

Complaints/Comments/Compliments - Information and Improvements

Contact Officer: Jean Roberts
Ext: 3202

Recommendation

The Standards Committee is asked to:

Note the attached data and charts for the periods 1 October – 31 December 2011 (Quarter 3).

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

This quarter there was a total percentage of complaints within target of 92.5%, above target and an improvement of 6% from the last quarter.

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

For this quarter 53 complaints were received with 13 complaints reviewed by business units, but only 1 improvement logged. It is still disappointing not to have more improvements as a result of complaints.

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. This quarter has seen feedback logged for 27 out of the 53 items received. Feedback for this quarter with regard to outcome stands at 77% satisfaction, complaint handling 81%, and speed of response stands at 86%. The speed of response percentage is disappointing as this is usually considerably higher. The speed of response does also have an impact on general complainant satisfaction as nationally it has been shown that customers are more satisfied with the outcome of the complaints if the response is quick.

4. Complaints to the LG Ombudsman

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

5. Compliments Logging

The total for compliments logged is 60 for this quarter, a reduction from Q2, but still more compliments than complaints. The single service area with the most compliments for this quarter is Development Management with 10, then the CSC with 9, and Environmental Health with 7.

Comments from Management Teams

No comments received this quarter from management teams other than Environmental Services, where it was noted that there were no trends emerging from the complaints recorded.

Comments from Strategic Management Board

The quarter 3 report was reviewed. There were more compliments than complaints and congratulations were extended to development management for the highest number of compliments this quarter (10). AGREED that all Services be reminded of the need to (1) log complaints (highlighted in the quarter 3 service performance report) and (2) review complaints to identify whether improvements are required.

Conclusion/Future Work

It will be interesting to see the impact of the removal of most of Housing services from the Council complaints statistics in the forthcoming months which should, of course, result in a reduction of complaints. However, there are still issues to be

resolved concerning the dealing of complaints for the residual Housing functions and there are concerns also with regard to the impact of Plan B reorganisations.

Background Papers

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