

## **COMPLAINTS/COMMENTS/COMPLIMENTS – INFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENTS**

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### **Recommendation**

The Standards Committee is asked to:

Note the attached data and charts for the periods 1 April-30 June 2011 (Quarter 1), and 1 July-30 September 2011 (Quarter 2).

### **Corporate Implications**

The establishment and maintenance of complaints procedures is conducive to the discharge of the Council's various functions and as such are authorised by Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

There are no financial implications.

A robust complaints procedure assists in minimising the risks to the Council arising from complaints.

### **Policy/Community Plan Implications**

This report is relevant to the Council's organisational focussed priority of 'delivering value for money' and the sub section in respect of transforming the way we deliver services to ensure they are customer focused and perform well. This report proves an effective and important auditing tool in ensuring this priority is delivered.

### **Background**

Quarterly information is supplied to all business units which record complaints, comments or compliments on ServiceMail, and after consultation with managers, composite information for each Management Team and the Strategic Management Board. Further complaints statistics are also incorporated as Local Performance Indicators by the Policy and Research Unit.

### **Report**

The information and charts for the quarters are attached herewith and additional information has been added to the graphs to show the targets in place for the relevant time periods, as well as a spreadsheet showing a comparison with the quarters in the previous year for key indicators.

The information and charts for the quarter are attached herewith and additional information has been added to the graphs to show the targets in place for the relevant time periods. In addition a summarised report on LG Ombudsman complaints is also attached. The target in place for complaints responded to in target is 90% for this year, and feedback on customer satisfaction with response, customer satisfaction with outcome, and satisfaction with complaint handling are also now all 90%. The following are the priority areas for improvement and the results for this quarter for all business units within the Council:

- 1. Answering complaints within our corporate timescale of 10 working days**

Quarter 1: This quarter there was a total percentage of complaints within target of 87.34%, below target and a decrease from the last quarter.

Quarter 2: This quarter there was a total percentage of complaints within target of 86.6%, still below target (although within 5% of target).

## **2. Review of Complaints by business units to “Learn Lessons” and Improvements Made**

Quarter 1: For this quarter 70 complaints were received with only 9 complaints/comments reviewed by business units, and 3 improvements logged.

Quarter 2: For this quarter 67 complaints were received with 16 complaints/comments reviewed by business units, but only 1 improvement logged. It is still disappointing not to have more improvements as a result of complaints, but more complaints have been reviewed.

## **3. Customer Feedback Cards - Complaints**

The numbers of customer feedback responses will always be lower than the number of complaints received as these are sent out after our response.

Quarter 1: The numbers of customer feedback responses will always be lower than the number of complaints received as these are sent out after our response. This quarter has seen feedback logged for 23 out of the 70 items received. Feedback for this quarter with regard to outcome and complaint handling and speed of response all stands at 96%.

Quarter 2: The numbers of customer feedback responses will always be lower than the number of complaints received as these are sent out after our response. This quarter has seen feedback logged for 23 out of the 67 items received. Feedback for this quarter with regard to outcome stands at 87% satisfaction, complaint handling 96%, and speed of response stands at 100%. I have asked managers to try to make sure that more feedback is logged for the complaints from feedback cards sent out.

## **4. Complaints to the LG Ombudsman**

Quarter 1: There have been no findings of maladministration. There were 5 ongoing Ombudsman investigations.

Quarter 2: There have been no findings of maladministration. There are 2 current ongoing Ombudsman enquiries.

## **5. Compliments Logging**

Quarter 1: The total for compliments logged is 78 for this quarter. The single service area with the most compliments for this quarter is the CSC again with 12, with Development Management a close second with 11 and Environmental Services with 9.

Quarter 2: The total for compliments logged is 94 for this quarter, an increase of 17% from Q1. It is gratifying to see that we still have more compliments received than complaints. The single service area with the most

compliments for this quarter is Development Management with 20, then the CSC with 11, and Environmental Health with 8.

## **Comments from Management Teams**

### **Quarter 1:**

*Comments from Team 1 :*

There has been a change of personnel within Housing with responsibility for ServiceMail and ST agreed to discuss with the individual. All Heads of Service to reinforce with teams (i) the need to put complaints 'on hold' when a response is not going to be made within target (and complainant informed of new date), and (ii) the need to keep complainants informed.

*Comments from Team 2 :*

It is good to see the high level of satisfaction from people who have been through the complaints process as to speed, understandability and complaints handling.

### **Quarter 2:**

*Comments from Team 1 :*

Staff have been asked to ensure that feedback received on complaints is logged, as this is an important source of information when seeking service improvements.

*Comments from Team 2 :*

It is good that no complaints were responded to out of time, but it is noted that we may be losing an opportunity to share learning through low feedback and improvements arising from the complaints.

## **Conclusion/Future Work**

- (a) Following review of the statistics for Quarter 1, Housing will focus on improving their performance with regard to achieving a larger number of complaints responded to within target; and also to logging all compliments receive onto the ServiceMail system.
- (b) As with the Directors' comments above, I think that managers and teams need to focus on feedback from complaints, as more items should be logged on the records, and secondly that this feedback is reviewed, as well as the complaints themselves to see where improvements can be made as a result of the complaints.

- (c) Plans are being put in place with regard to the complaints procedure place for Red Kite Community Housing so that customers will be informed and have easy access to their new complaints procedure.
- (d) The Complaints Officer recently attended a presentation showing potential website improvements and how our mapping system could link in to a web form for complaints and service requests. This will be piloted shortly and if it is successful it is hoped to expand this to incorporate customer complaints.

### **LGO Wycombe DC Annual Review**

Please note the attached letter and LGO final statistics for the 2010-11 year. It should be noted that the LG Ombudsman received a 21% increase in complaints overall, but our figures show a decrease in investigations from 20 to 17 from 2009-10 to 2010-11.

### **Background Papers**

“Have We Got It Right” leaflet for the public.