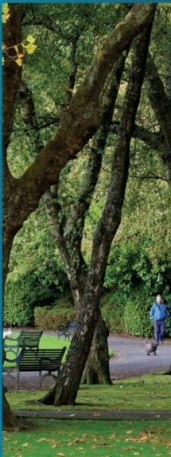
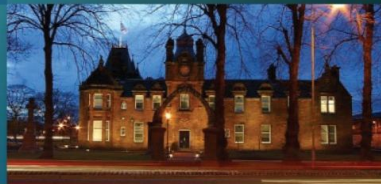


Housing, Environmental & Economic Development

Housing and Community Safety

Customer Satisfaction Strategy



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Section 1 Introduction

1. Introduction

- 1.1 West Dunbartonshire's Council's (WDC's) aim of delivering continuously improving services means that we must put customers' views at the forefront of all we do.
- 1.2 As part of striving to deliver continuously improving services, this Customer Satisfaction strategy has been developed to sit within the wider performance management framework covering Housing and Community Safety Services.
- 1.3 The strategy has the following aims:

- ◆ To outline the current situation in relation to Customer Satisfaction within Housing and Community Safety Services
- ◆ To propose a universal approach to measuring Customer Satisfaction within Housing and Community Safety Services
- ◆ To ensure Customer Satisfaction is measured comprehensively and consistently across Housing & Community Safety Services
- ◆ To develop benchmarking opportunities both internally and externally
- ◆ To ensure that Customer Satisfaction is at the core of the performance management framework and drives service improvement

- 1.4 This strategy sets out the strategic framework for measuring Customer Satisfaction across Housing and Community Safety Services
- Section 2 provides information about the national and local context in relation to Customer Satisfaction
 - Section 3 sets out the strategic outcomes of the strategy
 - Section 4 provides an overview of the approach taken to Customer Satisfaction to date within Housing and Community Safety Services
 - Section 5 sets out proposals for achieving the stated aims of this strategy
 - Section 6 contains an Action Plan, which sets out the actions required to achieve the aims outlined within this strategy.

Section 2 National and local context

2.1 National context

The Crerar Review of regulation, audit, inspection and complaints handling of public services in Scotland revealed support for a greater reliance on self-assessment as a mechanism for reducing the burden of external scrutiny. It also suggested that public services become more outcome focused. The ambition of focusing the attention of public services on the achievement of outcomes was reflected in the establishment of the Concordat signed by the Scottish Government and COSLA in November 2007.

It is therefore a key objective of the Scottish Government and local government in Scotland to focus the resources of public services to achieving results for people and communities. This outcome based approach makes it crucial that providers of public services understand what their customers think of the services they provide.

The proposed Scottish Social Housing Charter can be seen within this context. The Charter will be a series of outcomes that all social landlords will need to show that they are achieving for their tenants, residents and other customers. The draft Charter and the consultation carried out highlighted the importance Customer Satisfaction will play in relation to the Charter and to how the regulator will view a landlords performance.

West Dunbartonshire Council intends to build upon the outcomes detailed within the Scottish Social Housing Charter to ensure greater benefits for all our customers.

2.2 The local context

Following inspection of West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Management Services in 2004, customer focus and influence was one of the areas where the regulator highlighted weaknesses within the Council's approach.

In the Interim Report on Improvement Progress published in 2008, it was found that the council had not given service users more opportunities to give their views on the quality of its full range of services and did not always take account of the feedback it did get.

Customer feedback provides a clear understanding of what customers think, should lead to improved services, increasing levels of satisfaction and a reduction in complaints.

A properly developed Customer Satisfaction Strategy, which is consistent, planned and co-ordinated, is therefore an integral and valued element when seeking continuous service improvement.

Section 3 Strategic outcomes

3.1 Strategic aims

The strategic outcomes of this strategy have been developed in response to the national and local context outlined above.

