

REPORT BY THE SCRUTINY PANEL ON CUSTOMER CARE



May 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings of the Scrutiny Panel on Customer Care.

The findings of the panel are that the council is relatively good at customer care with some excellent examples of such, namely in Building Standards, with the achievement of the Customer Excellence Standard and with self-motivated customer services qualifications achieved by staff. All staff are asked to fulfil a certain level of basic e-learning and annual monitoring of complaint statistics and satisfaction levels is carried out and reported on.

The panel has made a number of recommendations and it is intended that future reports will be brought to the Scrutiny and Audit committee regarding the progress of the recommendations.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny and Audit Committee (Report 256/15) agreed on 23 June 2015 to establish a Scrutiny Panel to consider customer care. This followed some criticism from members of the public to elected members about the way they perceive they are treated in aural contact with officers of the Council. The Panel comprised the following members:

Councillor Lynne Devine (Chair)
Councillor Ronnie Proctor
Councillor Bill Duff
Councillor Robert Spink
Councillor Craig Fotheringham
Councillor Ian McLaren
Douglas Hill (Lead Officer)

Janine Wilson, Service Manager, Governance and Consultancy, attended most of the panel meetings

1.2 The Remit of the Panel

The Panel agreed that the brief for the review was to consider the following points:-

1. Gain a picture of Angus Council's Customer Care.
2. Identify areas of the council that are not addressing customers' concerns as well as they might and suggest improvements.
3. Ensure Angus Council's Customer Care and culture is as good as it can be.
4. Introduce a way of monitoring customer care standards.

We want to be able to map the customer's journey with us and measure the level of care received. We want to ensure that customers are treated as we would want to be treated, and their impressions are excellent from first to last. We will address the following questions:

- Do all departments adhere to the customer charter?
- What training is given to dealing with the public?
- How is this linked and delivered through the Transforming Angus workstream of improved customer experience?

The work of Digital Angus/Customer Service Channel will be monitored. The Culture and Leisure Trust will be excluded from the review.

2. CARRYING OUT THE REVIEW

The Panel reviewed a number of papers, listened to a number of presentations, carried out a survey and interviewed various staff to enable it to carry out its review.

2.1 Documentation

Information was provided to members of the Panel by the Lead Officer at the commencement of the review, namely:

- Customer Care Toolkit
- Customer Services Strategy
- [Improvement Service Customer satisfaction measurement tool](#) (CSMT)-
- [Improvement Service Customer Service Professional](#) Qualification –
- [Customer Service Excellence Standard](#)
- Consultation practices within Scottish local authorities and Community Planning Partnerships – Improvement Service
- Report from a 2013 Harrow Council scrutiny review of Customer Care
- [Argyll and Bute Council Customer Service Charter](#)
- [Angus Council Customer Care standards](#)

2.2 Interviewees

The Panel met various members of staff and listened to presentations as follows:

- Mike Millar – Building Standards – Presentation on the Customer Excellence Standards.
- Carol Petrie – Angus Digital and Customer Services Manager – Presentation on Customer Care.
- Mark Armstrong – Strategic Director of Resources – Presentation on Development of Service Standards in the Resources Directorate.
- Janine Wilson – Service Manager, Governance and Consultancy – Presentation on the customer focussed aspects of DELTA LEAN.
- Anne Lamont- Human Resources – Presentation on Customer Service Professional Induction.

2.3 Site Visits

Several members of the panel carried out a site visit to the ACCESSline office at Orchardbank to gain an appreciation of how staff members handled calls from the public, dealing with some directly and passing these on either by phone or electronically.

The Improvement Service suggested Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) as an exemplar in Customer Care. Unfortunately, it was not possible to arrange a visit to PKC within the timescale for the review.

3. RESEARCH

3.1 Customer Service Excellence Standard (held by Building Standards since 2010)

It was noted that excellent work had been undertaken by Building Standards on improving customer care but the process was time consuming and members agreed it would not be appropriate to recommend this for use across all council services. However, the Panel commend the Building Standards service on the work to achieve and maintain this and would consider this as an example of best practice.

3.2 Staff Training

Customer care workshops are run for teams and services on request. These are facilitated by the organisational development team and bespoke to meet the team needs. The majority of training around customer care is done by E-Learning. There is a section on Always Learning, the council's E-Learning platform called Customer Focus. It contains five categories:

1. Complaints Handling
2. Creating Positive Working Relationships
3. Customer Care
4. Telephone Skills
5. Understanding Your Customers

Each of these sections contains several modules covering different aspects of customer service and customer care.

At present, all of the modules are optional except two, which are mandatory for all staff:

1. Complaints Handling Training – This is a Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) learning module. It is made up of eight modules which cover: Understanding the Model Complaints Procedure; What Is a Complaint?; What Customers Want When They Complain; Getting It Right From the Start; Active Listening; Finding the Right Solution; Learning from Complaints; Managing Difficult Behaviour.
2. Delivering Excellent Customer Care – sits within the customer care section. This module is part of the council's corporate induction. It is an introduction to customer care and covers key customer care responsibilities, standards and procedures. It includes a 'test your knowledge' section.

