spread of responses received, with a slight preference for customers feeling that their needs are placed at the heart of everything we do, and that customers are involved and engaged in service design.

Recommendation: The involvement of customers in service design should be strengthened in pre commission and change process planning by services to ensure compliance with the Customer Service Policy.

Question 8 – How do you think KCC will know if services are improving for you?

Respondents were given the opportunity to enter their comments in response to this question. This question generated 58 responses – below are some examples of the comments received;

“I will get the services I need, when I need them. I won’t have to keep chasing or complain when things don’t happen in time.”

“Need to involve customers in evaluating the services, not just feedback forms, but mystery shopping type visits etc.”

“This isn’t clear. It will depend on how good the business intelligence and data capturing from feedback / complaints is and how this is fed into the

improvement process. How will "lessons learned" be integrated into new and existing systems and processes?"

There is a clear expectation that we will go beyond simply monitoring complaints and capturing feedback. There is a much deeper need to understand customer experience, capturing more qualitative data and feedback in order to truly gauge progress.

Recommendation: We should explore a variety of ways to ensure we capture and understand customer experiences when in using our services, and actively involve customers in reviewing and reshaping services.

Question 9 – Do you have any further comments on the Customer Service Policy?

Respondents were given the opportunity to enter their comments in response to this question. This question generated 36 responses.

From some of the comments received, there would appear to be a lack of understanding around a 'strategic commissioning model' and its relation to outsourcing.

Positive comments received include:

"Very ambitious policy, dynamic to match the current modern requirement, my only worry is about the vulnerable population which may have no access in a digital form to the service."

*"I liked it.
But it must be remembered that the policy is only words. It will be the delivery of this policy that matters."*

Amongst the negative comments received are statements such as:

"The 'Commissioning Authority' aspect appears to be nothing more than the council trying to offload its responsibilities onto somebody else."

"That it is a forgone conclusion that everything will be outsourced. So why bother with a consultation when you are not going to listen to what the people think."

Other Comments were received seeking further clarity, such as:

"Needs more clarity about how you will involve customers from the beginning of the process, customers will need to be involved in writing specifications not just saying what they think when its already written."

Recommendation: Following the launch of the policy, the customer service standards for the council and delivery partners will be written in consultation with our customers. A clear accountability will be with service managers to evidence customer involvement in the pre-planning and redesign of services.

Question 10 – Views or comments on the assumptions made as part of the Equality Impact Assessment?

Respondents were given the opportunity to enter their comments in response to this question. This question generated 13 responses. Extracts are quoted below.

“Fully agree with the assumption that digital access to the service is vital and therefore providing a continuous access for computers to certain criteria of the population is a must and probably running new computers courses for the senior citizens.”

“Good grief - 39 pages long! That is a barrier in itself, surely? I wholly support the use of EIAs but if you want people to actually become familiar with their content, they need to be summarised as to the impacts that have been identified, and the key ways in which these will be overcome or accommodated. The full report can then be available for people who wish to drill-down into the detail.”

“I was pleased to see that digital exclusion particularly of the elderly has been identified.”

“There are ongoing financial impacts to the user (IT, internet etc.) that may be beyond some.”

Recommendation: Need to ensure that ‘Digital by Design’ does not exclude those who do not use the internet, and positively communicate the convenience and benefits of digital self-service.

Summary of Recommendations arising from customer feedback in the consultation

- We should actively consult and communicate with our customers throughout the implementation of the policy, so that they can see the impact of both their feedback and in the definition of and implementation of the standards that underpin the policy
- We should remember to use plain English wherever possible. The language used in the Customer Service Policy had been reviewed to ensure it is as simple and clear as possible, and this approach should be taken forward into delivery.
- We will develop standards that can be measured to ensure that there is a consistent approach to Customer Service throughout the supply chain.
- The involvement of customers in service design will be strengthened in the pre-commissioning, redesign planning to achieve the aims of the Customer Service Policy.
- We will need to explore a variety of ways to ensure we capture and understand customer experiences when using our services and use this to improve what we do
- Following the launch of the policy, the customer service standards for the council and delivery partners will be written in consultation with our customers.
- Need to ensure that 'Digital by Design' does not exclude those who do not use the internet