- The development of a Customer Satisfaction Strategy will assist in delivering the outcomes contained within the Scottish Social Housing Charter which all social landlords' performance will be measured against.
- The development of a Customer Satisfaction Strategy will ensure a consistency with the Scottish Housing Regulator's view that organisations should continue to develop ways of gathering and using service user feedback to improve its services.
- The development of a Customer Satisfaction Strategy will contribute to continuous improving service provision and the goal of ensuring fit for purpose services.
- The development of a Customer Satisfaction strategy will contribute to the commitment to continue to develop and improve services which tackle homelessness, as outlined in the Homelessness Strategy.

Section 4 Customer Satisfaction within Housing & Community Safety

4.1 Customer Satisfaction currently within Housing & Community Safety

In order to get an understanding of the current situation relating to customer satisfaction measurement, an analysis has been carried out looking at how, where and by what means customer satisfaction is measured across Housing & Community Safety (see table below). In addition, a proposal to ask about customer satisfaction with response repairs has been developed but not yet implemented.

SERVICE AREA	MODEL	METHOD	SAMPLE SIZE	RESPONSE RATE	RESULTS COLLATED	REPORTED TO
Homeless Assessment	CSMT (pilot)	face to face & phone	No target	Unknown	Excel	Health Worker
Allocations	None	face to face	No target	Unknown	Excel	Team Leader, Allocations
post – Allocations	None	face to face & phone	No target	Unknown	Excel	Team Leader, Allocations
ASIST	None	phone	No target	Unknown	SPSS	Team Leader

This analysis shows that Customer Satisfaction is being measured within some service areas but that an inconsistent approach remains. There is no standard question set and in some surveys more questions ask about issues other than customer satisfaction. Response rates are not being monitored and only the survey with a target in relation to sample size is that relating to responsive repairs.

Results of surveys are being collated and analysed but different mechanisms are being used and this is not always being done at regular intervals. This analysis is being sent to named officers but there is no widespread reporting and no obvious signs of existing practice leading to service improvements. Finally, the fact that customer satisfaction is not being measured or reported within some service areas is a genuine weakness and a risk in the context of drawing an adverse reaction from the Scottish Housing Regulator.

4.2 The need to develop a Customer Satisfaction Strategy

As outlined above, a combination of the local situation and the national regulatory framework has resulted in the need have in place an approach to Customer Satisfaction which ensures that views of customers are being comprehensively gathered and acted upon.

A review of existing operational processes and procedures has shown that this is not the case at present. Whilst Customer Satisfaction is known to be important, no universal approach to measuring Customer Satisfaction exists and it is not being measured as comprehensively as it could be. In addition, there is little evidence of Customer Satisfaction leading to service improvement and there are no opportunities being pursued to benchmarking Customer Satisfaction.

Therefore, to ensure that Customer Satisfaction is at the core of the performance management framework, drives service improvement and is consistent with the views of the Scottish Government and Scottish Housing Regulator, there is a need to develop and implement this strategy.

