

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL INDICATOR SET TECHNICAL HANDBOOK - RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

**Name and address of responding organisation:  
Devon County Council**

**Is this your organisation's official response to the consultation? Y/N**

**Name and phone number of key contact in case of follow-up queries:  
Simon Kitchen - 01392 386899**

**National Indicator Number:**

**14**

***Please complete a separate form for each indicator on which you wish to respond***

<b>Indicator Issue</b>	
<b>1. Is the Technical Definition of this indicator clear?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>If NO</p> <p>a. What aspects of the technical definition of the indicator are unclear? Please specify clearly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is it in relation to the measurement method, or</li> <li>- on reporting</li> </ul> <p>b. Please suggest how the template can be clarified/improved.</p>	<p><b>a. 14 - Avoidable contact - The average number, of customer contacts per resolved request. - The definition of both resolved and requests is not clear. Does a resolution mean that the client is satisfied? Or that they need not take further action? Or until the clients issue is solved? For example a pothole, or a request for a by-pass may take months to resolve?</b></p> <p><b>b. A better definition to determine Avoidable Contact would be % of contacts that could have been avoided. Criteria for this could then be broken down into a clear list of what contacts are identified to be avoidable.</b></p>

<p><b>2. Does the Technical Definition for this indicator have any unintended consequences?</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If YES  a. What are the unintended consequences on this national indicator?  b. Can the unintended consequence be avoided? If so, how?</p>	<p><b>A lack of consistency of reporting across Authorities.</b></p>
<p><b>3. Will the Technical Definitions for this indicator work in practice?</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If NO  a. Why would this technical definition not work in practice?</p>	<p>Each organisation will have different ways of determining both contact levels, resolution and request. Similarly organisation will have a range of sophistication of workload management tools and CRM tools therefore most will not be able to determine at what point each issue has been resolved and further the individual link between contacts that a full organisational CSM would give.</p>
<p><b>4. Is this indicator defined at the right spatial level?</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>a) If not, what level should it be defined at? (including whether information is already gathered and/or reported at that level and if so where, if not, estimated cost of collecting and reporting it)</p>	<p>Criteria for this should be determined to a further level of granularity.</p>

<p><b>5. Should data for this indicator be provided for any or all of the different equalities strands (please tick the relevant box)?</b></p>	<p>Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Gender <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Religion <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Age <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sexual orientation <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disability <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other <input type="checkbox"/> (Please specify)</p>
<p>a) For any boxes ticked at 5, is this information already gathered and/or reported and, if so, where? If not, what would be the estimated additional burden of collecting and reporting it?</p>	<p>This should not be required as each service area that is required to capture these elements of data will be able to cross reference this with the avoidable contact level of the service itself.</p>
<p><b>6. Further comments on the questions above and /or any other comments that are not covered above questions.</b></p>	
<p>Additional comments from other colleagues:</p> <p>Is a satisfied request for a form a separate contact from the customer submitting the form for the service?</p> <p>What of hand-offs from a customer service centre to staff elsewhere in a council? These may be recorded on two separate systems, one CRM and one service-based customers file.</p> <p>How does a recorded visit to a website indicate whether the customer got the information they were looking for and distinguish from multiple visits seeking the information?</p> <p>The declared rationale is to promote "right first time" yet allows a "set of contacts for the same request" thus having no pressure to impact on a move to lean process management.</p> <p>A failure contact is limited to a customer chasing this up within 2 weeks.</p> <p>Clearly all a council needs to do to get a 100% rate is indicate to customers to expect the service to take over 2 weeks to deliver and all follow-ups will fall outside the time limit. This aspect is totally unacceptable.</p> <p>Even if all the above points receive satisfactory answers the whole of the data relies on accurate recording of a contact by many members of staff across LAs. It is widely recognised that these kind of codings are not completed consistently even where good guidance is available. It will be very easy to</p>	

record a contact as part of a set rather than as failure demand therefore simply the act of recording this for national reporting and publication will lead to perverse reporting. This will therefore diminish the quality of the data that could otherwise have been used honestly to inform actual improvement.

Completed versions can be sent to [niconsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:niconsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk). Hard copy responses should be returned to Local Government Quality and Performance Division, Zone J2, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Eland House, Bressenden Place, LONDON, SW1E 5DU.