

South Gloucestershire Council

Mystery Shopping Report 2013/14

Background

From 1 January 2010 South Gloucestershire Council's revised Customer Care Charter became effective; detailing the standards to which the council would aim to achieve when delivering services.

To allow us to assess our performance, each year we undertake a mystery shopping exercise where we use local residents to help us understand how our services are being delivered and if we are achieving the standards as set out in the charter. We also invite their feedback on how they think we can improve our services for the future.

Methodology

The following table illustrates our approach to the 2013/14 mystery shopping exercise:

Channels assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telephone (Corporate contact centre & Adult Care contact centre)• Face to face (One Stop Shop – Customer Services)• Email• Website (prior to introduction of new website)• Post
Assessment	<p>The assessment was carried out by two different groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telephone and email – these channels were mystery shopped by Red Door Coaching and Recruitment. They are a local based company who used their own recruits to undertake the mystery shops. All of the people they use are South Gloucestershire residents• Website, post and face to face – these channels were mystery shopped by residents appointed from our Viewpoint Panel.
Timeline	<p>The mystery shopping took place between 5 August 2013 and 30 November 2013</p>
Quantity	<p>The number of mystery shops undertaken against each channel is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telephone – 110 calls to our contact centre (10 per contact number)• Face to face – 40 visits to our one stop shops (10 separate services – 1 scenario per service used across all four one stop shop sites)• Website – 28 visits to the site• Post – 12 letters sent to various council services• Email – 55 emails sent to 8 different mailboxes
Services	<p>The following services were assessed during this exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Care• Housing & Council Tax Benefits• Council Tax• Children & Young People• Environmental Health• General Enquiries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Leisure & Libraries • Planning • Registration Services • Streetcare & Waste • Transport Services <p>Please note that not all services were assessed across all channels, for example post mystery shopping only covered 5 of the above channels as this was representative of the services that received large numbers of post.</p>
Scenarios	<p>Each service was set a series of scenarios where we advised the mystery shopper what to ask and what the response should be.</p> <p>The pre-empted responses were based on information provided through the council's website and information and advice given to customer care officers in our Contact Centre and One Stop Shops through ongoing training.</p>
Assessment against standards	<p>Following each mystery shop, the mystery shopper was asked to score their interaction against a list of standards (as set out in our corporate customer charter). They were also asked to tell us if their enquiry was dealt with at the first point of contact, if their individual needs were met and what their overall satisfaction was with contacting the council by the selected channel.</p>

Channel and service data

The following table shows the actual number of mystery shops carried out against each channel by service. This data takes into account non returns or unsuccessful mystery shops:

	Phone	Email	Face to Face	Website	Post
Adult Care	10	5	4	3	2
Housing and Council Tax Benefit	9	5	4	3	0
Council Tax	10	5	3	3	2
Children & Young People	10	5	4	3	0
Environmental Health	10	5	3	2	2
General Enquiries	10	5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Housing	10	5	4	2	0
Leisure & Libraries	10	5	N/A	2	0
Planning & Transport	10	5	8	4	2
Registration Services	10	5	3	2	0
Streetcare	10	5	4	3	2
Total	109	55	37	27	10

Outcomes from mystery shopping

<p>Telephone <i>(respondents = 109)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57% of calls made to the contact centre during the period of the mystery shopping exercise were answered within 60 seconds • 74% of mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered in full • 77% of mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered at the first point of contact • 94% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the way the advisor listened to their enquiry • 83% of mystery shoppers felt satisfied that their enquiry was understood • 89% of mystery shoppers felt satisfied with the confidence of our advisors • 85% of mystery shoppers felt the information provided to them was clear • 83% of mystery shoppers felt their individual needs were met • 80% of mystery shoppers felt satisfied with their overall experience of contacting the council by telephone
<p>Email <i>(respondents = 55)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98% of mystery shoppers told us their email was acknowledged within 2 working days • 98% of mystery shoppers told us their email was responded to in full within 5 working days • 51% of mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered in full • 82% of mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered at the first point of contact • 78% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the level of information provided in the response from the council • 87% of mystery shoppers were satisfied that the information provided by the council was clear • 76% of mystery shoppers were satisfied that their individual needs were met • 78% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with their overall experience of contacting the council by email
<p>Face to face <i>(respondents = 37)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the way the advisor listened to their enquiry • 95% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the level of understanding shown by the advisor

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the confidence shown by the advisor • 97% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the politeness shown by the advisor • 92% of mystery shoppers felt their individual needs were met • 86% of mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered at the first point of contact • 86% of mystery shoppers felt satisfied with their overall experience of contacting the council face to face
<p>Website</p> <p><i>(respondents = 27)</i></p> <p><i>Feedback based on old website</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of mystery shoppers were satisfied with the level of information provided on our website • 59% of mystery shoppers felt the information on our website was clear • 59% of mystery shoppers felt the information on our website was easy to understand • 62% of mystery shoppers told us their enquiry was answered in full • 96% of mystery shoppers said they would use the website again in the future to find out information about council services • 78% of mystery shoppers said they would use the website again in the future to request services • 56% of mystery shoppers felt satisfied with their overall experience of contacting the council through our website
<p>Post</p> <p><i>(respondents = 10)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% of mystery shoppers told us they received an acknowledgement to their letter within 5 working days • 50% of mystery shoppers told us they received a full response to their letter within 10 working days • 80% of mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was fully understood • 60% of mystery shoppers felt the information provided to them was clear • 60% of mystery shoppers felt their individual needs were met • None of our mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered in full • None of our mystery shoppers felt their enquiry was answered at the first point of contact • 60% of mystery shoppers felt satisfied with their overall experience of contacting the council by post

