

**Cherwell District Council**

**Customer Insight  
Report**

**1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013**



DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 What is customer insight?

Customer insight is the broad term used to describe the process of using data and information about our residents to help improve our understanding of their needs, expectations, behaviours and experiences. This information can then be used to target services and communications around the needs of different customer groups.

### 1.2. What information is available about our residents?

Information about our customers (our residents) is available from a variety of sources. The results of the 2011 Census provides a vast amount of demographic data on those living within the district. This information is summarised in a number of profiles currently available on the Cherwell website and detailed ward profiles are currently in development.

However, information about our customers is also collected through our interactions with residents. This can be through formal consultations, focus groups, customer feedback, customer complaints, and our website and through social media. Elected Members also provide officers with an important source of customer insight, often being the first to hear of issues impacting local areas.

### 1.2. What is the purpose of this report?

The purpose of this report is to pull together various customer insight sources available to the Council on a quarterly basis and to attempt to highlight trends and areas of importance to our customers.

## 2. Latest News / Consultation Results

During this period, the Council carried out its annual 'Customer Satisfaction Survey' which received 745 responses from residents. The overall results were very positive with 76% of residents satisfied with the services provided by Cherwell District Council. The full report can be accessed through the following link: <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1570>

Cherwell residents also had an opportunity to have their say on three further consultations, the 'Homelessness Strategy', 'Licensing Policy' and the 'Sex Establishment Policy'. All consultations were available on our Online Consultation Portal <http://consult.cherwell.gov.uk/portal/>. The number of responses received for these consultations were low, with only 5 responses received in total.




For more information on consultations or community engagement events please contact Michal Gogut, Consultation and Engagement Officer on 01295 221575 or [michal.gogut@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:michal.gogut@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk).

### 3. GovMetric Report

The Council uses GovMetric as a mechanism for capturing customer feedback about its services. GovMetric asks customers to rate their experience as either 'Good', 'Average' or 'Poor' based on a system of smiley faces. Feedback can be provided by telephone and via the website.






#### Overall satisfaction




			
<b>Number Of Respondents</b>	3219	130	306
<b>Percentage Of Respondents</b>	88.1%	3.6%	8.4%
<b>Trend (compared to Q1)</b>	↓ 1.4%	↑ 0.7%	↑ 0.7%

A total of 3,655 responses were logged with the GovMetric system during the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Overall satisfaction with Council services was slightly lower than in Quarter 1 at 88.1%, while 8.4% of respondents said the service they received was poor.

#### 1.1 Overall satisfaction by channel

<u>Telephone Satisfaction</u>			
<b>Number Of Respondents</b>	2918	48	6
<b>Percentage Of Respondents</b>	98%	2%	0%




Telephone satisfaction rates are exceptionally high, with 98% of respondents stating that the service they received was good.

<u>Website Satisfaction</u>			
<b>Number Of Respondents</b>	301	82	300
<b>Percentage Of Respondents</b>	44%	12%	44%

Website satisfaction rates are considerably lower than those for telephone satisfaction; however this is to be expected. 44% of respondents through the website rated their satisfaction as good, however 44% of respondents rated their satisfaction as poor. It should be noted that the number of website responses are considerably lower than the number of telephone responses and only represents a fraction of the number of visitors to the Council's website during this period.

## 1.2 Service satisfaction

The following tables provide a breakdown of the GovMetric responses by service areas.

Service	Number Of Respondents			
Benefits	667	98%	2%	0%
Council Tax	1253	96%	1%	3%
Environmental Services	252	88%	4%	9%
Housing	305	88%	5%	7%
Planning & Building Control	50	16%	14%	70%
Streets & Parking	39	44%	10%	46%
Waste & Recycling	646	89%	4%	7%
Other Services*	225	75%	6%	19%
Uncategorised**	212	52%	11%	37%

\* Service areas with fewer than 25 responses are included in 'Other Services' along with responses that cannot be attributed to one specific service area.

\*\* Officers are working with GovMetric on a potential re-launch in January which would significantly reduce the number of uncategorised responses.

Council Tax remains the service area with the highest number of responses and achieved an exceptionally high satisfaction rate with 96% rating their experience as good.

Other service areas receiving a high number of responses include Benefits, Environmental Services, Housing and Waste and Recycling. The overall satisfaction rate for these services during this period was excellent.

Planning and Building Control and Streets and Parking received the highest percentage of respondents stating that the service they received was poor, with 70% of Planning and Building Control respondents describing the service they received as poor. However it should be noted that the number of responses received for these service areas are considerably lower than for the other service areas reported on here.

