Customer Standards Comments Summary

Please note that some comments may cross more than one theme and percentages may therefore not add up to 100%. N/A or unrelated comments include those that said they had no experience of that contact method, said they had no further comments or comment on matters unrelated to customer care standards.

Contact by telephone

How to make these standards easier to understand? – 6 comments received.

Two comments state that these standards are not currently being met and another comment that we don't respond to messages left. One commenter stated that the survey text does not make it clear that it is a machine answering and suggests that a machine answering is not customer friendly.

Further comments about contacting us by phone – 45 comments received.

The table below shows how the 45 comments have been categorised. Although the majority of respondents thought the standards for contacts by telephone are reasonable the greatest proportion of comments were negative. Some of these said that the standards are not currently being met and queried 'as soon as possible' as a timescale stating that it was too vague and a specific timescale should be given.

Category	No.	%
Positive	6	13.3%
Negative	16	35.6%
Sceptic	3	6.7%
Improvement Suggestion	14	31.1%
N/A or unrelated	4	8.9%
Other	2	4.4%

Comments that were positive included people who said they had never had a problem contact the council over the phone and that the standards are simple and easy to understand. The theme of the sceptic comments is that the standards are good if they are adhered to.

There were 14 comments that included a suggestion for a change or improvement. These included things like ensuring appropriate cover when people are away or in meetings, giving your name and department when answering the phone and reducing the amount of recorded messages. There were also a couple of suggestions for what the timescale for answering / returning calls should be – one suggested 10 rings for answering the phone and another responding to voicemails on the same day they were left.

Contact by Web (Email & Contact us form)

How to make these standards easier to understand? – 9 comments received.

One commenter said that they have found sometimes they get a response saying 'case closed' when this is not the case. Two said that the timescales outlined were too long with another asking 'If a person phones, you will aim to answer there and then. Why should email be any different!'. Four commenters asked about definition of a simple enquiry.

Customer Standards Comments Summary

Further comments about contacting us by the web – 71 comments received.

Category	No.	%
Positive	8	11%
Negative	44	62%
Sceptic	4	6%
Improvement Suggestion	16	23%
N/A or unrelated	4	6%

The greatest proportion of comment were negative at 62%, most of which remark that the timescales are too long. One commenter felt there was no commitment to providing a meaningful reply and several mentioned using email acknowledgments. In the suggestion category commenters were asking about the definition of a simple enquiry and made suggestions for shortening the timeframe for responses, a maximum of five days was suggested by several people. It was also mentioned that having department email addresses would enable them to contact departments directly, with one mentioning their dislike of 'no reply' emails and another was concerned that no information was provide if these standards are not met. The positive comments stated that the timescales outline were reasonable, with previous residents who have contacted us this way saying that the standards align with their experience. The sceptics are just that – they'll believe it when they see it.

Contacts in person

How to make these standards easier to understand? – 5 comments received.

There were five comments in relation to making the standards easier to understand. One of these was unrelated to the survey or customer services and another had no comment. One mentioned knowing who to contact if the standards are not met and another commented that there should be less emphasis on technology and more focus on people. Lastly there was one comment about staff 'dressing down', saying that there are too many of these days and that staff should be smart when dealing with customers.

Further comments about contacting in person – 36 comments received.

Category	No.	%
Positive	5	14%
Negative	8	22%
Sceptic	2	6%
Improvement Suggestion	10	28%
N/A or unrelated	6	17%
IT literacy concern	7	19%
Other	2	6%

The greatest proportion of comments made a suggestion for improvement or change in relation to contact in person with ten comments categorised in this way. Most of these were about the change to appointments and said that there should still be the option for people to walk in and discuss issues/enquiry's without an appointment.

There were 8 comments that were negative, these included a commenter that had previously tried contacting councillors and had not received a response, the remaining commenters were unhappy about the appointment service or previously had long waits in the gateway.   Similarly the positive comments were mostly from people who had visited the gateway and were happy with the service they had received.

