Kawartha Lakes

Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number:	**CS2024-003**
Meeting Date:	March 5, 2024
Title:	**2023 Customer Service Annual Report**
Description:	An overview of the performance of the Customer Service Division in 2023
Author and Title:	Steve Babcock: Manager, Customer Service

Recommendation(s):

That Report CS2024-003 **2023 Customer Service Annual Report**, be received; and

That this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other:_____

Chief Administrative Officer:_____

Background:

The City's Customer Service Division has historically provided an annual update to Council with information on how well the City was delivering customer service. The annual cycle was disrupted due to shifting priorities during Covid.

In 2022, the Customer Service Division applied the Results Based Accountability (RBA) methodology to establish meaningful performance measures to provide a better customer experience and better efficiencies and more accountability. Throughout 2023, the Customer Service Division has been monitoring performance, establishing targets, and identifying continuous improvement initiatives focused on meeting and exceeding targets. These performance measures and targets will be detailed later in the report and highlighted in Appendix A.

At the Council Meeting of June 20, 2023, staff presented an update on a Community Hubs Strategy and performance measures. Within this presentation, staff committed to bring back an annual update on customer service performance during the first quarter of each calendar year.

At the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 6, 2024, staff provided members of Council with an introduction to the City's Customer Experience Strategy. Innovation and data driven decision making was identified as one of the five values in the strategy. As a result, performance measurement is one of the key themes identified throughout the Customer Experience Strategy.

Rationale:

The Customer Service Division is committed to building trust and confidence in our customers by creating a regular cycle of performance reporting. The RBA tool has helped ensure that the performance measures that staff are monitoring are meaningful to customers. The RBA tool asks the following performance measurement questions. Those questions are:

1. Who are your customers and what do they want?
2. How much do we do?
3. How well do we do it?
4. Is anyone better off?
5. How are we doing on the most important of these measures?
6. Who are the partners that have a role to play in helping us do better?
7. What can we do to improve and what do we propose to do?

Through the RBA exercise, staff were able to identify meaningful performance measures that are monitored regularly. Targets have been established using industry benchmarking best practices. All customer service performance measures have been themed into three areas: Customer Satisfaction, Call Centre Metrics, and Good Government. The performance measures that are currently managed include:

Customer Satisfaction

In June 2023, the City launched a new Customer Experience Feedback Survey. Results from this survey are used to measure performance as per below.

- Customer Satisfaction Score: Our target is to have 80% of respondents rate the service they received from the City as "good" or "excellent"

- Customer Effort Score: Our target is to have 75% of respondents rate the service they received from the City as very easy or easy

Call Centre Metrics

- Call Quality Score: The data for this performance measure is collected by scoring five random pre-recorded calls from each employee using a pre-established scoring matrix. The scores are averaged together to create a monthly team score. The monthly target has been set at 80%

The data for the following performance measures is collected using the City's telephone software.

- Service Level (SL): Our monthly target is 80/30, meaning we aim to answer 80% of all calls within 30 seconds

- First Contact Resolution Rate (FCR): All calls that come into the queue are filtered to determine if they meet FCR eligibility. In order to meet FCR eligibility, the customer must have their inquiry resolved, without the need for the customer to call back, or be transferred to another department. Our first contact resolution monthly target is 75%

- Average Speed of Answer (ASA): The amount of time that a customer waits before speaking to a city employee is timed. The amount of time it takes for each call to be answered is then averaged. Our monthly target has

been set at 20 seconds

- Answer Rate (AR): All calls that are abandoned in the queue are divided by the total number of calls. Our monthly target is to answer 95% of all calls

Good Government

- Service Channel Distribution Rate: The data for this performance measure is collected using tracking volume of inquiries through each of the City's service channels. In person transactions are collected using the City's financial software, general inquiry volume is estimated. Telephone volume is tracked using the City's telephone software. Online volume is determined by collecting data from customer service email mailboxes. The annual target has been at:
  - in person 10%,
  - telephone 50%,
  - online 40%
- Budget Management Target: The divisional budget is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that costs stay within budget forecast

Data can be difficult to collect due to some system limitations. As a result, some measures that were deemed to be important through the RBA exercise are not currently being monitored. Such as measuring cost per interaction to determine how much it costs to deliver services through each of the City's service channels. As our data collection systems improve, additional performance measures will be added.

Regular reporting of performance measures to the Customer Service Division has increased transparency and allowed staff to easily know what is expected of them. This has resulted in increased performance across the team and a more consistent delivery of service. Many improvements have been implemented in 2023 as a result of the team exploring new ways to hit performance targets. Some of the improvements that have been implemented include:

- Updated job descriptions to clearly identify who does what
- Cross training staff across all service centers to provide more flexibility in managing unscheduled absences.
- Delegation of duties to reassign online inquiries and online sales to front line staff

- Cross training from other service areas to reduce unnecessary transfers
- Streamlined operations at all Service Centres using lean tools
- Supporting Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA) to maximize efficiencies across the customer service team
- Enhanced knowledge base tools to increase first contact resolution
- Improved team communication through instant messaging Zoom chat
- Improved work culture that encourages teamwork and building strong customer relationships
- Strengthening relationships with key partners, including Council

Enhancements implemented throughout the year have resulted in an improvement in performance, which was realized in Q4, 2023 and has carried over to 2024. Although some regression is expected, the customer service team is well positioned to exceed performance expectations in 2024. The Customer Service Division will be focusing on implementing the following priorities in 2024:

Improve Accessibility
- New Customer Service channel pilot – social media
- Service Centre Modernization Strategy

Improve Partnerships
- Customer Experience Hot Team
- Collaboration opportunities with Council

Improve Community Trust
- Customer Service profiles

Improve Transparency
- Customer Service performance dashboard

Other Alternatives Considered:

There are no other alternatives considered at this time.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities:

The recommendations in this report align with the following strategic priority within 2020-2023 Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan:

Good Government – Regular reporting of our performance increases our transparency and accountability, which has a positive impact on efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery across all City services.

Customer Service performance measures and actions are developed with the City of Kawartha Lakes Guiding Principles at the forefront. Service Excellence, Partner and Collaborate, Fiscally Responsible, and Open and Transparent form the Customer Service decision making process.

The Strategic Plan is available on SharePoint at the following link:

[Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#)

Financial/Operation Impacts:

There are no financial or operational impacts associated with this report. Customer Service performance measures have been established by City staff, eliminating any need for consultation funding.

Consultations:

Municipal Service Delivery Officials (MSDO) – Community of Practice. Consultation with comparable Municipalities has occurred, and will continue to occur, to ensure municipal best practices are implemented.

Customer Service Division

Attachments:

Appendix A – Customer Service Annual Report Presentation

2023 Annual CS
Update - CoW.pdf

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