6. Summary of Workshop Discussions

6.1 Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) Group – Maidstone

- People were glad to be asked for their views and thought it was good that KCC were consulting on the policy.
- Flexibility is a key requirement, information is preferable in multiple formats, geography of Kent needs to be considered as this can have a big impact on customer experience. Language – both plain English and lack of understanding of English is still an issue.
- Consultations shouldn't be web only as there are still a high proportion of non-web users.
- Getting satisfactory answers through first point resolution – seeing something tangible after feeding back such as “you said we did”, we hate phrases such as “we will feed that back” – which seems false and we never hear back.
- Lots of service & staff turnover so it is hard to know who to approach to resolve issues – staff, arrangements and policies are not very clear - it is difficult for us to know who to contact and what to expect as often things are not responded to.
- There is too much reliance on Freedom of information Act to find things out rather than being transparent in the first place – “no one knows who is responsible when I call”
- There have been some successes such as the support to Ghurkha veterans through the Ghurkha settlement fund. Arrangements have been really good.
- There is a lot of value in community engagement – the wardens service is so important to provide reassurance and help sort out residents' issues.

6.2 Older People's Group - Shepway

General Discussion

- The group were almost unanimous in their view that regardless of what is said; the 'strategic commissioning authority' model meant that the County Council was engaging in an outsourcing programme.
- The group felt that outsourced delivery led to poorer performance, less accountability and is impossible to reverse once contracts have been let – examples given around health/hospital support provision.
- There was concern raised around how services will be overseen by the Council given ever decreasing resources and staff – will there be sufficient people to gather service users' views, intervene if required and listen to customer views? Doubts were expressed.
- Concerns were raised around staffing levels in Libraries and what will happen when the Trust model is operational – will the trust be looking make cut backs?

Customer Service Discussion

- Positive examples of customer service
 - District Nurses – attention to detail, regularity, well trained, instil confidence
 - William Harvey Hospital – one member of the group felt cared for, treated well, but this tended to depend on which nursing staff you got
 - Amazon – simple and straight forward process – always delivers when they say they will and usually quite quick. Good communication throughout.
 - The AA – good communication and reliable, track vans and always able to tell you how long before they get to you
 - Saga – mentioned as providing really good customer service. Their call centre knows who you are and often if you ring back you get the same person who recalls talking to you. Feels really personalised.
- Negative examples of customer service
 - Another online shopping experience, however demonstrating the need for full supply chain to perform to same standards. Group member found the experience of buying online with a particular supplier very slick and efficient, however the delivery team would not listen to her when they turned up. They unloaded the wrong shipment at her house involving many many boxes when she was expecting only one– she tried to tell them but they would not listen. Only when they thought they had finished and wanted to sign off did they realise they had wrong

address. Would have saved a lot of time and effort if they had listened to the customer.

- Private sector organisations contracted to provide homecare – the group felt that often performance of some of these organisations is poor, however clients are often afraid to complain as they fear their care will get even worse. People are genuinely scared to raise issues.
- Contact Centres in general were perceived to give poor customer service – too many automated switchboards, voice recognition systems that don't work were cited, alongside the length of time 'holding' to get through – an example of a 1.5 hour wait to get through to a hotel booking line was quoted. KCC contact centre was not well thought of by the group in general. The group were of the opinion that call centre operatives are under too much pressure to limit calls to a particular time, and managers 'stood over them' to increase pressure to perform to time limits.
- The group were also concerned around 'flexible working' and the move to people only being contactable by their mobile phones. This was seen as increased expense for the service user and you could not always get hold of the person. It was recognised that KCC's new telephone system could help with this.

Customer Service Channels

- Group felt that older people in general do not use the internet – especially those in their later years, although it was accepted that some were comfortable doing certain things on computers
- Smart phones in general were not a facility used by older people
- The group recognised that this may be a generational issue, with younger people being brought up with technology - they may be different when they reach older age.
- By far the most common channel used by older people is the telephone; however this brought considerable frustration as outlined above i.e. call centre experience.
- An example was raised about older people with hearing difficulties who sometimes appear to be shouting on the phone, but this is actually due to their condition. Staff who call them seemed to be unaware of this and accused them of being rude or aggressive.
- The group recognised that moving services online would suit some, however advised that other channels such as telephone remain very important to them – there should not be a scenario where 'digital by design' means ceasing the ability to access by other means.
- Some members of the group pointed out that although we often point to Libraries as a place to go to access computers and undertake online activity,

sometimes these are miles away and computers are fully booked or not operational when you want them.

Other Points Raised

- The group were not in favour of being called 'customers' as they were 'not buying services in a shop'.
- The group questioned the suggestion of describing 'minimum standards' for services – they saw this as a negative.

