

TITLE	Supplementary Estimate 20/21 – Monitoring Customer Satisfaction
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 26 November 2020
WARD	None specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Communities, Insight and Change - Keeley Clements
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions - Gregor Murray

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

This report seeks approval to fund implementation of a user-friendly multi-channel tool, to measure customer satisfaction and gather feedback from our customers in real time which can be used to inform service improvement and increase satisfaction.

This will help us improve services to residents by enabling us to specifically target issues and themes to contribute to the council's efficiency agenda by providing information to make better choices and deliver savings by better targeting improvement activity and reducing unnecessary contact.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to:

- 1) approve a Supplementary Estimate for £20,000;
- 2) note ongoing annual costs of £12,500 per annum for a further 2 years.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In search of providing efficient and cost-effective services we need to develop effective and accessible data driven by a digital solution; making it easier for us to work and communicate with customers and allow the council to tailor services to meet the needs of residents

To do this we need to be able to continuously capture the large amount of data we receive from residents feedback across our customer contact and use this data as the driver of improved services at the same time with the emphasis on value for money.

Having access to this data means we will be able to better target our improvements to services, deliver future savings and avoid residents having to contact us unnecessarily

This report seeks approval for funding to implement the GovMetric system to facilitate the monitoring of resident contact across our four main channels Web, Phone, email and via printed comment cards.

BACKGROUND

The Council has set out ambitious goals in our Community Vision of what we aim to achieve over the next few years to make Wokingham a great place to live, learn, work, grow and do business.

By investing now in a readily accessible tool to measure customer satisfaction we will be better able to target our improvement activity and deliver efficiencies by reducing unnecessary contact.

Analysis

The Council is seeking ways to capture customer views and understanding of resident's satisfaction across our various areas of the council. Currently we use several different methods for measuring different aspects of customer satisfaction with services.

We are seeking to implement a system that will enable us to capture and report on customer satisfaction data on a near real-time basis. This will enable us to:

- Reduce unnecessary cost and deliver efficiencies
- Identify, understand, and replicate existing areas of good practice
- Identify and prioritise areas for improvement
- Enable us to demonstrate both internally and externally the improvements that are being made to the customer experience
- Enable us to be more responsive and make changes more quickly

Having investigated options we believe that the GovMetric solution which has been deployed by over 70 other Local Authorities will help enable us to meet these objectives by providing our customers with the ability to provide user friendly feedback whenever they interact with us.

The system uses recognisable smiley face icons to capture structured and unstructured feedback as below:



STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED FEEDBACK

Simple, quick and consistent remains at the heart of GovMetric surveying. Capturing unstructured feedback too uncovers the real issues behind both positive and negative sentiment.

The software includes a reporting suite to enable us to analyse this information to be analysed and published both internally and externally.

High level overview of GovMetric service

Channel Summary					
Face to Face				Overall Rating	
Number of respondents	506	60	164		
Percentage of respondents	69%	8%	22%	Good	
<hr/>					
Telephone				Overall Rating	
Number of respondents	514	86	19		
Percentage of respondents	83%	14%	3%	Good	
<hr/>					
Web				Overall Rating	
Number of respondents	2087	607	1548		
Percentage of respondents	49%	14%	36%	Average	

BUSINESS CASE

We are proposing a deployment across our four main areas of contact with residents Web, Phone, email and printed customer comment cards which can be left with customers, used at our reception or by sending them through the post.

Evaluation

During the selection and appraisal process the council spoke to two Councils using the system, Hambleton and Hertfordshire and both gave positive feedback about the solution and were complimentary about their experience of working with the provider. Both were receiving a high volume of feedback and comments appx 1,500 per month and 500-600 comments per channel per month respectively.

They also emphasised the importance of developing a clear communication plan to encourage customers to feedback, and the same internally with staff ensure they realise feedback is important and to get them to encourage customers to feedback after interactions. This feedback will be incorporated into our implementation plan.

Benefits

The system will provide us a means to obtain simple, quick, and consistent feedback. Capturing unstructured feedback as well will also allow us to uncover the real issues behind both positive and negative sentiment.

It will also help us to:

- target our improvement activity and deliver future savings
- promote council self-service options (with a lower cost to serve)

- avoid residents having to contact us unnecessarily
- improve our contact handling and reduce repeat calls
- hold services and suppliers accountable for achieving the right customer outcomes and standards
- understand where we over and underperform vs other local authorities and nationally, highlighting areas of strength and areas for improvement
- provide baseline data that will enable us to be more efficient in the way in which we conduct future customer services consultations.
- enable us to demonstrate both internally and externally the improvements that are being made to services.
- measure the potential shifts in customer satisfaction and experience with front line services during service changes.
- help achieve key Corporate objectives and monitor performance through the adoption of key performance indicators (KPI's).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£20,000*	No	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£12,500	No	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£12,500	No	Revenue

**See breakdown below*

*£7,500 one off implementation cost and £12,500 annual charge based on direct procurement for a 3-year term.

By investing now the data received will support future council savings by better targeting of improvement activity, promoting channel migration and reducing unnecessary contact.

Other Financial Information
Implementing the system will enable us to gather the views of the boroughs residents. As a result, we will have valuable actionable insights for the planning, delivery and monitoring of customer service across the full range of services the council offer. This will lead to improvements in the way we work and communicate with Residents.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
A communication plan will be developed as part implementation if the growth bid is approved.

Public Sector Equality Duty
A full equalities impact assessment and privacy Impact assessment will be undertaken prior to implementation.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

It is hoped the insights received will help improve the Council digital offer and as a result reduce unnecessary trips to visit to council offices.

List of Background Papers

N/A

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APPENDIX 1

GovMetric – Capturing and measuring customer feedback

What is GovMetric?

It is a software solution that enables the capturing of customer feedback, across multiple contact channels. Feedback can be gathered in real time, or by using surveys. It can help to measure customer satisfaction, as well as gathering informal customer feedback. This can be used to make correlations between events and statistical data, inform service improvement and deliver customer excellence.

There is also benchmarking functionality, meaning customer satisfaction performance can be compared against other Councils, and individual service areas.

From feedback to improvement

Both quantitative and qualitative information is captured, which helps better understand the customer experience from first point of contact to resolution. Evaluating the customer journey in this way will help to understand strengths and weaknesses in ways of working, and actions that need to be taken to improve:

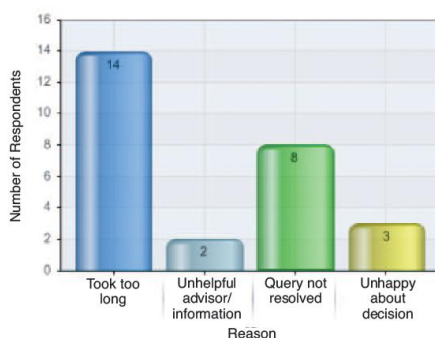


Monitoring and Reporting on feedback

The system captures all data and feedback, then a dashboard shows what is happening in real time:

Example of customer satisfaction across the primary access channels

Dissatisfaction by Channel - Telephone



Dissatisfaction by Channel - Web