From discussion with a number of officers, the panel identified that it is not widely known that these courses are mandatory. The panel recommends that managers should be reminded to ensure that all staff complete the mandatory e-learning on Customer Care. (Recommendation 2)

3.3 Our Competency Framework

One of the core competencies in the council's competency framework is 'Engaging with Customers, Citizens and Communities'. This provides the following set of descriptions of how all staff should engage with customers, citizens and communities:

- Understands customers, citizens and communities' needs, expectations and aspirations.
- Pays attention to those needs, expectations and manages them in the delivery of the service.
- Gives customers the information they need and links to different services when necessary.
- Takes time to build relationships and is courteous, friendly and respectful.
- Works with others to ensure customers, citizens and communities have a positive experience.
- Actively seeks and acts on feedback.
- When things go wrong, acknowledges and puts them right and uses the experience to strengthen the relationship.

The competency framework is being integrated into the performance appraisal and development scheme. This is due to be completed at the end

of 2016 and will mean all staff will consider their performance and be given feedback on each of the competency areas.

3.4 Survey Monkey – Feedback

The Panel decided to determine the council's approach to customer care with a short survey of Service Managers, asking about:

1. the use of the self assessment tool in AIM (Angus Improvement Model) or similar to review customer satisfaction;
2. staff training;
3. staff adherence to standards;
4. monitoring of staff customer care; and
5. suggested improvements.

It was noted that 15 of the 21 Service Managers completed the survey. The responses were discussed and the following points were noted:

1. 9 of the 15 managers responding had used AIM or similar. AIM (Angus Improvement Model) is an evidence based self assessment model (also known as the Public Sector Improvement Framework) that allows services to identify strengths, backed up by fact based evidence and highlights areas for improvement in a structured way, with the actions necessary to track and improve performance over time. To date, self assessment has been undertaken at a corporate and departmental level. The exception to this has been departments that already undertake self assessment as a requirement of external inspection agencies e.g. Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) Performance Inspection Model (PIM) and the HMIE Quality Management in Education (QMIE) framework.
2. In terms of staff training in customer care, in the last year, 7 managers identified some form of training of staff. Examples included induction, issuing reminders, and involvement with the Customer Excellence Award.
3. As for reminding staff of customer care service standards, 4 managers noted the induction process; 1 the complaints procedure; 12 reminded staff at Appraisals and one to one meetings and 1 noted staff were already aware.
4. In monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction, 3 managers issued annual satisfaction surveys; 1 asked staff at team meetings; 8 did ad hoc surveys; 2 mentioned complaint monitoring and Parent Council and Care inspections were also mentioned.

5. Regarding improvements managers noted: the Angus Deal outlining what the parent can expect; the internal customer was mentioned; the customer journey cutting out bureaucracy – LEAN and digital by design; the suggested use of the “mystery shopper”; more recognition of all services by all staff; better use of complaints data to improve services; being more open when things go wrong; the use of an improvement plan and better training; more understanding of the one stop shop; the need to act more as one organisation; more cascading of learning; strategic alignment of services; and professional development in customer care.

Of those responding, it was noted that self assessment was just above average; and customer care training; adherence and monitoring was around average. Suggestions for improvements were generally about the stated aims of the council of a one council approach.

3.5 Councillors Experience of Visits to ACCESSline

The ACCESSline is staffed by 8.03 FTE posts between 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The outcome of the visits led to the following conclusions:

- The Service is keen to consider agile working and an extension to hours, say to 7pm and members were keen that this should be investigated further. (Recommendation 3)
- The knowledge and experience of the staff was impressive with little turnover of staff an advantage.
- The ACCESSline is busiest on a Monday and a Friday.
- 56% of calls are dealt with at first point of contact.
- Staff try to answer calls within 2 minutes.
- The staff's use of IT systems is good.

3.6 Development of Service Standards

The Resources Directorate has recently developed new service level standards, detailing service relationships in-house. This required dialogue to achieve deliverable standards which manage expectations.

It was proving a valuable experience, where all involved were able to understand the levels of service that could be provided and resource could be prioritised where needed.

The Resources Directorate have been able to negotiate service standards with internal customers. This is not always possible with external customers and budget constraints may restrict the ability to meet public expectations. Managing customer expectations sensitively is critical in an economy of reducing budgets and ever increasing demands.

3.7 DELTA (Delivering Excellence through Lean Transformation in Angus) allowing Focus on the Customer.

DELTA, the council's Lean framework, has been developed specifically for the council, drawing on Lean, Organisational Development and business change tools to give a framework which supports the transformation agenda, particularly in terms of improved customer service and improved customer journey.

The DELTA process is strongly focussed on the customer, by ensuring that customer needs and expectations are understood and met as well as can be within the constraints of scarce resources. DELTA looks to make improvements to free up staff time to be used to provide added value to the customer.

Staff, particularly in Communities, have been trained in the process which begins and ends with the customer, designed to cut wastage and repetition, freeing time to add value and smooth the customer journey, and offering an excellent customer service. This will be progressed by the Service Manager Governance and Consultancy as part of the Communities DELTA Programme.