Section 5
Proposals – outcomes and how they will be achieved

5.1 A universal approach to measuring Customer Satisfaction

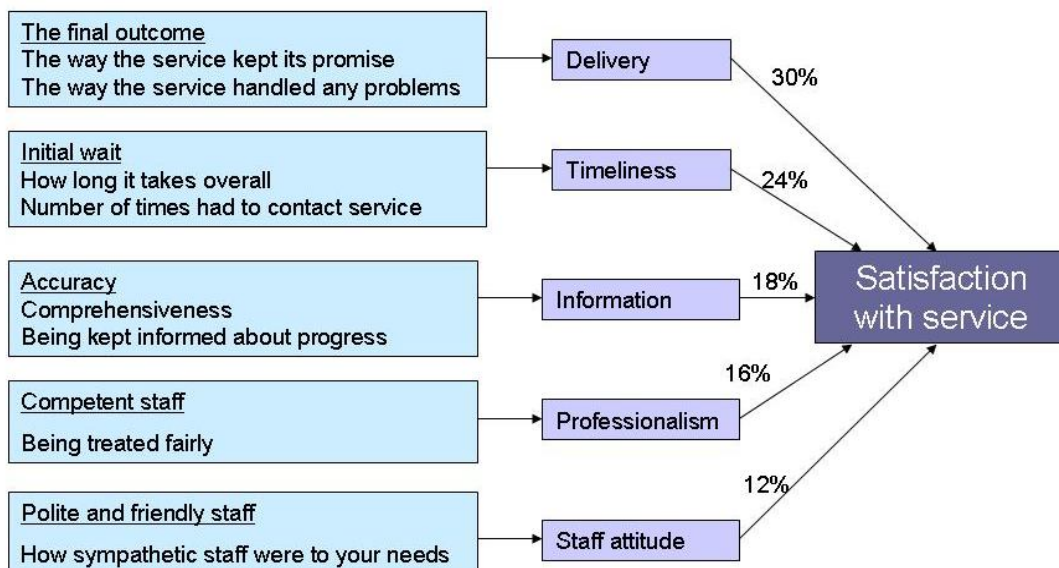
In 2005 Audit Scotland found that there were significant variations in the way Scotland’s 32 councils measured Customer Satisfaction.

In 2008 a study jointly commissioned by Consumer Focus Scotland and the Improvement Service suggested that the development of a new standard for satisfaction measurement was widely supported.

In response, collaboration between the Improvement Service, Consumer Focus Scotland, LARIA (Scotland), the Scottish Government, Audit Scotland and representatives from local government developed the Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool (CSMT).

Based around 5 keys drivers of customer satisfaction (see diagram below), CSMT offers a new, robust and consistent standard for measuring customer satisfaction, which is also cost-effective and simple to implement.

Key drivers of satisfaction



As part of a national pathfinder, West Dunbartonshire Council participated in a 6 month pilot program which found CSMT to offer robustness and consistency and provide a mechanism to benchmark effectively.

As a result, there is a proposal to introduce CSMT as a key component of SHBVN’s benchmarking service.

http://web.sbe.hw.ac.uk/shbvn/members/file.php/2/Main_Group/CSMT_Evaluation_Proposal_No_v_11.pdf

CSMT is also supported by the existence of an on-line [Community of Practice](#) hub, where registered users can share survey templates and scripts for use by phone, online, face to face and by post, as well as sharing experiences of CSMT across a wide area of public services.

CSMT is a positive development in relation to measuring customer satisfaction due to the advantages outlined should be the preferred tool used for measuring Customer Satisfaction across Housing and Community Safety Services.

5.2 A comprehensive approach to measuring Customer Satisfaction

The analysis undertaken referred to above, shows that whilst Customer Satisfaction is being measured in some service areas, this system has developed over a period of time and gaps exist where the views of customers are not being asked or acted upon.

Some actions have already been taken to address this situation. Within the Homelessness and Allocations Section, it has been agreed that the two surveys relating to allocations could be replaced by one survey based on CSMT. In addition, two further surveys based on CSMT have been introduced within the Homeless Service (seeking the views of those customers of the Prevention Service and Housing Support Service). Procedures and process maps have been amended and staff briefings taken place to outline the new procedures and question sets. These changes have taken effect from January 2012.

Within Anti-Social Behaviour and Estate Management, the survey being used by the ASIST has also been replaced by one based on CSMT. It has also been agreed to introduce a survey seeking the views of those using the Mediation Service and both these changes will be implemented from February 2012. Discussions are taking place with the aim of identifying further areas within this service where the views of customers could be sought.

Discussions continue in relation to introducing CSMT within the Maintenance and Repair Service. It is an aim of this strategy to resolve any issues in relation to this development so that by April 2012, Customer Satisfaction using CSMT can be measured within both the Response Repairs and the Capital Investment Programme areas of service.

5.3 A consistent Customer Satisfaction model

As well as agreeing CSMT as the tool for measuring Customer Satisfaction and planning a comprehensive approach across Housing and Community Safety Services, this strategy aims to develop a consistent and planned model in relation to data collection methods, sample sizes and response rates being targeted.

