

Customer Services Survey – Telephony Satisfaction

Introduction

From October 1st for one month, the Customer Contact Centre (Customer Services) ran a satisfaction survey which transferred some customers who had called in to the Customer Contact Centre, to a short automated survey consisting of 5 questions, at the end of their call. Customers that either hung up before the transfer took place, or who were transferred to other departments to address their query, were excluded from the survey.

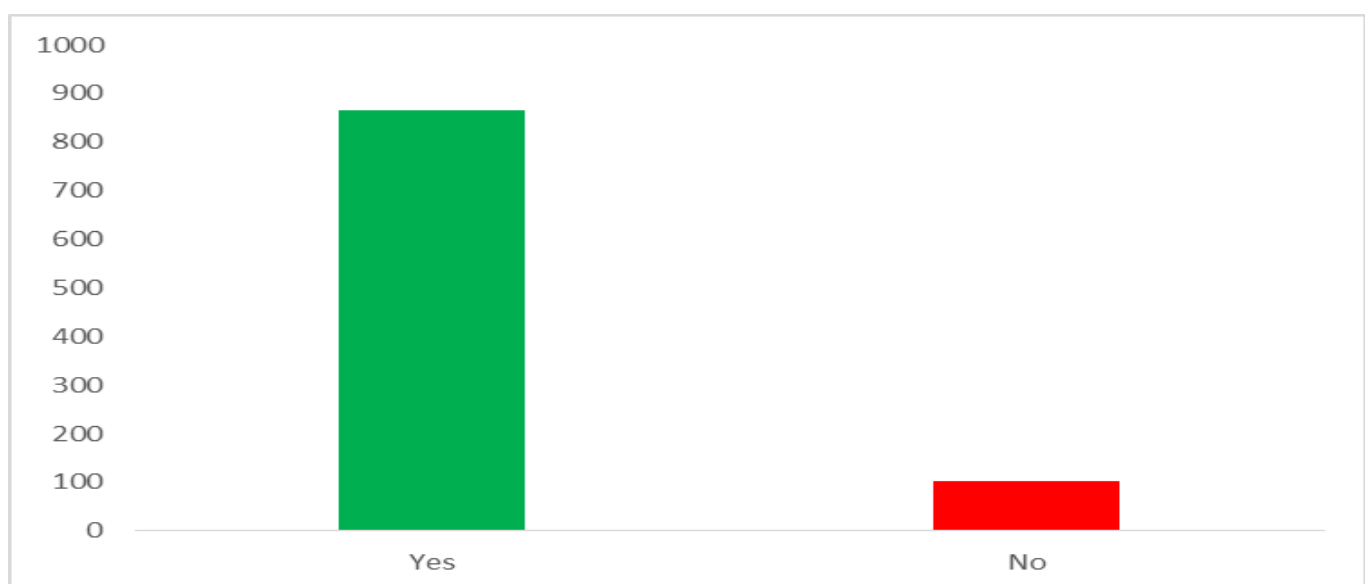
The aim of the survey was to provide as many customers as possible with an opportunity to feed back about their experience of that call, and to help understand where there were any areas for improvement. The questions are linked to the Service Standards for Customer Services which can be found online at www.basildon.gov.uk/standards.

The 5 questions asked were as follows:

- Question 1: Were you satisfied with the service you received today?
- Question 2: Did you get everything you needed from the call?
- Question 3: Did we answer your call in a reasonable time?
- Question 4: Did you feel the person you spoke to was professional and polite?
- Question 5: Did you feel you were treated fairly?

968 survey responses were received to question 1. 3% of customers who started the survey then hung up, with 942 proceeding to answer question 2. Further reduction in respondents occurred as is customary for telephony surveys, with 879 answering question 3, 870 for question 4 and 851 for question 5. There was therefore an overall drop of 12% in customers who started the survey, completing all questions. This is well within what we would expect to see and a promising return of responses for the survey.