Work has been undertaken within this review on mapping the customer journey within the AccessLine office and it is intended that this exercise be extended on a sample basis to follow the journey through the council from start to finish.

The panel is supportive of DELTA LEAN, recommending that DELTA:

- is better resourced, with a full time member of staff supporting the Service Manager.
- is better communicated taking account of the benefits. These include
 - Help with culture change
 - empowering staff to identify and implement improvements to processes
 - cutting out duplication, freeing up time to focus on customers adding value

(Recommendation 4)

3.8 Customer Service Qualification

- The Customer Services qualification is promoted through Leadership & Coaching programmes; the intranet; in mini matters; and on posters.
- The measurement of performance is qualitative and is based on feedback and individual examples.
- The standard e-learning covers only one aspect of customer care, whereas the course covers many areas.
- As with Building Standards, the Panel did not feel that this form of training should be rolled out to all staff mandatorily.

3.9 Customer Care Standards

Customer Care Standards are available to all staff and the public on the web – internet/intranet. They are posted in each council reception.

The customer care objectives and priorities are contained in the Customer Services Strategy. The action plan for 2011/12 is included in the strategy document and the action plan for 2012/13 is also on the intranet.

The Customer Services Programme Board had responsibility for the Customer Services Strategy (see page 11 of the strategy). The chair was given the corporate role for customer care. This Board essentially discontinued when the chair retired.

From January 2016, the Customer Services Manager post no longer existed, however a temporary post, Angus Digital / Channel Shift programme Manager, has been advertised in May 2016. Responsibilities include:

- Support the implementation of best customer service practice within all council services and promote high quality customer care to deliver best value
- Support the review and further development of customer service performance standards by ensuring the standards are met and reflect the needs of the customer.

The panel agreed that customer care standards need to be more widely publicised both internally and externally to the public. It appears that there is an opportunity for a Customer Services Strategy refresh and this is something that the Council Management Team are recommended to consider.

(Recommendation 5)

The panel also recommend that job outlines should have customer care skills highlighted where appropriate. (Recommendation 1) Human Resources are

currently checking how many staff have customer care as a pre requisite of their job outline.

3.10 Complaints and Monitoring

Complaints statistics are reported to the Scrutiny and Audit Committee. This includes the key performance indicators of complaints closed and the results of the satisfaction survey sent to those who made a complaint (see report No 162/16). The report identifies lessons learned and in some cases, improvements made to services in response to complaints. Reports on complaints during 2015/16 were submitted to the Committee in April and June 2016. The panel recommends that reports are submitted every 6 months. (Recommendation 6)

A citizen survey is undertaken on behalf of the Council every two years. A similar survey with citizen panel members is carried out in the intervening years to enable the council to gather annual data to help inform and shape services.

There are opportunities to monitor public perception about Customer Care through the Citizens Panel.

The Citizens panel is due to be surveyed this year – September/October time.

Two sections of the 2015 Citizen Survey were particularly relevant to this review:

- Section 8 Contacting Your Council
- Section 9 Views About the Council

The responses to these sections are attached at Appendix 1. The full results of the survey were reported to the Communities Committee in January 2016 (Report 15/16 Schedule 1).

In relation to complaints, only 48% of respondents said that they were very satisfied / satisfied that the Council responded reasonably to their complaint. This is a significant reduction in satisfaction compared with the 2013 survey (60%). Satisfaction with information requests has seen a marginal decrease from 89% in 2013 to 86% in 2015. No reasons have been determined and the issue continues to be monitored.

Despite the above, 88% of 2015 participants said that they got what they needed when they last contacted the Council, which is a slight improvement on the 2013 results (86%).

The panel recommend that more use is made of the Citizens Panel to determine public views on customer care within the council. Relevant questions could be included in the survey later this year. (Recommendation 7)

4 CONCLUSION

The Panel has gained a picture of Angus Council's Customer Care:

- through noting results of a survey answered by Service Managers;
- by listening to various presentations;
- by ascertaining complaints results and visiting the ACCESSline office to see staff in operation.

They noted the ability to map the customer's journey and measure the level of care received and it was decided that mapping the customer journey would be better dealt with through a DELTA LEAN workshop outwith the scope of the scrutiny review.

Customer Care was found to be generally good and the panel were impressed by Building Standards' customer service excellence standards and individuals striving for Customer Care qualifications and also with the competency framework and the service in Accessline but felt there needed to be more in the way of ensuring that training was undertaken and monitored.

The panel's recommendations are set out in the Action Plan, on pages 12 to 14 of this report. The recommendations have been agreed by the Executive Management Team.

