

Customer Engagement Strategy 2023-2024

Torfaen Registration Service

Introduction

Civil Registration is a vital service which affects everyone at some time in their lives. It provides a name and identity within society; a facility for marriage and civil partnership; and evidence of parentage and entitlement to inheritance.

Torfaen Registration Service is committed to providing customers with high quality services at key times in their lives in accordance with relevant legislation, General Registry Office governance and Torfaen County Borough Council's policies and procedures.

Torfaen Registration Service is committed to improving service delivery, increasing customer satisfaction and ensuring that the service reflects the needs of its customers. In order to do this, we continually seek the views and experiences of all those who have a connection with the service.

The purpose of this Customer Engagement Strategy is to set out the framework that Torfaen Registration Service has in place to help understand its customers, enhance relationships and to offer the opportunity to involve them in shaping the future of our service.

Aims

This strategy looks to deliver two distinct outcomes:

1. Customers are able to influence key policies, strategies and service standards: We will provide customers with the opportunity to comment on key policies, strategies and their experience of service standards. We will consider customer comments provided and incorporate their suggestions, where appropriate.
2. Customer feedback is integral to service improvement: We will ensure appropriate processes are in place to routinely obtain and analyse customer feedback on their experiences and use this to influence and change service delivery where appropriate.

Objectives

Our objectives are the measurable steps we will take in order to achieve our aims. These are:

1. To engage with stakeholders about the service, balancing the needs of the organisation and the customer whilst considering reasonableness, proportionality, legislation and cost, whilst making best use of the council's online engagement tool.
2. To engage with customers on relevant registration service issues which directly affect them.
3. To routinely use customer feedback to drive forward service improvement.
4. To engage with customers in a range of ways that meets their needs.
5. Where relevant, to ask customers about proposed service developments to gain an understanding of appetite for changes to services e.g. opening times, new discretionary fees, etc.
6. Where applicable and where a customer experience measure is developed, and published, for this to be documented with an indication of the volume of survey forms, dates of survey and indicative return rates.

Methodology

We measure our performance against key performance indicators outlined by the General Register Office, a range of methods will be employed to gather views from customers on both their perceptions and experiences of using the registration service. This will include:

- Customer surveys
- Trend analysis – providing an indication of customer satisfaction levels over a period of time to determine the direction of travel
- Publication of satisfaction levels, waiting times, performance indicators/service standards
- Benchmarking
- Risk management
- Complaints, comments and compliments
- Social media
- Formal and informal consultation in line with the Council's budget consultation mechanisms
- Provide a numerical measure of customer experience/satisfaction in terms of our service

Reporting/publishing performance

Performance levels against targets will be published on the Registration Service web pages of Torfaen Council's internet site.

Accessible Services - How will we ensure we achieve our aims?

Equalities – we are committed to reducing inequality and advancing equality through the decisions that we make and through our policies and practices.

We ensure that customers who identify with a protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) are not disadvantaged in any way. Our services are designed to maximise accessibility and we continue to make changes and improvements in response to customer needs.

In order to ensure we are meeting customer needs, we will:

- Provide evidence of timeliness to meet statutory requirements and customer expectations.
- Ensure our customer base is appropriate and proportionate to the wider local customer base and demographics.
- Ensure our services are available to those who wish to or who need to use them by providing accessible information in a range of ways (e.g. written information, online services).
- Seek the views of the local community through customer feedback
- Engage with our stakeholders.
- Make best use of social media.
- Seek and use website feedback.

Continuous Improvement

We are committed to developing and improving our services through a wide range of stakeholder consultation. We can demonstrate we are continually seeking to improve our services by:

- Providing evidence of the impact of customer feedback where practical and proportionate

- Monitoring and reviewing our action plans and lessons learned based on customer feedback, comments and complaints
- Provide an explanation where services cannot change due to legislation, corporate policy etc.
- Achieving our aims for service improvement as documented in our annual Service Plan
- Benefits analysis (customers, service and/or organisation)
- Sharing of Best Practice; and
- Learning from Best Practice in other organisations

Corporate Complaints

Corporate Complaints are an integral part of our customer service review cycle. We welcome both positive and negative feedback about our service and we look at each concern as an opportunity to investigate and to make improvements to our service, or to prevent the same complaint from happening again.

- For further information please see the Corporate Complaints Procedure
<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/AboutTheCouncil/Complaints/Corporate-Complaints.aspx>
 Any service complaint would be dealt with in the following way, by the Corporate Complaints Manager, working with the Superintendent Registrar:
- Record of formal complaint investigations, findings and response;
- Audit trail of complaint correspondence;
- Remedial action from upheld complaints and learning outcomes;
- Good practice shared as appropriate;
- Analysis of trends;
- Timely and effective communication with complainants;