## 3. Complaints Report

A new Corporate Management Process for both Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Council was introduced on 1 July 2013. Both councils have now moved to a more effective two phase approach, replacing the old three stage complaints system.

### 4.1 Total number of complaints

	Quarter 1 (Apr – June)	Quarter 2 (Jul – Sept)	Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)	Quarter 4 (Jan-March)
Stage 1 Complaints	56	66	-	-
Stage 2 Complaints	5	5	-	-
Stage 3 Complaints	2	n/a (new 2 stage process)	n/a (new 2 stage process)	n/a (new 2 stage process)

A total of 73 complaints were received and recorded during the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013. This is higher than the 57 complaints recorded during Quarter 2 in 2012/13. 66 of the complaints received this quarter were ‘Stage 1’ complaints and 5 were ‘Stage 2’ complaints; however 2 of these complaints were not logged as a specific stage.

No of Complaints Received	Acknowledged within 3 working days		Responded to within 10 working days		Unknown (No response date logged)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
73	66	90.4%	38	52.1%	16	21.9%

Of the 73 complaints received, 90.4% were acknowledged within 3 days. The majority of these complaints were acknowledged on the same day that they were received.

Just over half (52.1%) of these 73 complaints were recorded as being responded to within 10 working days. A number of the complaints received during this period (21.9%) do not have a response date logged on the system. While this remains an issue, this does represent a significant improvement compared to Quarter 1 where 55.6% of complaints received do not have a response date logged.

No of Complaints Received	Valid Complaints		Invalid Complaints		Unknown	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
73	28	38.4%	28	38.4%	17	23.3%

28 out of 73 complaints (38.4%) were recorded as valid during this period, with a further 28 (38.4%) being recorded as invalid. However, 17 out of the 73 complaints were recorded as “unknown”.

## **4.2 Complaints by service area**

Complaints are logged in LAGAN in line with the new reporting process. However, there is a need to update the service categories that complaints are recorded against. This issue is being addressed and service categories will be updated to reflect the new service structure implemented by JMT on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

Service Area	No of Complaints Received	Acknowledged within 3 working days		Responded to within 10 working days		Valid Complaints	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Amenity Services</b>	18	18	100%	14	77.8%	12	66.7%
<b>Council Tax</b>	8	6	75%	3	37.5%	2*	25%
<b>Customer Service</b>	7	7	100%	0	0%	2*	25%
<b>Benefits</b>	7	7	100%	7	100%	4	57.1%
<b>Planning</b>	10	10	100%	4	40%	2	20%
<b>Urban &amp; Rural Services</b>	8	5	62.5%	6	75%	2	25%
<b>Other Services</b>	15	14	93.3%	6	40%	4*	26.7%

\* A large proportion of these complaints in this service area were recorded as "unknown" in terms of whether the complaint was valid or not.

## **4.3 Reasons for complaint**

The following table provides a breakdown of the reasons for each complaint received.

Reason for complaint	Number of complaints	% of all complaints
<b>Services not being delivered / Delivered at a lower standard</b>	30	41.1%
<b>Disagreement about a decision</b>	17	23.3%
<b>Attitude of staff</b>	10	13.7%
<b>Neglect or delay in responding to customer</b>	9	12.3%
<b>Failure to follow agreed policy and/or procedure</b>	4	5.5%
<b>Policy decision</b>	1	1.4%
<b>Unknown</b>	2	2.7%

The main reason for complaints received during this period was services not being delivered or delivered at a lower standard.

#### **4.4 Identifying Trends**

25% of complaints received in Quarter 2 were in relation to Amenity Services, with 12 of out those 18 complaints recorded as valid.

<b>Amenity Services - Reason for complaint</b>	<b>Number of complaints</b>	<b>% of service complaints</b>
<b>Services not being delivered / Delivered at a lower standard</b>	10	55.6%
<b>Attitude of staff</b>	5	27.8%
<b>Other</b>	3	16.7%

The majority of complaints received against Amenity Services (10 out of 18) were in relation to services not being delivered or delivered at a lower standard. Of these 10 complaints, five of them were recorded as valid.

#### **4.5 Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Complaints**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – June)</b>	<b>Quarter 2 (Jul – Sept)</b>	<b>Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)</b>	<b>Quarter 4 (Jan-March)</b>
<b>Benefits</b>	0	1	-	-
<b>Planning &amp; Building Control</b>	1	1	-	-
<b>Highways &amp; Transport</b>	1	0	-	-
<b>Other</b>	0	2	-	-

Two LGO complaints were received in Quarter 1 with a further four received in Quarter 2.

