

Southampton City Council – Customer Services

Good afternoon/evening – I am calling to ask you a few questions to see how you rated the service provided by Southampton Council when you contacted them recently. Can you spare a few minutes please?

1. What was the main reason for your contact with the Council?

2. To which particular Council services did your call relate?

3. Thinking about various aspects of your call how satisfied were you with the following?

4. Responsiveness

## Southampton Strategic Service Partnership

Project: Customer satisfaction tracking surveys

Area: Customer satisfaction

Customer Plus was commissioned in 2008 to undertake a customer satisfaction survey for Southampton Strategic Services.

The client is a partnership between Southampton City Council and Capita. The aim of the partnership is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of a range of council services.

### Aim and objectives

The underlying drive was to help the Partnership fulfil its contract of increasing various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including those related to internal and external customer satisfaction.

The aim of the project was to establish a reliable baseline of acceptable performance levels and measure customer satisfaction of Southampton City Council services focusing on two primary customer groups:

- External customers (city council service users)
- Internal customers (city council staff)

### External customers

The Partnership's external responsibilities include Customer Services and Local Taxation and Benefits. The specific objectives for the external customer survey were:

- to "baseline" acceptable performance levels and measure customer service satisfaction amongst Southampton City Council's citizens
- to compare customer service satisfaction with that measured in previous years

### Internal Customers

The specific objectives for the internal customer survey were:

- to provide a baseline and measurement of the quality of service provided via the Partnership by IT, Procurement, Property, Print and HR Services.
- to produce quarterly service quality reports for each service, comparing results to baseline and previous periods

# Delivery

All customer surveys included a set of core questions that remained stable over time in order to identify trends. Other sub-questions changed from survey to survey.

The core questions were based on five recognised measurements of service quality:

Dimension	Description
Responsiveness	Helping customers and providing a prompt service
Assurance	Inspiring trust and confidence
Empathy	Providing a caring and individual service to customers
Reliability	Performing the promised service dependably and accurately
Tangibles	The physical facilities and equipment available, the appearance of staff; how easy it is to understand communication materials

The external customer research was undertaken through structured telephone interviews, using a sample of citizens that had contacted the council's Customer Service centre or the Local Taxation & Benefits department by telephone, email or letter during the three months prior to the research starting.

Face-to-face "exit" interviews were also conducted with people as they left the council's Customer Service Centre.

Internal customer surveys were converted to a web-based format. Special web-links were set up on emails to enable staff to click through to a survey on a continuous basis, after specific identifiable events (e.g. on the final email issued following the closure of a help desk enquiry).

The internal survey process is ongoing and quarterly reports are being published for each service area.

## Client feedback



*I have been extremely pleased with the professional work undertaken by Customer Plus over the last couple of years. They have made a huge contribution to our understanding of customers and helping me target scarce resources."*

**Tony Lubman, Regional Partnership Director, Capita**

**For further information or to arrange a free discussion please contact us.**

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