6.3 Young People's Group - Shepway

A small group of young people aged between 11 and 16 took part in a workshop at Folkestone Academy.

The following points were raised during the discussion in relation to customer service:

- The young people taking part made no distinction between the KCC and the District Council
- Most examples of good customer service for young people were quoted in terms of face to face contact with very little online or telephone service having been experienced by the group.
- Most important to the group was people following through on their promises and people doing what they say they will
- Information is not always clear and understandable to young people – examples were given around bus timetables which no-one could understand!
- The group also felt they were often mistrusted when with their friends just because they are a group of young people – this often made them feel angry
- Young people tend not to look online for help – they would more likely talk to someone they trust
- Awareness of services available to young people is poor – perhaps further discussions with schools would help and this is where most information is given

6.4 BME Young People's Group – Gravesend

Are you aware of the difference between the district and borough services and Kent County Council?

We are aware of the County Council and the various District Councils. Also aware of some of the services both councils offer/run, but not all.

What online services do you use?

- Travel tickets
- Bus passes

Examples of good and bad customer service and what matters to you as a customer

We will start with bad – Has anyone got an example of bad customer service, it can be anywhere i.e. retail, contact centres, council services etc.?

- “If you go to a place, for example a restaurant, and you want to get something and you have to wait for hours and no one is attending to you and then someone else comes in and they then speak to that person before you, you then come out feeling angry and like it was a waste of time”.
- “I was on a bus when the driver was rude to someone who got on, it was a mum and I think she was with a child and gave the driver a note to pay with. The driver was annoyed and said that she didn't have change and muttered under her breath. The passenger said it's not my job to have 50p's in my wallet as the driver was moaning and getting stressed”.
- “For me it's about being bounced around from department to department, for example cancelling a broadband contract when they say we can offer you this and we can offer you that and you just want to cancel the contract”.
- “I have an example about the borough Councils website. A client of mine applied for housing and was refused. He was asked to appeal the decision but was not told how and the only instruction on the website was to write a letter, it offered no guidance or support as to how the letter should be written. When my client wrote her letter to appeal it was rejected and informed that it was not in the correct format it is really confusing and not representing what the council stands for”.

By going through the bad examples, the group highlighted that;

- *They expected to be acknowledged when requesting a service*
- *To access services easily without front line staff making it difficult and not displaying a can-do attitude*

- *Services need to take responsibility when dealing with their customers*

Does anyone have any examples of good customer service?

- “I think it comes down to the individual that you deal with. If you have a big company and have people put in place for sales or dealing with clients you can have lots of good employees but if you have one bad egg it will give the whole company a bad name. If you place someone in the position of customer service they have to be happy all the time as they are representing the company.

I have met a few people and I have done research of my own, for example, if someone doesn't feel good they bring that to work with all the negative spirit and they take it out on customers. Maybe it's the way the company operates and it depends on the people but even in phone shops they are going the extra mile and they have good energy and that energy is transferable. If People help you and they are in a cheery mood it makes you happy for the rest of day. Good Front line support should be compulsory”.

- “We have had good people in the library in the town centre they show respect and get respect back”.
- “Another example are the schools which have improved standards and the students who come out now with better academics and personality. I met some people who came out of school recently and before there was crimes, knives and guns in the school but it now seems a much better place to be and they have much better personalities”.
- “All that you need to do for people is to change people's lives positively, like a high street homeless person if you view them in different way and you can change their lives, like even if you have £5, you can make a difference you don't know what that person is thinking about, because no one even cares. If you remember late last year people were killing themselves and there was the internet bullies, kids don't have relationships they don't have people to talk to, they bottle it up inside and that's dangerous, that's like a grenade waiting to go off. Not every young person wants to be bad sometimes they are just followers and we should try and channel the bad energy in to something positive”.
- “The youth clubs actually help. I've been in to youth clubs who try and change and give the attention youths need. Front line services and customer services are a good investment for KCC they should invest in street based youth clubs, apart from the ones they have already commissioned. Other organisations that are not known, they are doing a very good job around engaging young people”.

“Would you find it useful if KCC went to youth clubs to show what the Council can do for you?”

- “Yes, definitely, the only thing that makes me happy is to see people doing positive things. In my free time if I see someone that needs help, I help, that’s way I am. I have been to a few places and I see the way they are organised. Some people that just don’t care, they are there just to do the hours and to just get paid, they are not connected to youth. They need the right guidance and right supervision and can easily plug in and get the early intervention. When I was working there, a young guy was by himself in the corner with about twenty other kids on the other side of the room, not talking to him. I stood next to the person in charge of the youth centre and said why is he not talking to the others and he said, he never talks”.