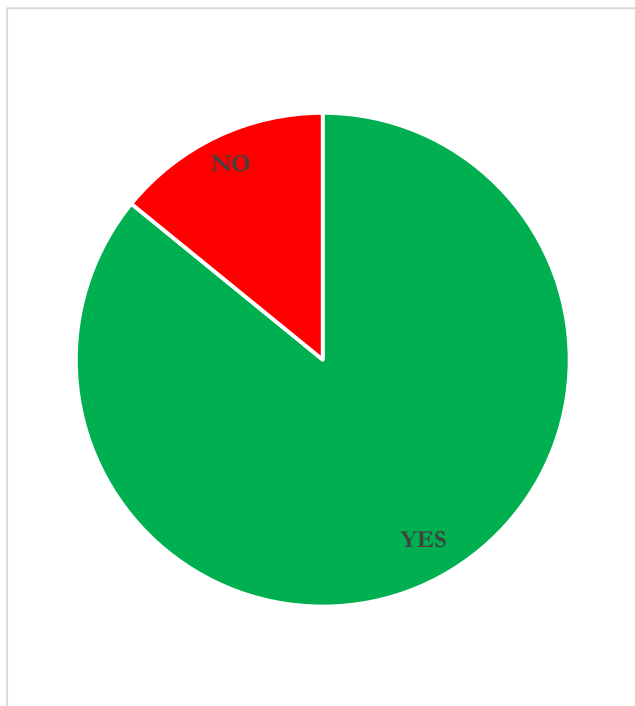
Question 1: Were you satisfied with the service you received today?



Customers were asked to judge the provision of service provided by Customer Services which has to be within the regulatory framework that Customer Services and the Council overall, must operate in. For instance customers should not score negatively if they are not entitled to a Council Tax reduction if there is no regulatory basis upon which the Council can legally reduce their bill.

89% of customers were satisfied with the customer service provided on this day. 11% therefore indicated that they were not. This survey will not be sufficient to understand why 11% customers were not satisfied, although the majority clearly were satisfied with the interaction. Consideration will need to be given in future surveys of how best to understand, for those who scored negatively, why this is. [See IA1](#)

Question 2: Did you get everything you needed from the call?



This question in particular is one of the ways Customer Services try to establish whether “First Contact Resolution” (one of our key Service Standards) has been achieved.

First Contact Resolution is about making sure advisors establish if there is anything else they can do for the caller that they can reasonably be expected to do, and which falls within the remit and scope of the Customer Contact Centre.

For instance, callers who wish to book a Special Collection of household goods, should not expect Customer Services to collect the item(s) which would be dealing with their service request but which is not something Customer Services can provide. They can expect Customer Services to book a collection date, explain next steps / sign-post or explain why certain items cannot be collected.

86% of customers told us they received all the help they needed during the call.

Again as with Q1, customers scoring negatively may do so for a number of reasons and the survey provides an additional set of options if a negative answer is given, asking for more information.

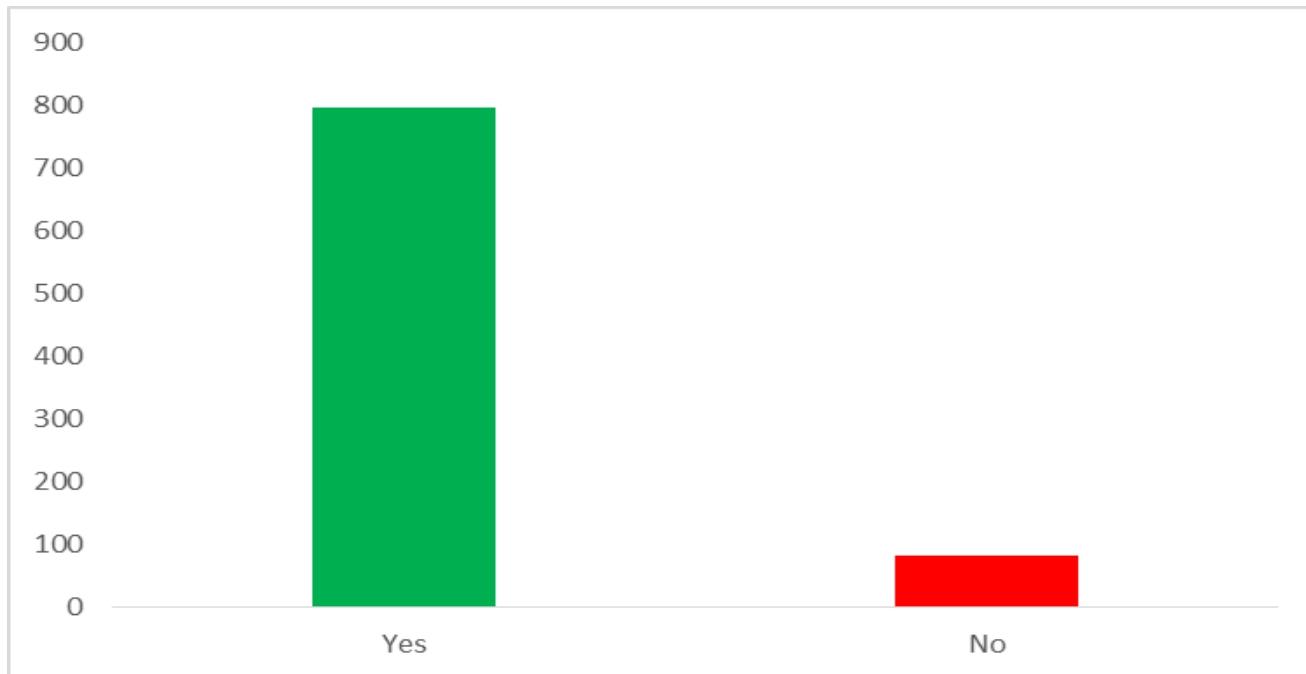
Of the 14% who indicated they did not get everything they needed, 98 people went on to explain why in more detail:

