

Customer Engagement Strategy 2020

Portsmouth Registration Service

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

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Introduction and Background

Civil registration is a vital service that affects everyone at some point in their lives. It provides a person with their identity, offers a facility for marriage and civil partnership, and evidence of parentage and entitlement to inheritance.

The statistical information collected by the service is important to policy making and in allocating national and local resources. It is therefore essential that Portsmouth Registration Service records high quality information.

The City of Portsmouth recognises the importance of the registration service, and is committed to providing customers with high quality services at key times in their lives. This will be reflected in the facilities provided within the register office and the skill and dedication of the staff.

To maintain a high standard of service it is vital to understand the needs of our customers, and have an understanding of their views on the services and products we provide. This will help us to continue to provide the high level of service reputation that Portsmouth Registration Service holds. We can achieve this by ensuring that regular consultation is an everyday part of our business.



Milldam House is open Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm and Saturdays by appointment only. An appointment system is in place for the registration of births, still births, deaths and notices of marriage/civil partnership. The office can be contacted on: 023 9282 9041 or by email at: registars@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

What is Customer Engagement?

The Government wants services for all that are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering - with the customer always and everywhere at the heart of the service provision. Customer Engagement is about using practical tools for driving customer-focused change in the registration service - within legislative limitations - by developing customer insight, understanding the users experience and a form of measurement of service satisfaction.

Our Aims

We aim to provide opportunities for all our customers to actively engage in the delivery of our services.

We will do this by:

- Providing them with the opportunity to comment on key policies, strategies and their experience of service standards.
- We will routinely obtain and analyse customer feedback
- We will use this to influence and change service delivery where appropriate
- We will show that we have listened by providing feedback to our customers

Our customer engagement strategy ensures that our customers are first and foremost at the heart of the service provision.

Who are our customers?

Portsmouth Registration Service has looked at our service users and has identified the following customers:

- Members of the public
- General Register Office
- Home Office
- UK Visas and Immigration
- Portsmouth City Council and other local authorities
- Central Government Departments
- Office for National Statistics
- The Coroner's Service
- Funeral Directors
- Clergy (Church of England and other denominations)
- General Medical Practitioners
- Hospitals, Nursing and Care Homes
- Approved Venues

Our Objectives

Our objectives are:

- To engage with stakeholders about the service, balancing the needs of the organisation and the customer whilst considering reasonableness, proportionality, legislation and cost.
- To engage with customers on relevant registration service issues
- To routinely use customer feedback to drive forward service improvement
- To engage with customers in a range of ways that meets their needs
- Where relevant, to ask customers about proposed service developments to gain an understanding of appetite for changes to services e.g. opening times
- 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.

How we achieve this

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

We achieve this in the following ways:

- Customer surveys
- Comment cards
- Publication of satisfaction levels, waiting times, performance indicators/service standards
- Benchmarking
- Risk management
- Complaints, comments and compliments
- Website feedback
- Social media
- Formal and informal consultation



How we use this information to improve our service

It is essential that customer engagement is not used as a 'tick box' exercise, but as an important source of data that has a valid use in the provision of our service. We are committed to developing and improving our services through our customer engagement. We can demonstrate that we are continually seeking to improve our services by:

- Providing evidence of the impact of customer feedback where practical and proportionate
- 'How did we do today?' and Customer Satisfaction Survey outcomes and results are published
- Monitoring and reviewing our service delivery plan based on customer feedback, comments and complaints
- Explanation where service cannot change due to legislation e.g corporate policy.
- Detailing our ideas for income generation
- Achieving our aims for service improvement as documented in our annual service plan
- Evidence of impact for staff training and development
- Sharing of Best Practice
- Learning from Best Practice in other organisations

How we show our results and actions

Portsmouth Registration Service provides feedback to its customers in the following ways:

- Through Portsmouth City Council's website
- In the Annual Report to the Registrar General
- In our Service Delivery Plan
- On our public notice boards at Milldam House

Training

It is vital that every member of staff understands and implements our customer engagement processes appropriately. This leads to better decision making, improves relations between staff and customers and leads to better customer satisfaction levels.

Our training includes:

- Customer care
- Legal responsibilities for delivery of registration services under relevant legislation
- Importance and benefits of participation
- How participation works in practice
- Ways to become involved
- Good practice

Equalities

Portsmouth City Council wants to ensure that equality considerations are imbedded in our decision-making process and applied to everything we do, from the services we design and deliver, the policies we design, the way we carry our public functions, the way we commission and buy from others to the way we treat our staff.

Portsmouth Registration Service is committed to incorporating this ethos into our working policies and processes. We ensure that customers who identify with a protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010 and any subsequent updates) 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 and make adjustments to our service delivery when appropriate - based on customer feedback - to improve the service going forward. Where feedback cannot be acted upon, an explanation will be given
- Engage with our stakeholders
- Make best use of social media
- Seek and use website feedback

Corporate Complaints

Corporate complaints are an integral part of our customer service review cycle. We welcome both positive and negative feedback about our service. 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. The processes in place for this are:

- Our Corporate complaints procedure <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/your-council/your-say/complaints/comment-compliment-or-complaint>
- 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
- Staff training and regular refreshers in the Corporate Complaints Procedure.