By going through the good examples, the group highlighted that;

- *Front line customer service is extremely important in representing the brand of your company*
- *Local Youth Clubs are worthwhile and engagement with KCC services would be welcomed*
- *The group appreciated customer service workers who went out of their way to help them*
- *Communication and engagement are crucial in promoting KCC services to youth groups, they want to be involved in shaping KCC services*

What barriers you have encountered in accessing service?

- The wrong people in place, not helping customers to access services
- Struggles in finding what services KCC have to offer

“Sticking on the difficulties and barriers is there anything you can’t access online?”

“I think if it’s only available online and it is a small place and they have no posters around town it’s hard to find and search about it and you’re not going to search for something you don’t know the name of”.

“So for example if you were applying for a Blue badge on behalf of a family member do you think KCC are doing a good job of letting people know how to apply? Where would you go?”

“I would search online for parking websites and KCC blue badge parking on the KCC website and Gravesham Borough Council website. I’m not sure where to access it on the KCC website though”.

What can we do to get rid of barriers?

- Street services – KCC going out to see people in local towns and in local forums.
- Get to know the people who you are employing to make sure that they are not there just for the money and that they care about the service which they work for, as it's having an impact on customers.
- There is a disconnection between, young people and people in authority. Frontline services have little connection or links speaking to younger people, they have no idea what this group of people need or want or if a tailored service is required, it just doesn't happen at the moment.

“So for you it's about communication and engagement and making sure you are involved in decision making?”

Yes

Have you found any difficulties in accessing our services online?

“I think now your website has been updated, it has been made easy. Services are now grouped and they there is easier access to pages. It's easy enough now. Before when you went to the website you didn't know where to go, grouping the services has helped improve this. It is also now mobile friendly”.

The group were also asked if they would access KCC services via Social Media. Only a handful of the participants had Social Media accounts and the ones that did said that they were unlikely to access KCC services via these platforms. The group stated that they use social media for interacting with friends and would most likely avoid KCC links, some saying that they would see it as spam/untrusted links.

6.5 Learning Disability Group - Canterbury

Members of a Learning Disability Group took part in a workshop in Canterbury.

The following points were raised during the discussing in relation to their experiences in general with customer services and what they felt was important:

- Patience is required, as some tasks can take longer – this was deemed very important and as a customer they want to go where they feel comfortable.
- The group felt that Learning Disability and Dementia training would be beneficial for all staff. They felt that staff often rushed them and didn't have time to support their customers when they needed extra help or time.
- The group wanted clear guidelines of what to expect, particularly with regards to how long it should take for someone to call or email them back. They also wanted to feel as if staff had taken the time to prepare for meetings with them in advance.
- Someone raised that they didn't feel like they were listened to by staff about how they would like to be supported by the council
- The group felt too uncomfortable raising issues if they received bad customer service.
- Very few members owned a smartphone
- The majority of the group did not use the internet or needed help to do so. They said that it would be easier to use the web if it was more pictures based and easier to use. Some also said they didn't really like to ask others to help them online as they prefer to be as independent as possible
- When contacting the council the group were largely happy to call in for small issues but for more complicated enquires they preferred to see someone.
- The group were reluctant to use libraries as they find it difficult to read and didn't want to read children books. They would like to see more adults books that were easy read. Someone also said they might use the library if audio books were available.

7. Equality Analysis

The Equality Impact Assessment has been updated to reflect the comments raised during the consultation period.

These include the rewording of the Policy to make the language clearer for customers and ensuring that customers can still access services in a variety of ways.

The updated assessment can be found in Appendix A

8. Next Steps

The policy will be updated to ensure that the terms and language used in the Policy are clearer for all our customers.

An implementation plan will be put into place to reflect any recommendations that are approved by the Policy and Resources Committee following the consultation report these include;

- Customer Service training for KCC staff
- Communication plan to let customers know of proposed changes and also improvements made as a direct result of the customer service policy and their feedback
- Ensuring 'Digital by Design' does not exclude those who cannot use the internet
- Devising Customer Service standards that can be monitored are put in place for both Kent County Council staff and commissioned services. This should be written in consultation with our customers.
- Actively consulting and communicating with our customers throughout the implementation of the policy, so that they can see the impact of both their feedback and the implementation of the standards expressed in the policy
- Using a variety of ways to capture and understand customer experiences in using our services to help gauge the impact of changes made as a result of the policy