- 24% advised it was because another service area was still dealing with the matter;
- 6% had been asked for further information so Customer Services / other service areas could not resolve their query in full due to the lack of that information
- 8% advised their query was still to be processed within another service area
- 1% of queries were not for Basildon Council to answer
- 61% were listed as “other” for which no further analysis is possible

Therefore, in over a third of cases (39%) where customers said they did not get all the help they needed, the required help was outside the scope of Customer Services.

More needs to be done to understand what “other” consists of as this accounts for the remainder of the negative score and is a limitation of the options available within the survey itself. [See IA2](#)

Question 3: Did we answer your call in a reasonable time?



Customer Services have a call answering target of 80% in 2 minutes. Customers are not asked in the survey how long they waited, merely did they think the waiting time was reasonable to them (every individual may have different expectations about what a reasonable time is).

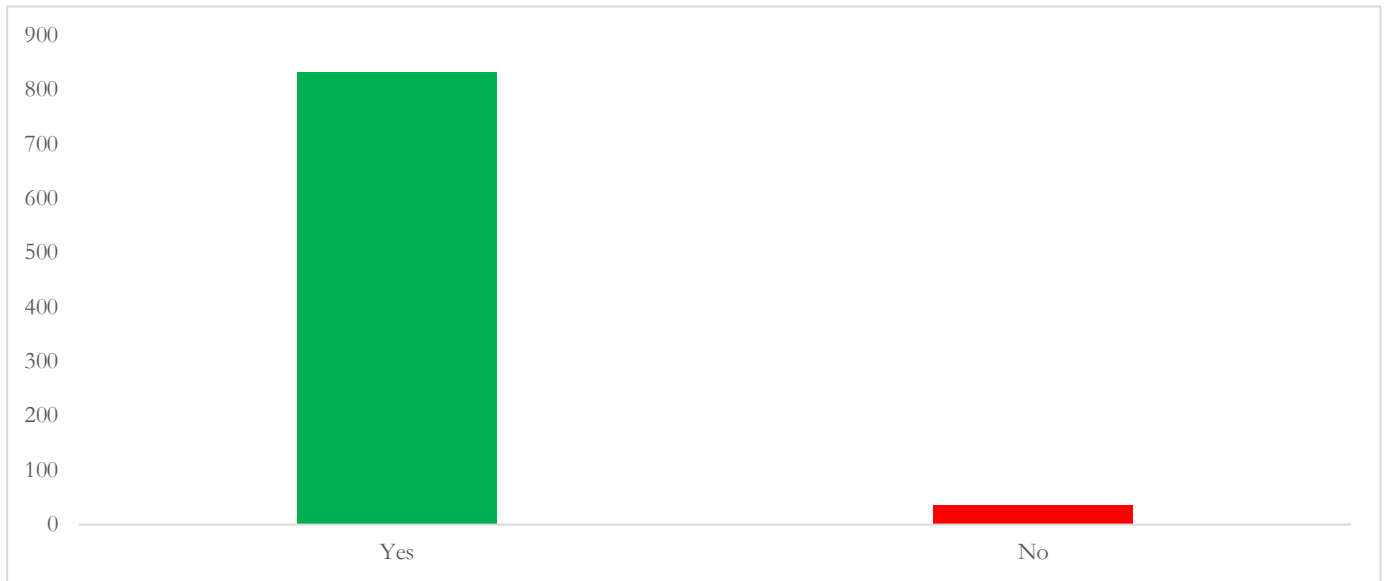
A further survey takes place in November 2019 asking explicitly whether 80% of calls answered in 2 minutes is a reasonable target.

91% of respondents advised they felt the call was answered in a reasonable time-frame, leaving 9% who did not. Again, a new survey takes place in November to understand whether customers on the whole regard 2 minutes as an acceptable wait time

Customer Services list performance, average waiting times and other information on the Basildon Council website which may be beneficial to customers who are considering how best to contact Customer Services.

