

Anti-Poverty Service – You Said, We Did

Comments to action from customer surveys and staff suggestions in the 2020/21 period

The Anti-Poverty Service issues customer surveys to all customer groups and encourages staff suggestions and improvements on a monthly basis within team meetings.

The results have been analysed and are used to update the Advice Shop's Performance Indicators in Pentana. All comments and suggestions are recorded and those requiring action are listed below.

Customer/ Staff Comment	Comment/ Action
<p>Improved Referral System - Internal and external partners felt it would be useful to have an improved referral system to clearly identify the range of support available and a unified referral process</p>	<p>The FORT referral and tracking system was developed and implemented by the Service. Increased awareness of available support across the county with an improved referral and tracking system has meant that more people are receiving the help at the time they need this.</p> <p>The new process is the same for all partners and less resource intensive for staff.</p> <p>There are 44 partners using the new referral system.</p> <p>This system has been essential to services across West Lothian in supporting in individuals throughout the pandemic by offering a holistic response.</p>
<p>Customer Feedback Forms - Staff felt it was becoming more challenging to have customer feedback forms completed having less face to face contact with customers.</p> <p>Response rates significantly reduced following the restrictions throughout the pandemic.</p>	<p>Multiple ideas and suggestions were discussed at team meetings and the service implemented additional measure to ensure increased response rates. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software system development to clearly identify if customer have already been asked to complete a customer survey and a reminder if this has not been completed. • Links added to text messages.

<p>Staff were asked for suggestions on how response rates could be increased.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online publicity to encourage customers to complete the customer survey.
<p>Face to Face Advice - During the Pandemic, face to face advice was suspended due to the restrictions in place. Customer feedback was that this was missed and often made enquiries harder to deal with.</p>	<p>The service introduced the Attend Anywhere software which supported customers to be seen through video conferencing software.</p> <p>Feedback was this was very easy to use and a good alternative channel for those who wished to use this.</p> <p>Where customers did not have the required facilities to access this software, the service worked with partner organisations to make available computers and software so that the customer would be supported to access Attend Anywhere.</p> <p>This software also has the ability to replicate a virtual waiting room which helped the service to be able to offer face-to-face meetings quickly.</p> <p>We have also introduced electronic mandates and an evidence upload system.</p>
<p>Case Record Management System - Staff and management felt that the current case record management system (CRM) was no longer meeting the needs of the service and was causing significant pressures.</p>	<p>The service implemented a purpose-built system which better managed work requirements.</p> <p>This has helped to reduce pressures on staff and has reduced duplication of input. Other benefits of the system include improved reporting, the ability to link in with National Standards for Information and Advice Providers and improved remote working abilities.</p>
<p>Waiting Times – Customers raised concerns around waiting times for support to complete Disability Benefit Applications.</p> <p>There was a significant increase in requests for support following an initial pause from the Department for Work and Pensions in relation to disability benefits</p>	<p>Welfare Rights Officers looked at the current rota and made changes to allow additional appointments to be made.</p> <p>Staff were offered overtime to help reduce waiting times and offer additional appointments.</p> <p>Self help guides have been developed and, for those who are more able, they can complete the form and the service will discuss the contents to ensure they have given full answers to the questions.</p>

<p>PayPoint - Customers who were awarded a Crisis Grant felt that it was often difficult to travel to restricted locations to collect their payment. They advised there was often transport and cost implications, especially for those who lived within small villages across West Lothian. During Covid-19, travelling to collect payment was severely restricted.</p>	<p>Development and implementation of Paypoint across West Lothian now means that West Lothian residents can now receive payment for crisis grants through 111 Paypoint outlets in West Lothian.</p> <p>Previously payment was only available from Arrocher House in Livingston or Bathgate Partnership Centre.</p> <p>Most Paypoint venues are open 7 days a week from 6 am until 10 pm, which means people can get their money at a time and place that is convenient to them, without unnecessary travel to Livingston or Bathgate.</p> <p>The Scottish Welfare Fund Team can also pay larger payments by bank transfer which was not possible previously.</p>
<p>Online Applications – Customer felt there should be the ability to apply online for potential help and support</p>	<p>Education Maintenance Allowance – School pupils wanted easier access to apply for Education Maintenance Allowance.</p> <p>Education Maintenance Allowance application is now fully online.</p> <p>Bus passes/Young Scot - West Lothian Council was one of the first Local Authorities to sign up to getyournec. Customers can now apply for any type of Bus Pass/Young Scot card online.</p> <p>Changes to photographs, requests for replacement/lost or stolen cards can also be requested online.</p>