There was another theme that was identified while categorising the comments and this is in relation to IT literacy. There were seven comments in relation to this theme with commenters mentioning

that not everyone has a smart phone, some people are not computer savvy and that everything should be available in paper forms for those who do not use this type of technology.

<u>**Social Media Contacts**</u>

How to make these standards easier to understand? – 4 comments received

One was unhappy about the use of the service request in the background information, saying it was jargon. One said it was not clear of posts would be responded to on the same day and one said that social media was not a suitable contact channel. One comment was irrelevant.

Further comments about contacting in person – 29 comments

Category	No.	%
Positive	4	14%
Negative	7	24%
Improvement Suggestion	10	34%
N/A or unrelated	9	31%
Other	2	7%

The greatest proportion of comments have been categorised as improvement suggestions here the theme was timescales with some querying why there were specific timescales for responding to emails but not for responding to social media. One commenter was unhappy about the 16:30 cut off time on Fridays, another was unhappy there is no cover over weekend and another said that there should be an out of hours contact. Alternatively one commenter said that customers should be contacting us directly rather than through social media.

There were seven negative comments however like improvement most on these focuses on timescales, or lack of them for social media. Another commenter said they dislike being referred to online support saying they wouldn't be contacting us if they could complete their enquiry online.

The nine comments classified as N/A or unrelated were mostly people saying they do not have social media.

<u>**Contact by Post**</u>

How to make these standards easier to understand? – 2 comments received.

There were two comments about making the standards easier to understand, one with pertinent information: 'It is not clear whether someone might have to wait 10 days to then receive a response saying it will take longer than 10 days'.

Further comments about contacting us by post– 46 comments

Category	No.	%
Positive	3	7%
Negative	32	70%
Sceptic	3	7%
Improvement Suggestion	6	13%
N/A or unrelated	4	9%

There were 32 negative comments, the majority of which were negative about the timescales outlined. They thought that 10 working days is too long, some suggested that five days would be a better timeframe. Another commenter said that this approach was in the dark ages and if someone has provided a phone number it is better to contact them directly.

Customer Standards Comments Summary

The improvement suggestion comments were mostly about ensuring that there is an acknowledgment process so that people know if their correspondence has been received. A positive commenter was happy that we still receive enquires by post and another had experience of service delivery via post which they were happy with.

Contact in relation to stage 1 complaints

There were no comments received in relation to make the standards easier to understand.

Further comments about contacting us by post – 36 comments

Category	No.	%
Positive	2	6%
Negative	20	56%
Improvement Suggestion	6	17%
N/A or unrelated	8	22%

The majority of comments in relation to contacting the council to complain are negative. Most are unhappy with the length of time, 10 working days to respond and several said acknowledgment of a complaint should be immediate. Other commenters in this category mention instances where the standards set out differ from their experiences. Comments classified as improvement suggestion mention making sure the process, timescales and escalation procedures are clear and well-advertised, use language that is understandable and ensuring there is support for disabled and vulnerable people.

Accessing Information

How to make these standards easier to understand? – 5 comments received

There were five comments in relation to making the standards for accessing information easier to understand. Two commenters felt there should be a definition and/or examples of exceptional circumstances. Another said there should be a brief outline of these types of requests to assist with understanding. One commenter queried if there is a cost to providing the information and one comment contained no information.

Further Comments about accessing information – 29 comments

Category	No.	%
Positive	1	3%
Negative	15	52%
Improvement Suggestion	1	3%
N/A or unrelated	7	24%
Other	5	17%

Just of half the comments in relation to accessing information were classified as negative. Commenters were unhappy with the timescales outlined saying they are too long and several cited previous experiences where information they requested was late or where the information received differed from what they were expecting. The improvement suggestion comments were about providing the relevant links to the policies on customer contact. Of the five comments classified as 'other', one askes about exceptional circumstances, two query the non-release of information asking about timescales and reasons for non-disclosure and the last commenter points out that there is a legal obligation to respond within a certain timeframe.