# Luton



# LBC Digital Services team case study



As part of our metrics reports, we will produce case studies demonstrating how the Digital Services team can increase efficiency for services within the council.

This month we will show changes to an online form have significantly saved time and money for the Business Intelligence team.

# Background

The 'Comments, compliments and complaints' form on our website allows people to let the council know if we're doing something right or wrong, or to make a formal complaint. It is one of the most commonly used forms on our website, usually featuring in the top five. Statistics for the last six months are as follows:

| Month | Submissions |
|--------|-------------|
| Dec 16 | 139 |
| Jan 17 | 195 |
| Feb 17 | 174 |
| Mar 17 | 202 |
| Apr 17 | 192 |
| May 17 | 215 |

The Business Intelligence (BI) team contacted us regarding the 'comments' option in the form. Complaints and compliments were still to be dealt with by BI, but we were asked to find a way to send comments or service requests directly to the appropriate department.

The BI spent approximately two hours per day, dealing with around 500 emails per month relating to these comments, including:

- forwarding form submissions to the relevant department, where it is a comment instead of a complaint or compliment
- sending chasing emails
- sending and replying to follow-up emails

# Changes to comments

An additional stage was added to the beginning of the form, asking people if they wanted to make a comment, compliment or complaint:



We then amended step 3 of the form to include a more comprehensive list of services to choose from when telling us what they are contacting us about:

Step 3 of 4
## Details of contact

What are you contacting us about today? *
- Abandoned vehicles
- Admissions and appeals
- Business rates
- Concerns about the welfare of a child
- Concerns about the welfare or abuse of an adult
- Council buildings (other than council houses)
- Council housing repairs
- Council tax
- Council vehicles
- Customer services
- Electoral registration (registering to vote)

We then added 29 conditions to the form so that if the user selected had option 1 in step 1, tell us about something we have failed to do, or not done to your satisfaction, the submission PDF would be sent directly to the service instead of BI team. Each condition added told the system which email address the submission would be sent to, based on the service selected by the user in step 3.

For example, if the user selected 'council housing repairs', the email would be sent to housing.repairs@luton.gov.uk.

This will save approximately **500 manual hours** per year for the BI team as they will no longer be the 'middle man' for comments and service requests submitted through this form.

## Changes to complaints

In addition, we made changes that would ensure people were certain they wanted to use the complaints option of the form. In many cases, this option was used to make comments about services, ie telling us about something we have failed to do, or not done to their satisfaction, rather than a **formal** complaint.

To ensure this option was only used to make a formal complaint, we added the work 'formal' to the description and added a display condition to step 1. If the user still selected the complaint option, the following text and link to our formal complaints procedure would display.



Download a copy of our complaints process here.

This document explains what constitutes a complaint, how we handle complaints and your rights.

Reading this will help you to decide if you wish to lodge a formal complaint, or whether you wish to take a less formal route by telling us about something we have failed to do, or not done to your satisfaction (first option from list above).

Please confirm you wish to lodge a FORMAL complaint with us. *
- Yes, I wish to lodge a FORMAL complaint
- No I do not wish to lodge a formal complaint

Adding the confirmation field before they could move on to complete the remainder of the form should ensure that the user is absolutely certain they want to go down that route, instead of simply making a comment.

## Conculsion

These relatively simple changes took approximately **seven hours** (including testing and alterations) and cost **£98** in Digital Development Officer time, but will save BI team a total of **500 hours** and **£8,918.91** - two hours/ day spent dealing this type of query at L6 rate.

**This is an overall saving for the council of £6,8220.**