



# CUSTOMER SERVICES

POST COVID COUNCIL

## Pre COVID

The most public facing of a council's service and the point of contact where citizens instinctively deal with their local authority. This was a centre for people to drop-in with emergencies, and was positioned very much as the beating heart of an authority. Whether for homelessness enquiries, queries on assistance with Council Tax, benefits or just to pick up forms and ask questions, customer service was at the centre of Council as a first point of contact, to encourage and assist citizens with service provision.

## COVID Challenge

In a COVID-19 world, allowing the Customer Service centres to open for drop-ins will become a virtual impossibility. Queuing systems will become obsolete in the short-term, as allowing groups of people to wait for their appointment will be difficult to manage and potentially irresponsible, even if we could have lines of people queuing the street.

With this in mind, pre-arranged appointment slots will become vital. These will be needed for people attending appointments, and will be needed to switch some appointment types to outgoing call based discussions (its vital to ensure people are somewhere quiet and have their information ready...no point ringing if someone is doing their food shop).

For face-to-face appointments, strict controls will be needed, allowing the best-use of interview rooms where more private conversations can

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be handled. Dropping-in as your passing in the street will become less likely; as the need for the fewest number of people possible attending the appointment will be key to maintaining all social distancing rules. Parents with children will be much more limited on their ability to attend, as they will need to ensure that the children can be looked after. It won't always be possible, nor desirable for children to accompany parents to appointments, but with grandparents and schools currently unavailable, further planning and good use of resources will be needed to ensure extenuating circumstances can be accounted for. The council telephone hotline seen in many places where I can walk in make a call and speak to departments will be impossible, unless someone is present to clean receivers and phones between public calls, so an appointment will even need to be made for that purpose.

## How Zipporah can assist with the issue

- With Zipporah's assistance, Dublin City Council introduced appointment bookings for their customer service centre in just two-weeks.
- Appointment bookings for customers will become vital. This will include both those attending appointments on site and those who may be contacted by phone
- Phone based appointment systems will become vital to ensure that customers are informed and reminded of details they need to have ready and when to expect a call
- The ability to upload documents against appointments will become increasingly relevant so that information can be reviewed before calls/visits
- The ability to set tasks your customers must perform before appointments (such as filling in and loading forms) or to set tasks that customer service or departments will need. These can act as tick lists and reminders for all
- The ability to allocate a room against specific appointments should there be rooms needed for private discussions. These rooms will need to be allocated as priority and will need to be big enough to allow social distancing or have screens to separate the citizen from the council staff
- Appointment confirmations can include forms for completion and very specific instructions to ensure that citizens follow and arrive as required
- Self-arrival will become more necessary, potentially from the customers own mobile devices, as floor walkers will become increasingly difficult to operate without PPE. Self-arrival kiosks will only be operational if cleaning time between people is operated which becomes difficult as things become busier. Therefore a self-arrival that can be accessed online from the customers own phone for use to arrive no more than x minutes before their appointment may become more vital

## Features & Benefits

**Keep necessary parties informed** of arrivals – reducing queuing at reception, and allowing people to check-in themselves, reducing the shared contact of hard surfaces.

**Flexible and scalable** – as you learn more about your own services, you can up or down-scale your provision to suit you, and the changing circumstances of the social distancing measures.

**Public facing browser based 24/7/365** - empower your citizens to access yours services when it suits them. No more 9-5, no more hold-music during peak periods.

**Improve customer journey** – faster, more efficient access to information and services, reducing the need to visit offices where possible.

**Manage the information you need** to capture when booking – no one knows your service better than you do, and as you learn more about your service and your resident habits, you can manage your own content – quickly and without needing to contact I.T. or your solution provider.

**Control the complexity** of your appointment booking process – ensure that you're always in control of what your own services.

100%

100% of arrivals in Hammersmith and Fullham council use Zipporah's self-arrival system

## Learn more about our Post Covid Council services

**Canteen Services**

**Customer Services**

**Environment Services**

**Finance & Accounting**

**Housing Services**

**Internal Services**

**Leisure, Outdoor Gatherings  
& Activity Centres**

**Library Services**

**Licensing & Trading Standards**

**MOT, Vehicles & Licensing**

**Parks & Highways**

**Registrars Services**

**Social Care Services**

**Sports & Venues**

**Training Services**

**Launch Post Covid Council**