



# "You Said, We Did"

How your views helped shape  
our Customer Service Policy

# “You Said, We Did” - How your views helped shape Customer Service Policy

## Why do we need a Customer Service Policy?

Defining our approach to customers is essential to help the organisation achieve its aim towards becoming a successful strategic commissioning authority.

Facing the Challenge, Kent County Council's transformation plan, places a heavy importance on the role of the customer in the work of a commissioning authority: “By 2020, all KCC services will have a greater customer focus with services organised around the needs of the users and residents.”

Facing the Challenge shifts the focus from improving our services through understanding our customers' experience, to better understanding our customers' needs by actively engaging them in the design and delivery of services.

In order to create this change in approach the Council has agreed, in consultation with its customers, the core customer service values and principles by which the Council will abide.

These principles are designed to work alongside Kent County Council's Commissioning and Outcomes Frameworks towards the delivery of effective commissioning.

The Policy and its measures will be used alongside the Commissioning Framework, enabling KCC to hold all service providers to account for meeting customer service expectations. KCC will act as guarantor of standards for service users, acting on their behalf where customer service principles and standards are not met.

## Consultation

The proposed Customer Service Policy was open to public consultation from 10 March 2015 until 12 May 2015.

A questionnaire was developed to capture feedback on the draft policy. In addition, as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment process, key groups were identified that could potentially be impacted by the Customer Service Policy. In order to ensure that the views of these customers were incorporated into the consultation, a small number of interactive workshops were undertaken across the County where more qualitative discussions and issues were explored. Workshops were undertaken with a BME (Black, Minority and Ethnic) community group, an older people's forum and two groups of young people including a BME youth forum. A workshop was also held with a disability group – although this fell slightly outside of the consultation period comments have been included to ensure that their views are reflected.

## How have you made a difference?

We asked for your views on our draft Customer Service Policy. Your suggestions have helped us to make changes so our Policy is simpler, clearer and measurable.

You have had a direct influence, helping us identify priorities for action that we will put into practice and deliver through our business plans.

You said	We did
We need to use plain English, and ensure that content is clear and easy to understand.	We have reviewed our Customer Service Policy to ensure it is simple and as clear as possible, and will continue this approach into the delivery.
We should actively consult and communicate with our customers throughout the implementation of the policy, so that they can see the impact of their feedback in the definition of and implementation of the standards that underpin the policy.	We have included a communication plan as part of our implementation approach to let customers know of proposed changes and also improvements made as a direct result of the Customer Service Policy and their feedback.
There should be measurable standards that can be measured to ensure consistency.	We will write measurable standards for the council and delivery partners to ensure there is a consistent approach to Customer Service. These will be written in consultation with our customers.
There should be continual involvement of customers within service redesign.	We will strengthen customer involvement in the pre-commissioning, redesign and planning stages to achieve the aims of the Customer Service Policy.
We need to ensure that 'Digital by Design' does not exclude those who do not use the internet.	We will reflect the needs of ALL of our customers in service redesign so that services remain accessible to all.
Need to involve customers in evaluating the services, not just feedback forms, but mystery shopping type visits, etc.	We will use a variety of ways to capture and understand customer experiences in using our services to help gauge the impact of the changes made as a result of the policy. These will include looking at complaints, comments and sharing best practice from compliments.

To see the full consultation report please visit

[www.kent.gov.uk/customerservicepolicy](http://www.kent.gov.uk/customerservicepolicy)