The goal of producing credible and quality data, whilst also ensuring the best use of available resources has been considered, alongside the experiences and lessons learned from previous approaches.

The table below outlines a model agreed across service areas which meets these criteria, which can be implemented quickly and which will be able to capture the customer insight that is being sought.

SERVICE AREA	SURVEY MODEL	METHOD	SAMPLE SIZE	RESPONSE RATE	RESULTS COLLATED	REPORTED TO
Homeless Assessment	CSMT	face to face & phone	100%	60% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
Homeless Prevention Service	CSMT	face to face & phone	100%	40% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
Housing Support Service	CSMT	face to face & phone	100%	60% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
Allocations & Lettings	CSMT	face to face	100% of new tenants (excluding those being housed by Homeless Service)	80% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
ASIST cases	CSMT	phone	100%	60% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
Mediation cases	CSMT	Phone	100%	60% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
Response Repairs	CSMT	To be agreed	100%	15% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website
Capital Investment	CSMT	To be agreed	100%	75% target	electronically via Survey monkey	SMT monthly via HPIB Members via MOWG report Performance area on WDC Website

5.4 Reporting and learning from results

A commitment to report results widely and use results to drive service improvement is an important aspect of this strategy.

Customer Satisfaction rates will feature prominently in the monthly performance report produced for the SMT, which is also provided to the MOWG. It is also planned that these results will also be reported via a performance section on the WDC website.

CSMT allows satisfaction rates to be compared across service areas. It is envisioned that a detailed report will be produced monthly which will allow managers and operational staff the opportunity to look at data and identify areas where improvement can be made.

In addition, it is expected that a benchmarking the pilot being facilitated by SHBVN will be extended to include more service areas and other local authorities and that this will provide further opportunities for identifying and sharing good practice and for delivering service improvement.

This strategy envisages an effective and efficient approach to measuring, recording and reporting customer satisfaction. It is a robust approach which also facilitates benchmarking and will allow areas of weakness to be identified, actions to be agreed and will contribute to continuous service improvement.

Section 6 Implementation and Review Plan

Implementation Plan – Customer Satisfaction Strategy

Aim	Action and what this will achieve	Who will do this?	When for?	Progress
Assess current situation in relation to customer satisfaction measurement within Housing and Community Safety Services.	An awareness of current surveys being completed within HEED - highlights resources currently being used and whether these resources are being used efficiently Allows an understanding of where Customer Satisfaction is currently being measured within HEED, the impact this is having and identifies gaps.	Performance & Continuous Improvement Officer	31 st Oct	complete
Identify a universal tool for measuring Customer Satisfaction, which is flexible and can be implemented effectively and efficiently	http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/news-and-features/features/customer-satisfaction-tool-is-making-its-mark/ Evaluate CSMT as a tool	Performance & Continuous Improvement Officer	31 st Oct	complete
Develop comprehensive and consistent model for measuring Customer Satisfaction across Housing and Community Safety Services	Review existing processes and procedures to incorporate CSMT and new approach Meet with Managers and Team Leaders to develop approach within each service area	Performance & Continuous Improvement Officer, Service Managers, Team Leaders	31 st Dec	complete
Agree implementation plan	On-going discussions with Managers in order to fully implement model by April 2012	Performance & Continuous Improvement Officer, Service Managers,	31 st Mar 12	On-going
Agree reporting framework which will ensure Customer Satisfaction is central to the performance reporting framework and the benchmarking opportunities are maximised	Fully integrate the reporting of Customer Satisfaction within the existing performance reporting framework, including the highlight	Performance & Continuous Improvement Officer, Service Managers,	31 st Mar 12	On-going
Ensure new customer satisfaction arrangements are meeting our aims and objectives.	Carry out annual review of customer satisfaction procedures within Housing and Community Safety to ensure that its implementation has led to continuous improvement of housing services in West Dunbartonshire	Performance & Continuous Improvement Officer, Service Managers	31 st Mar 13	



Customer Satisfaction Strategy