Customer Care Scrutiny Review – Action Plan

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Responsible Officers	Action	Agreed Completion Date
1.	<p>Job Outlines should have customer care skills highlighted where appropriate.</p> <p>(report section 3.9)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> CEO/SDs/HR</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> CEO</p>	<p>We will review relevant job outlines in concert with HR, ensuring the right skills are sought in appropriate circumstances, mindful of current grading across the organisation. We will discuss this with Trade Unions</p>	31 May 2017
2.	<p>Managers from all services to ensure that all staff complete the mandatory e-learning on Customer Care and monitoring takes place.</p> <p>(report section 3.2)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> CEO/SDs/HR</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> CEO</p>	<p>We will ensure that all staff complete e-learning for customer care.</p>	31 May 2017
3.	<p>Investigate if Accessline hours could be extended and/or Accessline made agile.</p> <p>(report section 3.5)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> CF/CG</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> SD Communities</p>	<p>We will scope out the feasibility of Accessline moving to an agile environment and develop an action plan to deliver that within 18 months if it is feasible and ensure this is embedded within the Channel Shift and Digital agendas</p>	30 November 2017

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Responsible Officers	Action	Agreed Completion Date
4.	<p>The panel is supportive of DELTA LEAN, recommending that DELTA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is better resourced, with a full time member of staff supporting the Service Manager. • is better communicated taking account of the benefits. <p>(report section 3.7)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> SD Resources</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> CEO</p>	<p>We will consider part one of this recommendation in the context of council wide arrangements for performance improvement and delivering transformational change.</p> <p>We will continue to communicate DELTA LEAN as part of our corporate approach to performance improvement and delivering transformational change.</p>	31 March 2017
5.	<p>It was agreed that customer care standards need to be more widely publicised both internally to staff and externally to the public.</p> <p>It appears that there is an opportunity for a Customer Services Strategy refresh and this is something that the Council Management Team are recommended to consider.</p> <p>(report section 3.9)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> CF/CG</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> SD Communities</p>	<p>We will review the Customer Care Strategy ensuring a corporate wide approach is delivered to ensure consistency of customer service across the council where appropriate and make this part of the Channel Shift programme</p>	31 May 2018

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Responsible Officers	Action	Agreed Completion Date
6.	<p>The council currently monitor all complaints and improvements are sought where required. Six monthly reporting to the Scrutiny & Audit Committee is recommended as a minimum.</p> <p>(report section 3.10)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> EW</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> CEO</p>	<p>We will seek Improvements to the complaints and compliments process as appropriate ensuring feedback is targeted at improving customer service.</p>	<p>31 May 2017</p>
7.	<p>The panel recommend that more use is made of the Citizens Panel to determine public views on customer care within the council. Relevant questions could be included in the survey later this year.</p> <p>(report section 3.10)</p>	<p><u>Assigned to</u> RG</p> <p><u>Managed by</u> AM</p>	<p>We will review how the Citizens Panel can be used to effectively secure public views on customer care.</p>	<p>30 Sept 2016</p>

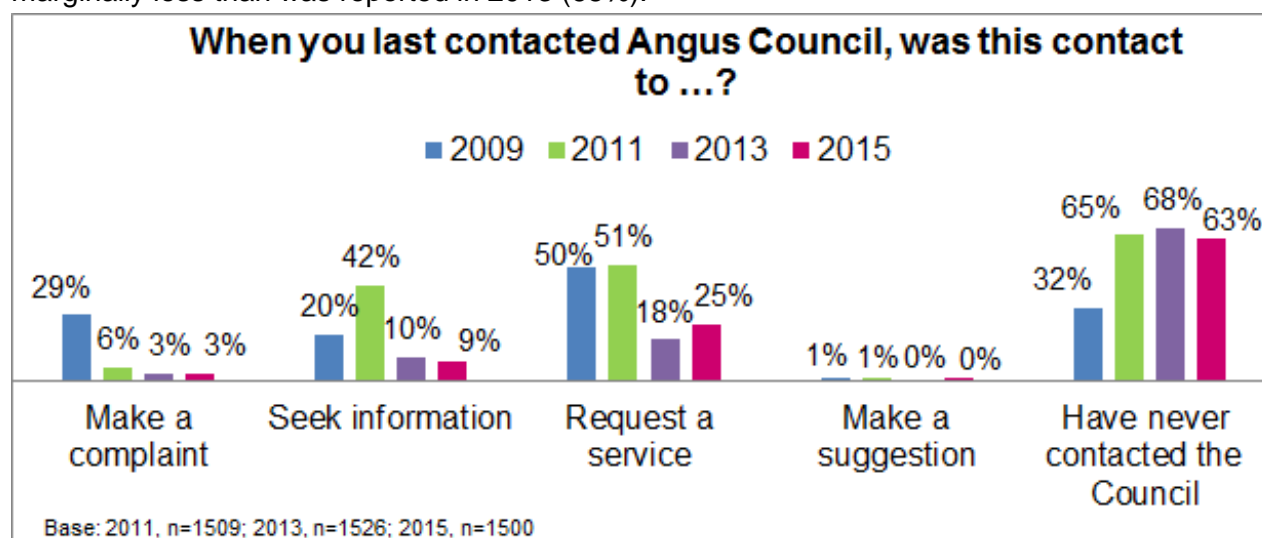
Appendix 1: 2015 Citizen Survey

This is an extract from the 2015 Citizen Survey 2015 Research Report. The full report was submitted to the Communities Committee in January 2016 (R15/16, Schedule 1)

7. CONTACTING YOUR COUNCIL

7.1 Reason for contact (Q41)

Participants were asked about their last contact with the Council, Just 3% of participants had contacted the Council about a complaint (3% in 2013), 9% had sought information (10% in 2013), 25% had requested a service (18% in 2013) and less than 1% had made a suggestion (less than 1% in 2013). Over 6 in 10 participants (63%) said they had never contacted the Council which is marginally less than was reported in 2013 (68%).