The outcome of the six LGO complaints received so far in 2013/14 is summarised below:

- 1 x *“Not Investigated (LGO Discretion)”*
- 1 x *“No Maladministration (letter only)”*
- 3 x *“Not in jurisdiction & discretion not exercised”*
- 1 x *“Premature”*

## 4. Media Enquiries

The Communications Team produces a monthly media monitoring report, detailing how the Council has been reported on in the local news, whether the news item was positive or negative and what media enquiries and news releases occurred during the month. This section is a high level summary of those reports for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

	Total number of media items	Positive	Neutral	Negative
July	199	44%	47%	9%
August	219	37%	59%	4%
September	183	49%	47%	4%
Total Quarter 2	601	43%	51%	6%

During this period, the Council received 273 enquiries and issued 54 press releases. For further detail on the nature of these enquiries and press releases please contact the Communication Team on 01295 227941 or [communications.team@cherwell.gov.uk](mailto:communications.team@cherwell.gov.uk).

## 5. Social Media

Social Media is a powerful tool for engaging and communicating with customers. The Council has a Facebook page and a Twitter account which allows us to communicate directly with any residents who have decided to 'like' or 'follow' us on these social media sites. They also allow residents to communicate directly with the Council. The Communications Team manages the Council's social media presence.

### 5.1 Twitter

The council currently has 3,935 followers on Twitter, an increase of 270 since the Quarter 1 report. The Council is also following 73 and has tweeted 1,506 times. Follow us on Twitter [@CherwellCouncil](https://twitter.com/CherwellCouncil)



The Council's Waste and Recycling department also has its own Twitter account with 849 followers and have tweeted 1,678 times. Follow them on Twitter on [@CherwellRecycle](https://twitter.com/CherwellRecycle)

### 5.2 Facebook

The Council is also on Facebook and currently has 1,142 likes, which is significantly higher than the 226 likes reported on in Quarter 1. Take a look and start following us - click on the link to our page:

<https://www.facebook.com/cherwelldistrictcouncil>





## 6. Website Interaction



The following provides an overview of how customers access the Cherwell website and how they behave on the site.

### 6.1 Visitor Statistics

	01/07/13 – 30/09/13	Compared to Quarter 1
Number of visitors	181,364	+ 2,181
Number of unique visitors	91,149	+ 282
Number of page views	857,337	+ 12,634

### 6.2 How customers access our website (search engine terms)

The following are the top 5 search terms that have been used across all search engines and referred visitors to the website during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

Rank	External Search Term	Number of visits
1.	Cherwell district council	15,047
2.	Cherwell council	1,329
3.	Cherwell district council planning	1,107
4.	Cherwell	814
5.	Cherwell district council jobs	597

### 6.3 What customers search for on our website (search function on website)

There has been a technical issue with recording internal search terms during this quarter. As a result, it is not possible to provide an accurate picture of what customers have been searching for on the Council's website. This issue has been resolved and further details should be provided in the Quarter 3 report.

## 6.4 Most popular pages

Rank	External Page	Page Views
1.	Homepage	76,703
2.	Public Access search results	48,169
3.	Public Access homepage (publicaccess.cherwell.gov.uk)	37,434
4.	View/comment on a planning application	28,500
5.	Site search results	25,198
6.	Planning landing page	19,156
7.	Recycling and waste landing page	9,778
8.	Job vacancies	8,712
9.	Council Tax landing page	7,844
10.	Public Access planning applications weekly list	7,058

Five of the ten most popular pages for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013 were planning web pages. Search results from the planning register was by far the most popular page, however this figure is likely to be inflated by users carrying out multiple searches.

## 7. Summary

### Customer Satisfaction

Overall customer satisfaction through GovMetric was slightly down compared to Quarter 1, however face-to-face and telephone satisfaction rates remain high. Website satisfaction, while remaining low has improved slightly from Quarter 1.

### Complaints

28 out of 73 complaints were recorded as valid during this period with just over half of the complaints received (38 out of 73) were responded to within 10 working days.

There remains an issue with how complaints are being recorded as 16 out of 73 (21.9%) of complaints received do not have a response date recorded on the system. However this represents a significant improvement from Quarter 1 where 55.6% of complaints did not have a response date logged.

### Website Interactions

'Planning' or information related to planning applications remains the most popular area on the website for visitors.