What you told us in 2009 and what we did...
Customer Services

You said...

The Council’s efforts towards accessibility (access to buildings for wheelchair users, meeting other specific needs and providing for those whose first language is not English) were recognised.

65% rated the telephone as their preferred method of contacting OCC, whilst 28% preferred email.

The top three reasons for this contact were to report a problem (37%), get advice or information (26%), or request a service (23%).

34% of queries were about waste and recycling, followed by Environmental Health (11%) and Planning (11%).

71% of respondents were satisfied with the length of time it took to see an advisor and 75% were satisfied overall with customer service they received. However 18% of respondents were dissatisfied with the length of time they had to wait to see a member of staff. 68% reported their query being dealt with at the time of their first contact.

Communications

You told us...

The majority of respondents obtained information about OCC through Council publications (65%), Local newspapers (47%) and the OCC website (37%).

86% of respondents were satisfied with the range of different communication methods open to them and 78% of respondents felt well informed about OCC services. 97% agreed that OCC publications were easy to understand.

When asked what their preferred method of consultation the majority of respondents (65%) reported postal surveys followed by online surveys (45%).

We did...

- We developed ‘Customers First’ which is part of our transformation programme, focused on putting customers needs at the forefront of our work, improve customer service and join up our work different departments.
- A Customer Contact Strategy has been developed that’s sets out where we are now, where we want to be in 2012 and what the key milestones are in our journey.
- This strategy identifies where we are now with reference to our current performance, sets targets for future performance, and gives details of the milestones that will indicate the achievement of our aspirations.

Our Website (www.oxford.gov.uk)

You told us...

- The majority of respondents were satisfied with most elements of the website.
- Areas with the highest levels of dissatisfaction related to ease of navigating around the site (31%) and site content being up-to-date.
- 66% of website users have not used the online payment options.
- The ability to do more things online (39%), and search for information about their house or specific locality (33%) were the top rated suggested improvements to the website.

We did...

- We have developed a new website with the aim of making it easier to use. The new website was launched in November 2009 on time and on budget (www.oxford.gov.uk).
- We have launched a new payments system that makes it easier for you to carry out transactions at any time that is convenient for you (www.oxford.gov.uk/payments).
- We have created a large number of online transactional forms on our website using our new eForms system that will enable you to report a wide range of issues such as graffiti, abandoned vehicles, and missed bins, as well as applying for services such as requesting pest control or a Council garage to rent.

New forms are being added to the website all of the time, and in the longer term these forms will integrate with our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which will enable you to track the progress of any issues reported without having to contact us again.

- Our new website has an improved accessibility function which users can tailor according to their specific needs, e.g. font size and text colour. There is also a ‘speak the page’ function that allows users to hear the page being spoken aloud.
- Following on from your comments about the search facility being unsatisfactory, we now have an improved ‘search’ facility that will help you find the information you are looking for.
- We have upgraded our facility which allows you to find information about your home and specific locality (www.oxford.gov.uk/localview).
Council Priorities

Initially respondents were asked to rank individual services within the six priorities. The six priorities are listed below:

- More housing, better housing for all
- Tackle inequalities and support communities
- Improve the local environment, economy and quality of life
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Tackle climate change and promote sustainable environmental resource management
- Transform Oxford City Council by improving value for money and service performance

You told us...

- Services connected with crime, the city environment and environmental management were considered to be a high priority by the largest number of the respondents.
- Within these priorities, the following services were considered to be a high priority by 60% or more of respondents:
  - Free bus travel for pensioners
  - Social and economic regeneration in deprived areas
  - Keeping the streets clean and free of litter
  - Maintaining parks and green areas
  - Providing public toilets
  - Working with the police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in the City
  - Waste collection
  - Recycling collection

Having completed this exercise respondents were asked to name their three highest priorities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Work with the police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in the City</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Keep the streets clean and free of litter</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Support social and economic regeneration in deprived areas</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We did...

We used the results to develop our budget for 2010/2011. By finding out what is key to you, we hope to allocate spending in areas that are important to you. With limited financial resources we are unable to meet all your needs but where we can target resources to the areas that matter most to you, we will aim to do so.

Public Toilets

You told us...

- Top priorities for respondents were clean and tidy facilities (79.1%), facilities that were easy to find and close to public spaces (59.9%) and facilities being free of charge (51.8%).
- Most respondents felt there were too few public toilets in the city (42.5%). Nearly twice as many respondents use toilets in shops (66.4%) and restaurants/bars (66.1%) as use Council-run facilities.
- When asked if they were prepared to pay for toilet facilities 14.4% said yes and would be willing to pay 50p - while 55% answered ‘Yes, but I would not pay more than 20p’. 22.2% would not be prepared to pay for these facilities.
- The Westgate and Castle Street facilities were rated lowest with 51.8% and 59.2% respondents respectively rating these facilities as poor or very poor. The Town Hall facilities were considered the best with 78.6% of users rating them either good or excellent.

We did...