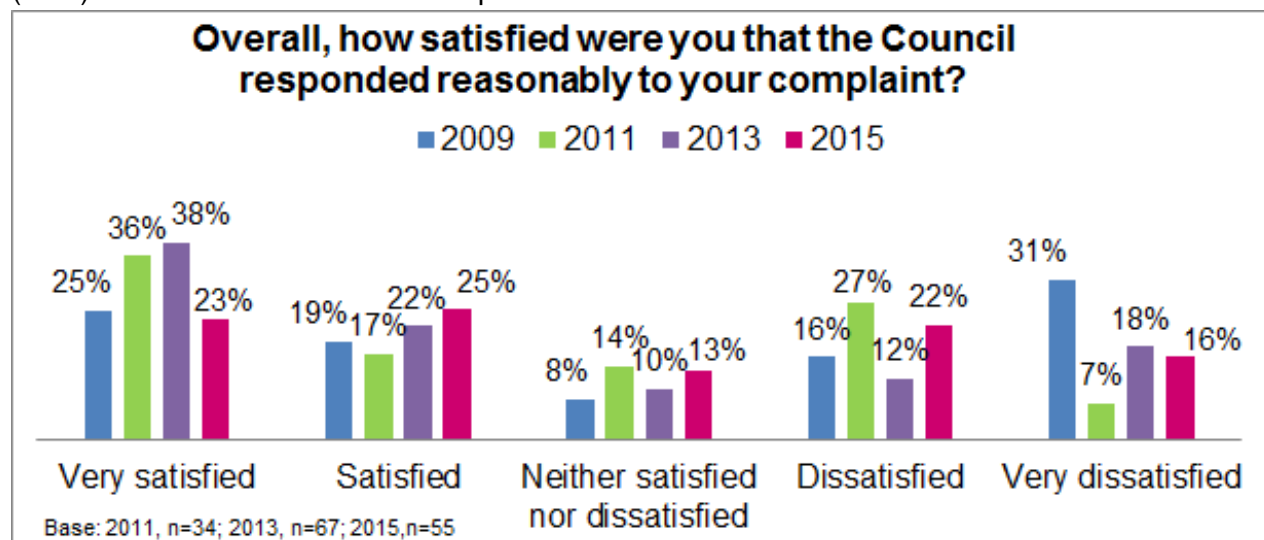
7.2 Contact method (Q46)

The vast majority of participants who made contact said they telephoned the Council (85%). This has been the most popular contact method since 2009. The proportion of participants who made personal visit to a Council office has decreased from 15% in 2013 to 9% in 2015.

Was your most recent contact ...?				
Base: 2011, n=564; 2013, n=528; 2015, n=601	2009	2011	2013	2015
By a telephone call to the Council	54%	90%	77%	85%
By a personal visit to a Council office	41%	8%	15%	9%
By visiting the Council's website	0%	2%	5%	5%
By a letter	4%	1%	3%	1%
By e-mail	1%	0%	1%	1%

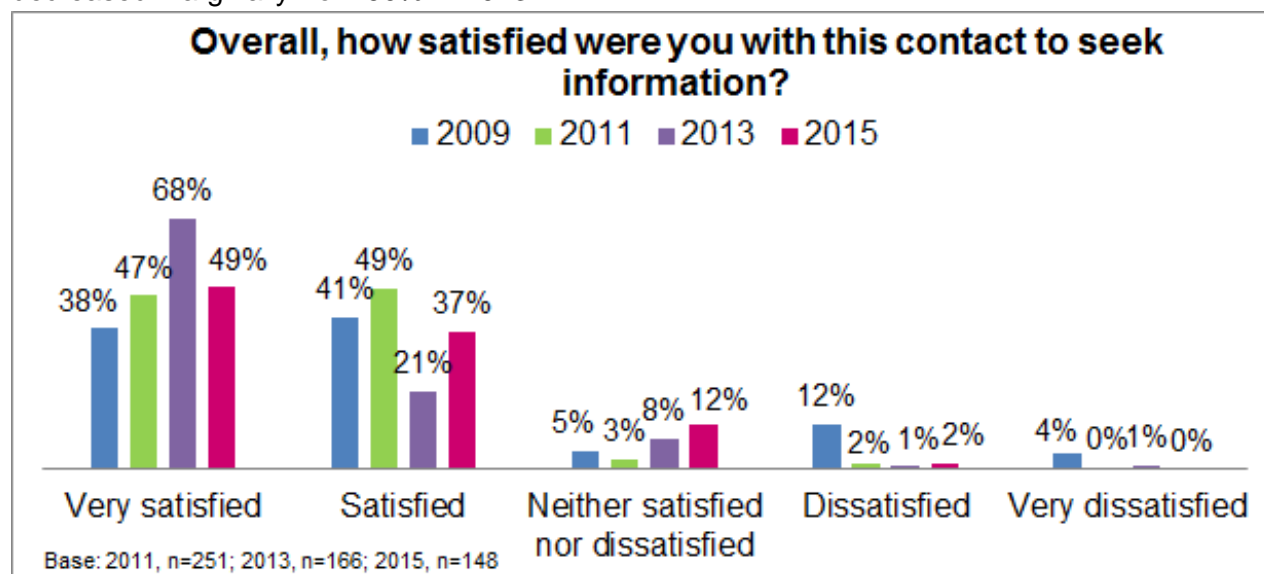
7.3 Satisfaction with responding to complaints (Q42)

Those who contacted the Council to make a complaint were asked how satisfied they were that the Council responded to their complaint. More participants were satisfied (48%) than dissatisfied (38%). Overall satisfaction with complaints has decreased from 60% in 2013.



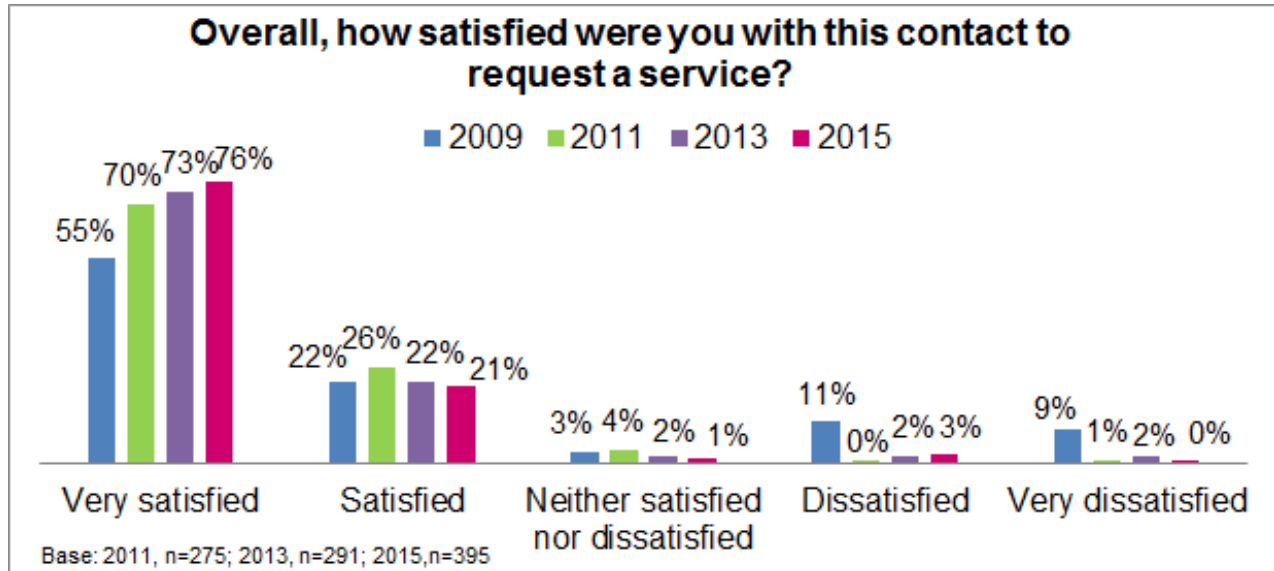
7.4 Satisfaction with responding to information requests (Q43)

Those who had contacted the Council for information were asked how satisfied they were with the response they received. Just under 9 in 10 participants (86%) were very satisfied or satisfied with this contact to seek information compared to 2% who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied and 12% who were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Overall satisfaction in this respect has decreased marginally from 90% in 2013.



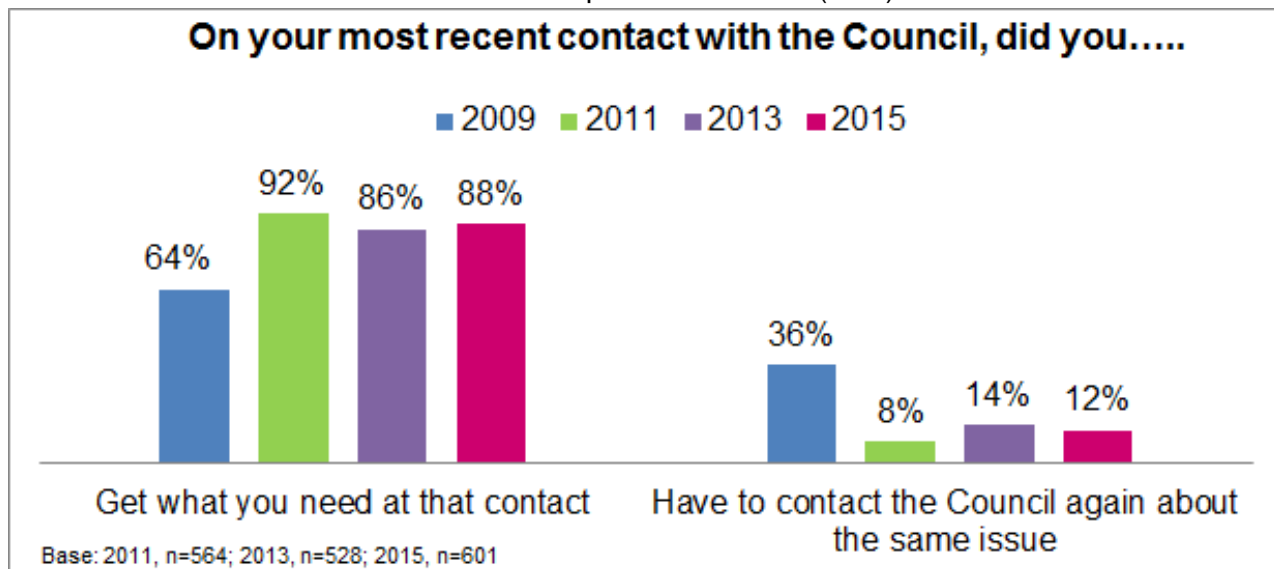
7.5 Satisfaction with responding to service requests (Q44)