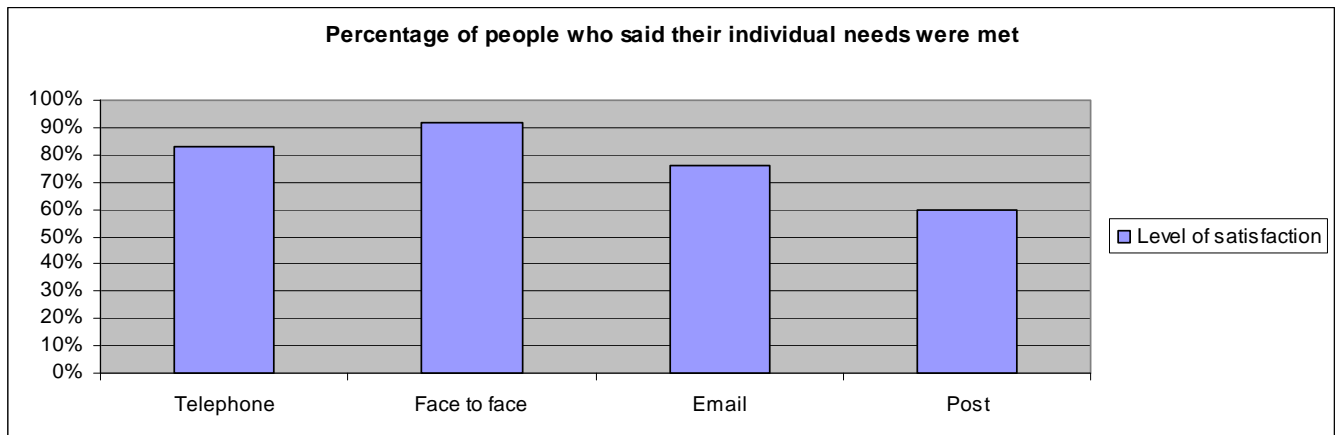
Individual needs and overall experience

Mystery shoppers were asked how satisfied they were with the following:

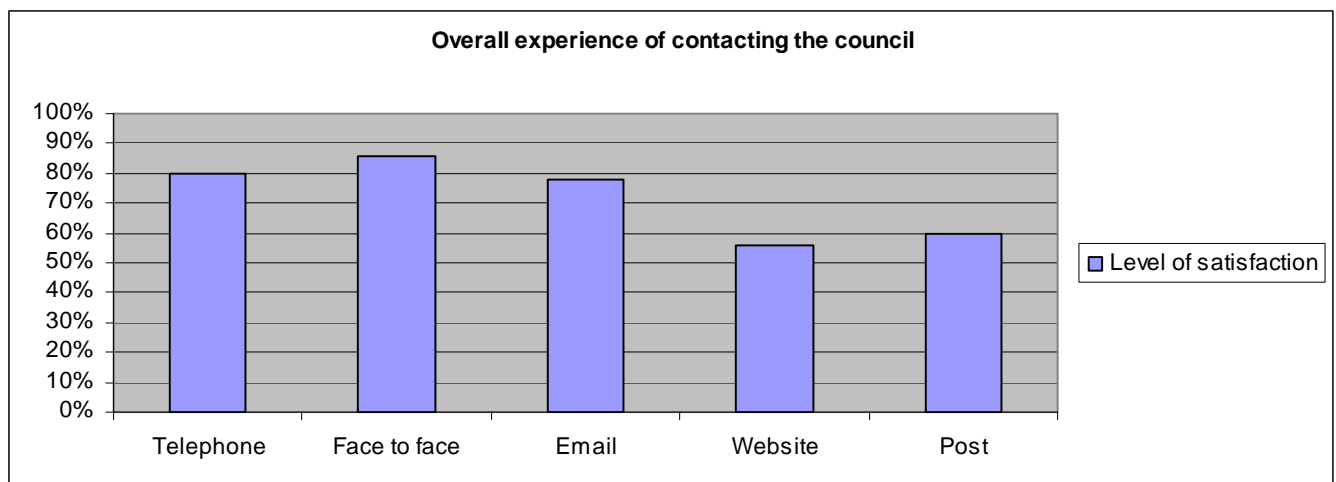
- Individual needs being met
- Overall experience of contacting the council

The scale of satisfaction ranged from 1 being very dissatisfied to 5 being very satisfied.

The following chart shows, by channel, the percentage of mystery shoppers that said they were either satisfied or very satisfied that their individual needs were met (please note that the number of responses for each channel varies):



The following chart shows, by channel, the percentage of mystery shoppers that said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience of contacting the council (please note the number of responses for each channel varies):



Next Steps

The data collected through the mystery shopping project will be reviewed and acknowledged by service managers. Where appropriate, service improvements will be identified.

Report author: Customer Relations – Chief Executive & Corporate Resources Department – July 2014