

# Medway Council

## How Medway Council improved customer satisfaction in 4 months

Medway Council is the unitary local authority for Medway in Kent, England. The contact centre has 80 Officers providing 30 local government services. It is a training ground for people to move into other jobs in the council.



### The Challenge

Medway Council's Initial Contact Team had a longstanding but dated approach for receiving and tracking customer satisfaction. The process was time consuming, response levels were low and it was often difficult, because of the general nature of the feedback provided, to draw a link between the customer experience and individual performance.

### The Solution

Bright Navigator was implemented to enable immediate customer feedback to be collected and shared with staff. The reporting capability is giving instant access to customer feedback as well as individual and team performance and trends, highlighting great performance and areas for improvement. Customer Contact Officers can see their own performance in real-time and compare against that of their colleagues.

### The Result

Medway Council has seen a 6-fold increase in completed surveys, giving a more accurate view of customer satisfaction. This has enabled them to further improve CSAT in just four months. The new process has resulted in a reduction of 0.8 FTE and that time is now more positively invested in using feedback and data to inform and drive continuous improvement. Staff now have a better understanding of the customer experience and as a result customer satisfaction is benchmarking ever more positively against others.

*“Using Bright has delivered improved C-SAT results with staff now having improved visibility and understanding the factors that determine customer satisfaction.”*

Martin Garlick, Head of Customer Contact

### Realising change

Previously, call centre customer feedback was gained mostly over the phone, but it was also becoming apparent that people weren't always completely open in their feedback when speaking to a real person. Not only this, but they were using out-dated paper-based

systems to document the customer feedback, which was making it an arduous and slow process when trying to collate data and ascertain trends. This process, coupled with the fact that individual Officer feedback was only possible when the customer remembered the Officer's name, made it very difficult for Officers to have any kind of idea as to where their own performance was in relation to the rest of the team.

Sam Best, previously Business Improvement Officer for Customer Contact and now in the digital transformation team at Medway Council, explains, “we wanted to look for alternatives but we didn't know where to start. By chance we attended a workshop with one of Bright's customers, and they recommended Bright to us. We did our own research on their solutions and decided Bright Navigator was the tool for us.”

### Solving two key problems

There were two main issues that Medway Council were looking to solve: 1) improving the process of getting feedback from customers, and 2) streamlining the collation and analysis of the feedback to enable performance improvements. Both were addressed by implementing Bright Navigator.

Previously, it was time consuming to manually call customers for feedback. Bright Navigator has automated the process, saving them time and money on a full-time employee for this role, as well as increasing the quantity and quality of the feedback being gathered.

Now, after a call, Bright Navigator kicks in and asks three simple questions around speed of answer, first contact resolution and general satisfaction.

*“The results speak for themselves: 6-fold increase in surveys completed, improved CSAT in four months and a saving of 0.8 FTE time.”*

Zoe Bowles, Senior Customer Contact Officer

Zoe Bowles, Senior Customer Contact Officer at Medway Council, said, “we are now getting feedback instantly from customers. Combined with a six-fold increase in surveys completed, the feedback is much more accurate and relevant, especially in the verbatim comments, which means our Officers are able to learn and develop their soft skills, as well as their knowledge.”

“With Bright Navigator, Officers are more in control of their performance than they were, as their statistics are available on a day-to-day basis and they can seek support quicker from their Senior Officer if needed. They can see their performance against their team’s average, as well as the average for the whole floor, which is information they would never have had access to before.”

Medway Council measure Officers against six different areas: general customer satisfaction, knowledge, professionalism, average talk time, average call handling time and work time. The Officers are measured against the team target, which is set as the team average. This means it is a moving target and provides real motivation to ensure they are always ahead.

## Being alerted to performance

The contact centre team have been utilising the tool’s alert feature to carry out targeted call monitoring, rather than the random call monitoring they carried out before. Senior Officers are alerted when a customer has been very satisfied, or very unsatisfied, which prompts them to listen to the call to review what may have given that customer feedback result. They can even ask the relevant Officer to listen to the call and reflect on it.