Almost all participants who had contacted the Council to request a service (97%) were very satisfied or satisfied with this contact compared to 1% who were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 3% who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Overall satisfaction has not changed significantly for this question when compared to the results for 2013 (95%) and 2011 (96%).



7.6 Experience of contacting the Council (Q45)

Less than 9 in 10 participants (88%) said they got what they needed when they last contacted the Council. This is consistent with the results reported from 2013 (86%).



As can be seen in the table below, those who contacted the Council to make a complaint were least likely to have said they got what they needed at the contact (50%). On the other hand, participants who had requested a service were most likely to have got what they needed (94%).

On your most recent contact with the Council, did you....				
	Make a complaint	Seek information	Request a service	Make a suggestion
Base	55	148	395	3
Get what you need at that contact	50%	82%	94%	85%
Have to contact the Council again about the same issue	50%	18%	6%	15%

Those who telephoned the Council or visited the Council's website were most likely to say they got what they needed at that contact. On the other hand, those who made a personal visit to a Council office were least likely to say this.

On your most recent contact with the Council, did you....				
	Telephone call to the Council	Personal visit to a Council office	By e-mail/letter	By visiting the Council's website
Base	505	63	7	26
Get what you need at that contact	90%	64%	69%	100%
Have to contact the Council again about the same issue	10%	36%	31%	-

7.7 Satisfaction with telephone contact (Q47)

Participants who had telephoned the Council were asked to rate their satisfaction with the Council's telephone system. Satisfaction levels ranged from 95% in terms of how well the staff understood what they wanted to 99% in terms of how easy it was to find the right number to call.

How would you rate your most recent contact with the Council in terms of the following? (Telephone contact - % satisfied)				
Base: 2011, n=494; 2013, n=390; 2015, n=505	2009	2011	2013	2015
How easy it was for you to find the right number to call	-	-	99%	99%
How quickly the phone was answered	98%	99%	99%	98%
How well the staff understood what you wanted	87%	98%	97%	95%

7.8 Satisfaction with office contact (Q48)

Satisfaction with office contact was very high with 100% satisfaction in terms of the ease of getting to the office and 98% in terms of how well the staff understood what they wanted. These results are consistent with those reported in 2013.

How would you rate your most recent contact with the Council in terms of the following? (Personal visit - % satisfied)				
Base: 2011, n=50; 2013, n=88; 2015, n=63	2009	2011	2013	2015
How easy it was to get to the office	90%	100%	100%	100%
How well the staff understood what you wanted	82%	98%	97%	98%

7.9 Satisfaction with written contact (Q49)

A total of 7 participants said they had written or emailed the Council and of these individuals 6 were very or fairly satisfied in terms of how quickly they received a reply to their email or letter and the extent to which the first reply they received answered their query.

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your most recent contact with the Council by email/ letter in terms of the following?					
Base: 2015, n=7	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/ nor	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
How quickly you received a reply to your email/ letter	66%	26%	9%	0%	0%
The extent to which the first reply you received answered your query	66%	26%	9%	0%	0%

7.10 Satisfaction with visiting the website (Q50/51)

All participants were asked if they had ever used the Council's website. More than 1 in 5 participants (21%) said they had used the Council's website which is consistent with the results reported in previous years.

Have you ever used the Council's website?				
Base: 2011, n=1495; 2013, n=1526; 2015, n=1500	2009	2011	2013	2015
Yes	20%	18%	20%	21%

Those who had visited the website were asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with various aspects of the website. The 2015 survey included two new questions on the ease of making a payment and the ease of requesting a service. Satisfaction levels were very high with 97% stating they were satisfied with the ease of finding information, the ease of making a payment on the website and the ease of requesting a service on the website and 99% being satisfied with the amount of information provided on the website. Overall satisfaction has increased marginally since 2013 with regards to the ease of finding information and the amount of information available on the website.

How would you rate the website in terms of the following? (% satisfied)				
Base: 2011, n=293; 2013, n=643; 2015, n=308	2009	2011	2013	2015
How easily you managed to find the information you wanted	84%	97%	94%	97%
The amount of information provided on the website	83%	96%	95%	99%
How easy it is to make a payment on the website	-	-	-	97%
How easy it is to request a service on the website	-	-	-	97%

7.11 Amount of information provided about the Council and its services (Q52)

Over 8 in 10 participants (84%) were of the opinion they receive enough information about the Council and the services it provides. This is less than was reported in 2013 (94%).

Generally, do you feel that you receive enough information about the Council and the services it provides?				
Base: 2011, n=307; 2013, n=1526; 2015, n=1500	2009	2011	2013	2015
Yes	61%	92%	94%	84%

Participants who lived in Monifieth and Sidlaw (58%) were significantly less likely to have answered yes to this question (58%) than participants who lived in Kirriemuir and Dean (98%).

8. VIEWS ABOUT THE COUNCIL

8.1 Statements about the Council - most important (Q55)

Participants were asked to select from a list of statements about their local council which three they considered most important. This revealed that the following were considered to be most important for survey participants:

1. Offering a good range of services (up from 3rd priority in 2013)
2. Providing an efficient service (also 2nd priority in 2013)
3. Tackling important issues for the future of the area (up from 4th priority in 2013)
4. Providing good quality services (up from 5th priority in 2013).
5. Providing services which are good value for money (down from 1st priority in 2013)

I am going to read out a list of statements about your local Council and would like you to tell me which 3 are of the most importance to you.				
Base: 2011, n=1509; 2013, n=1526; 2015, n=1500	2009	2011	2013	2015
Offering a good range of services	46%	55%	43%	45%
Providing an efficient service	51%	34%	46%	43%
Tackling important issues for the future of the area	21%	22%	43%	42%
Providing good quality services	36%	60%	42%	39%
Providing services which are value for money	23%	51%	60%	34%
Having the resources to do a good job	23%	24%	26%	30%
Listening to complaints	30%	9%	5%	18%
Ensuring sustainable use of resources and care for the environment	12%	2%	12%	17%
Having friendly, polite, helpful, well informed employees	34%	22%	13%	13%
Promoting its services well	7%	10%	5%	13%
Communicating well with the public	13%	8%	5%	6%

The level of priority has decreased significantly in terms of providing services which are value for money, decreasing by 26 percentage points. On the other hand, the proportion of participants who stated listening to complaints was a priority has increased by 13 percentage points and the proportion of participants who said promoting services well was a priority has increased by 8 percentage points.

Tackling important issues for the future of the area was the top priority for participants who lived in Arbroath East and Lunan, Arbroath West and Letham, Carnoustie and District and Kirriemuir and Dean. Those who lived in Forfar and District, Monifieth and Sidlaw and Montrose and District stated having the resources to do a good job was most important, and participants who lived in Brechin and Edzell stated offering a good range of services was most important.

Top priority per ward		
Ward	Priority	%
Arbroath East and Lunan	Tackling important issues for the future of the area	45%
Arbroath West and Letham	Tackling important issues for the future of the area	56%
Carnoustie and District	Tackling important issues for the future of the area	59%
Kirriemuir and Dean	Tackling important issues for the future of the area	57%
Brechin and Edzell	Offering a good range of services	55%
Forfar and District	Having the resources to do a good job	46%
Monifieth and Sidlaw	Having the resources to do a good job	63%
Montrose and District	Having the resources to do a good job	63%
Most deprived areas	Providing services which are value for money	41%
Non deprived areas	Offering a good range of services	45%

As can be seen in the table below providing an efficient service is the top priority for all age groups with the exception of participants aged 25-44 who said offering a good range of services was most important, and those aged 55-64 who said that tackling important issues for the future of the area was most important.

Top priority analysed by age		
Ward	Priority	%
16-24	Providing an efficient service	48%
25-34	Offering a good range of services	51%
35-44	Offering a good range of services	49%
45-54	Providing an efficient service	46%
55-64	Tackling important issues for the future of the area	48%
65-74	Providing an efficient service	43%
75 and over	Providing an efficient service	55%

8.2 Agreement with statements about the Council (Q56)

Following on from this, participants were asked to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various statements about the Council. Participants were most likely to agree with the following statements and these were also the statements which had the highest level of agreement in 2013:

- Offers a good range of services (80%)
- Provides an efficient service (74%)
- Provides good quality services (73%)

The level of agreement does not vary more than 5 percentage points when compared to the 2013 survey results with the biggest differences being for the statements:

- Has the resources to do a good job (decreased by 5% points)
- Provides good quality services (increased by 5% points)
- Ensures sustainable use of resources and care for the environment (increased by 5% points)

Agreement with statements about your local Council. (% agree)				
Base: 2011, n=1509; 2013, n=1526; 2015, n=1500	2009	2011	2013	2015
Offers a good range of services	72%	89%	76%	80%
Provides an efficient service	64%	79%	71%	74%
Provides good quality services	64%	81%	68%	73%
Ensures sustainable use of resources and care for the environment	54%	69%	58%	63%
Tackles important issues for the future of the area	51%	72%	60%	62%
Has friendly, polite, helpful, well informed employees	70%	81%	58%	61%
Provides services which are value for money	55%	73%	62%	58%
Promotes its services well	57%	72%	58%	55%
Communicates well with the public	51%	65%	57%	54%
Listens to complaints	52%	64%	51%	48%
Has the resources to do a good job	63%	55%	51%	46%