

Complaints/Comments/Compliments - Information and Improvements

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Wards affected: All

PROPOSED DECISION OR RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

The Standards Committee is asked to:

Note the attached data and charts for the periods 1 January – 31 March 2012 (Quarter 4).

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.

Executive Summary

Statistics and data appended herewith for information and noting.

Background and Issues

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 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 93%. 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 97 for this quarter, a large rise from Quarter 3! The single service area with the most compliments for this quarter is Development Management with 21, then Off-Street Parking with 16, and Environmental Health with 14. This is a very good result for the services concerned.

Comments from Management Teams

It is pleasing to see the number of compliments exceeding those for complaints, particularly for the regulatory services. There is a need however to ensure services continue to review the complaints they have received and to consider whether there are any service improvements that can be made.

Comments from Strategic Management Board

There was a large increase in compliments across the Council to 97 in total.

SMB has issued a reminder about the need to review any complaints to learn lessons and identify and log improvements.

Conclusions

(a) It will be interesting to see the impact of the removal of most of Housing services from the Council statistics in the forthcoming months which should result in a reduction of complaints.

(b) The Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints procedure for the Council will shortly be updated and circulated for comments.

Background Papers

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