*“We can now easily identify areas of improvement.”*

Sam Best, Business Improvement Officer

“We are finding the alert feature a great asset in being able to motivate the team,” said Zoe. “The intelligence the tool is giving us means that Senior Officers are able to easily identify areas for improvement such as additional training if an Officer is getting poor feedback, as well as recognising achievements and having more opportunity to praise Officers and create a more positive working environment. This all ultimately drives a better customer experience.”

## Improving performance with evidence

The second key challenge that has been resolved with the Bright system is in the ability to collate and analyse the feedback from customers. Martin Garlick, Head of Customer Contact at Medway Council, takes up the story: “having the tools to see the correlation between feedback and performance has been invaluable. We simply weren’t able to do that before because everything was disjointed and considered in isolation of each other. Bright has allowed us to join everything up”.

*Being able to correlate performance and C-SAT has been invaluable.”*

Zoe Bowles, Senior Customer Contact Officer

Zoe responded with an example: “Senior Officer’s would typically spend an hour doing preparation work for an individual monthly one-to-one review, which quickly adds up when there are 80 Officers on the floor. This task can now be done at a click of a button with Bright Navigator, enabling those 80 hours to be put to better use in additional coaching,”

“Bright has become our hub for performance,” continues Zoe. “I can pull 6 months’ data for an Officer at a drop of a hat. We log all our interactions with Officers in Bright Navigator, which means it’s easy to look back at past reviews and Officers are more engaged with their performance reviews. It’s created a much more open and supportive culture.”

Sam recognised the reporting capability from the outset. “The report outputs from Bright Navigator are really striking. They give us the whole picture; making the relationship between professionalism and satisfaction more apparent. The intelligent correlations provide us with confidence to make decisions on what needs improving.”

Bright Navigator gives Medway Council more than just their own performance data. Using the Bright Index, the council can benchmark their performance against their peers in local authorities, and also against other Bright customers.

## Seeing notable results

“One of the first things we noticed was that we thought we knew how our Officers were performing,” said Sam. “However, we discovered that some weren’t doing as well as we thought. . . Zoe reveals more: “the statistics are more real than they used to be; for example we have always been able to measure wait time, but now we can demonstrate the impact

on the customer experience. And I’m pleased to say that in the first months working with Bright, Medway Council saw a further increase in general customer satisfaction.

“Combine this with the time saved in analysing the data into more intelligent information and we have seen an ROI within weeks,” added Martin.

## Surprising outcomes

Bright Navigator gives Medway Council access to much more than they bargained for. Using the information they now have access to, they can better assess the tools and resources that the contact centre has and ways these can be improved. This is what Zoe said:

“The evidence we now have is empowering us to improve our staffing levels based on call demand, deployment on different lines and providing statistical analysis for our service areas with the impact they are having on the customer. For instance, most calls follow a script. But in some cases it is highlighted through our customer feedback that the information and links held in those scripts could be improved. This prompts the team to review and identify where they can make improvements in these resources.”

Another area that has improved is how and where the Senior Officer team focuses their discussions. Zoe reveals more: “When we first started using Bright we used to look at the bottom ten Officers’ results for the key areas we were assessing them against. It would identify those that needed the most support and where. We then moved to look at the top ten Officers across the same areas, and now publish this to the whole floor. This has created a positive competitive environment where the identification and sharing of best practice is as an important part of our improvement tool kit as identifying and responding to points of weakness.”

Bright Navigator has also supported the initial training of new Officers. Zoe explains, “whilst in the incubation period, where calls are limited and call handling is more actively supported, Officers are able to monitor their performance and improve it before being released into mainstream, stopping any bad habits before they form. The impact is that many of the new Officers appear in the top ten results early on, giving the longer serving team members a run for their money.”

As for working with Bright, Martin said. “The quarterly meetings with our Account Manager are always thought provoking, providing helpful insight and challenge, that invariably adds value to our use of Bright. I would certainly recommend Bright to others.”

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