Customers can visit www.basildon.gov.uk/article/6321/Making-the-most-of-our-Services for more information.

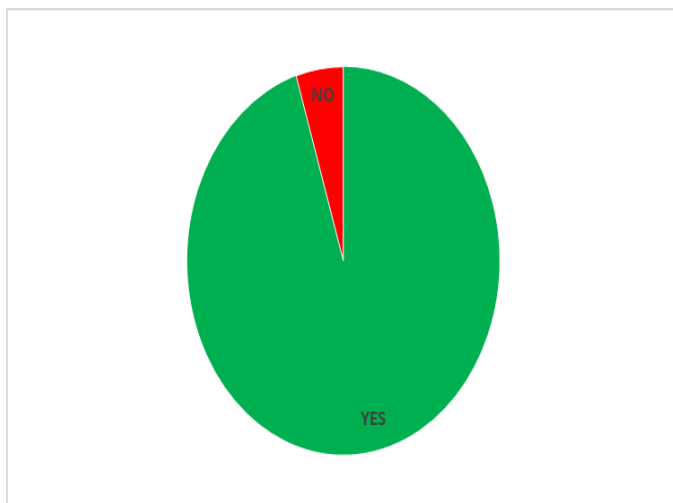
Question 4: Did you feel the person you spoke to was professional and polite?



96% of respondents advised they found the member of staff to whom they spoke, professional and polite. 4% indicated they did not.

No further analysis on this question is possible given there is a limitation how many additional questions it would be reasonable and practical to add into a survey (which would be needed to get extra detail about what specifically they feel advisors did or said wrong) and the vast majority of customers indicate that they found the staff gave a professional service which indicates this is not an area requiring further exploration.

Question 5: Did you feel you were treated fairly?



Fairness is subjective and as with answering calls within a reasonable timeframe, is a matter for individual interpretation.

It is important to Customer Services that irrespective of how happy a customer may be with the response to their query (given we cannot always provide the answer that somebody may wish) customers should all be treated consistently fairly.

96% of respondents advised they felt they were treated fairly. 4% said they felt otherwise.

Of the 4% who did not feel they were treated fairly, a message was played upon selection of a “no” to this question, notifying the caller that they could email comments@basildon.gov.uk directly with any feedback about why they did not feel they were treated fairly. No emails were received in relation to this.

Conclusions

A good number of respondents took part in this survey and overall the responses were positive and show that Customer Services – as judged by customers themselves – is providing a quality service.

- 89% of customers were happy with the service received
- 86% got all the help needed, and 39% of those who claimed they did not, had issues being dealt with outside the scope and remit of Customer Services
- 91% were happy their call was answered in a reasonable timeframe
- 96% found the advisors professional and polite
- 96% felt they were treated fairly

There is scope to expand on either the questions asked in the survey, or the addition of extra sub-questions added (which only prompt where a customer chooses “No”) although this needs to be carefully considered. Extra questions can result in survey fatigue (where customers hang up after starting the survey – 12% in the case of this survey ended the call prematurely). This risks losing more data than that to be gained. Furthermore there may be many unique circumstances at play which may never be captured in a list of options from which the customer can choose.

From this survey it can be suggested customers do not feel strongly enough, or do not have the time or the means, to email additional feedback that may give Customer Services a greater understanding of why they have indicated dissatisfaction in one or more of their answers, and as such asking for additional contact outside of the survey may not be viable nor preferable for the customer.

It should be noted that Customer Services are reliant on feedback from customers, and foremost in any planning about future surveys should be consideration around how much time and effort customers will be expected to make. As such, whilst improving understanding of some of these areas where a less positive answer has been provided would be useful, the focus has to be on where the greatest customer gains are to be made. Re-ordering the questions rather than changing the wording or adding new questions, may be beneficial so that Customer Services get a balanced spread of answers over a period of time. For example, if “Did you get all the help you needed?” had been question 1, would the proportion of customers selecting “No” then indicating the reason be vastly different from the answers in this survey. [See IA3](#)

Improvement Actions

Action	Details	Owner	Due
IA1	Future survey to consider addition of extra sub-question if a customer chooses NO to being satisfied; e.g. list potential options to choose from, offer telephony route to speak to advisor about their answer or email address for comments	Customer Services	As required
IA2	Future survey to expand on "other" from sub-questions asked if customer chooses NO to "did you get everything you needed" so that we can understand what this truly means	Customer Services	As required
IA3	Re-order questions as an alternative to adding new questions to establish if proportionately answers change	Customer Services	As required