- Agreed to work with City Centre businesses to implement a Community Toilet Scheme over the coming year, which will lead to a higher number of good quality, conveniently placed toilets being available to members of the public over longer hours and free of charge.
- Re-launched the Council’s public toilets webpage with an interactive map showing the location and opening times of each site plus a list of which facilities are available at that site. The Town Hall toilets are included on this map as they are available to the public during normal opening hours.
- Keep closures to a minimum – only 3 toilets were permanently closed in Oxford due to low usage and/or poor condition. These included the facilities that the panel rated as the least visited (Headington Hill Park) and the least popular (Castle Street).
- Provided additional training for our toilet cleaning staff in order to gain a nationally recognised qualification and ensure that they are fully able to keep Oxford’s toilets clean to the necessary high standards.
- Kept all of our existing facilities free of charge.
- Decided to pursue a major refurbishment of the Gloucester Green toilet facilities in order to increase the number of cubicles and raise the facility to a World-Class standard.
Recycling in the City

You told us...

- For the majority of respondents the overall environmental impact of the service was the driving factor behind satisfaction levels, followed by being able to dispose of recycling on a weekly basis.
- Comments on the recycling service centred on four main areas: the need for clarity of instructions for the contents of each container, care and tidiness by refuse collectors, a desire for weekly collections and a greater number of recyclable materials, especially plastics.
- Preferences were shown for the following containers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Preferred Recycling Container</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glass bottles, jars and newspaper</td>
<td>Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cans, plastic bottles and cardboard</td>
<td>Wheelie bin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden waste</td>
<td>Hessian sacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other waste</td>
<td>Wheelie bin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We did...

- We are in the process of assessing the current provision of waste and recycling to ensure we are offering the best value for money service that we can. We are also exploring ways to extend the range of materials that we can recycle.

Advice Centres

You told us...

- 59% of respondents were aware there are advice centres in Oxford – leaving 41% not being aware.
- The most popular sources of advice, and many used more than one, were the Internet (37%), ‘Other’ means (36%) and Local Authority (29%). Only 14% cited advice centres as a source they use.
- The majority of those attending advice centres went to the Citizens’ Advice Bureau (52%), followed by OCC Customer Service Advice Centre (24%) with other outlets poorly represented.
- Nearly two thirds were aware of advice and were very supportive of their role. The main complaint against advice centres was that their whereabouts and functions were not sufficiently publicised.
- The advice most used was the Citizens Advice Bureau. 70% of CAB users rated the service good or excellent, although some respondents noted there was a heavy demand on their services and this sometimes made it difficult to contact them or secure an appointment.

We did...

- 2010-11 is the last year of a 3 year funding agreement with the advice centres in Oxford. During this final year we will be reviewing the needs and priorities for these services to ensure they meet the needs of the local community. Your feedback will help us with this process.

Community Safety

You told us...

- Your fears about the "top 3" crime types have fallen since last year. Domestic burglary, theft from a vehicle and being mugged still remain the crimes that people are most worried about in Oxford, but fewer people are worried about them compared to in 2008.
- The “top 3” types of anti-social behaviour that you think are the biggest problems in your area are: rubbish and litter on the street, speeding vehicles or dangerous driving, and cars parked dangerously or illegally. Residents in Cowley, East Oxford and the South East of the city are more likely than other respondents to rate anti social behaviour as a fairly or very big problem in their area.
- 28% of respondents know who their Neighbourhood Police Team are, compared to only 9% in 2007, and 43% know how to contact their Neighbourhood team, compared to 21% in 2007.
- 4% of respondents think that alcohol related anti-social behaviour is a very big problem in the city centre during the day, whilst 35% believe that it is a very big problem in the city centre at night.
- 42% of respondents believe that the police and Oxford city are dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour issues that matter in their area; this is an improvement on 39% in 2008.

We did...

- Continued to run our successful target hardening scheme, offering increased security measures to those who have been burgled. In addition, as many victims of burglary are students, we have been working with Thames Valley Police to roll out Operation Bachelor to educate students on personal safety and how to protect their valuables. We attended the Oxford University Freshers’ Fair, providing advice and demonstrating how to security mark property.
- Set up Student Watch - a scheme that provides local email updates for students on how to reduce their chances of becoming a victim of crime. Over 500 students have initially signed up for this scheme. If you are interested in joining Student Watch, please visit: http://www.safexoxford.org/index.asp
- Many anti-social behaviour issues are being addressed by the 12 Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGS) that have been set up around Oxford. As part of Cleaner Greener Oxford, Blackbird Leys had a community clean up day where Oxford City Council, Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire County Council and many voluntary agencies worked together to clear up litter hot-spots.
- Many NAGs have involved their Neighbourhood Policing Teams by organising a number of high-profile operations to target speeding drivers and those drivers who drive without tax or insurance. Some NAGs have parking issues as one of their local priorities. For example in Wood Farm, several of the Neighbourhood Police Team were prominent outside Windmill Primary School and Wood Farm Primary School at drop-off and pick-up times, to give parents safety advice about where they park their cars.
- We will continue to raise awareness of local Neighbourhood Police teams and how to contact them – via poster campaigns and the Thames Valley Police website - www.thamesvalleypolice.uk/yoursite.htm
- We will continue to operate the Nightsafe scheme – a high visibility policing operation in the city centre and East Oxford that runs on Friday and Saturday nights, and has had success in decreasing violent crime. Oxford Nightsafe has recently been working alongside partner agencies and local private hire firms on a new alcohol awareness campaign, and images encouraging people ???
Thank you to everybody that took part in Talkback in 2009. We look forward to hearing more of your views in 2010.

To read the reports that accompany any of the Talkback surveys please go to our website at:
www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation