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Compliments, Concerns and Complaints received 2018/19 – 2020/21

1. Purpose

This purpose of this report is to:

- compare concerns, complaints and compliments data across the three years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.
- advise of any corrective action taken to reduce or remove problems that led to a complaint being made.
- identify opportunities to improve public satisfaction with the services the Authority provides.

It includes details of the complaints that were upheld, corrective action taken to reduce or remove the problem and improve public satisfaction with the services we provide.

2. Scope

As the numbers of concerns, complaints and compliments received directly from the public is relatively low, data from the annual satisfaction survey 'After the Incident' is also included, to capture the perceptions of those experiencing an incident in the home or in non-domestic premises.

3. Concerns and complaints

There were no complaints arising from an information security incident and no complaints were investigated by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO) or the Information Commissioner, during this reporting period.

2018/2019 16 concerns/complaints were received, six of which were upheld:

- During training dirty water from a hose was sprayed onto a neighbour's window. – *Crews were advised to be cautious in considering wind direction when using water hoses in exercises.*
- Someone walked on a freshly painted fire hydrant and got paint on their shoes. - *This is an ongoing problem where it is unsafe to put anything around the painted area and, in most instances, the paint has dried before the technician has left.*
- The report of an incident, on the "latest incidents" on the website, was considered inaccurate. – *The householders felt that the incident was misreported and a correction was made.*
- An Authority driver pulled out into the path of a car. – *The driver was distracted and admitted liability. The driver was referred for refresher training.*
- The reporting of an arson finding with regard to a vehicle fire was delayed. – *The incident commander did not notify the change in incident cause. As a consequence, Thames Valley Police did not allocate a crime number immediately. The procedures have been reviewed to ensure that the correct actions are taken as soon as possible.*

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- The message explaining that the switchboard was closed over Christmas did not function. – *The message had been checked and was thought to be working. Additional checks will be made in future.*

2019/2020 There were 17, concerns/complaints five of which were upheld:

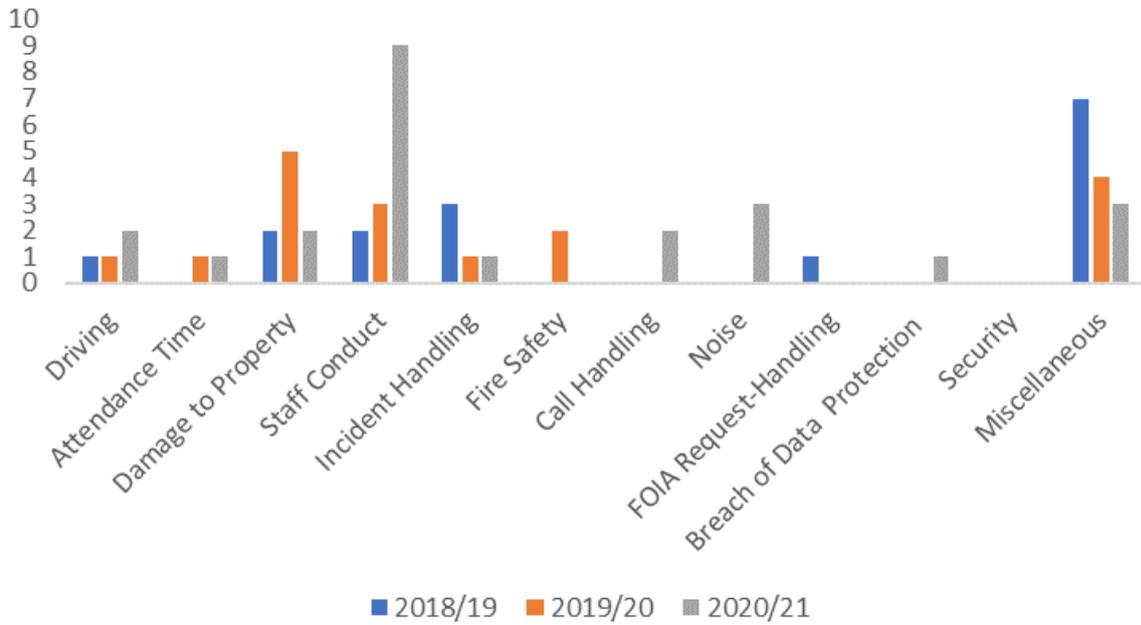
- Inappropriate use of social media which could be seen as bringing the Authority into disrepute. – *All employees reminded that social media cannot be used to present personal views whilst representing the Authority.*
- An Authority employee driving a badged vehicle was seen speaking on a mobile phone whilst driving. – *This was referred as a disciplinary investigation.*
- An officer failed to attend an appointment for a fire and wellness visit – *Officer fell sick and we were unable to make contact to advise the resident and reschedule the appointment.*
- A complainant stated that a uniformed firefighter approached him at his place of work and threatened him. – *This was found to be a family dispute. However, as the firefighter was in uniform, this was referred as a disciplinary investigation.*
- Following a visit by our contractors coming to collect scrapped vehicles, it was found that batteries had been put in the wrong place resulting in “sparking” which could have resulted in a fire. – *The procedure had changed under a new contract and the extant procedural document did not reflect this. This procedure has since been rewritten.*

2020/2021 There were 24, concerns/complaints five of which were upheld:

- Damage to a neighbouring property driveway by a fire appliance following a house fire – *cost of repair of damage paid under a settlement agreement.*
- Complaint from neighbour regarding training at a Fire Station on a Sunday – *training continued, but every effort was made to keep the noise to a minimum.*
- A member of the public was not happy with the way a member of staff spoke to them when ringing regarding smoke detectors – *a letter of apology was sent explaining the situation.*
- Damage to car when taking action to avoid a fire appliance on blue lights – *Insurance claim.*
- A vehicle accident involving a fire appliance – *Insurance claim.*

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Complaints 2018/19 - 2020/21



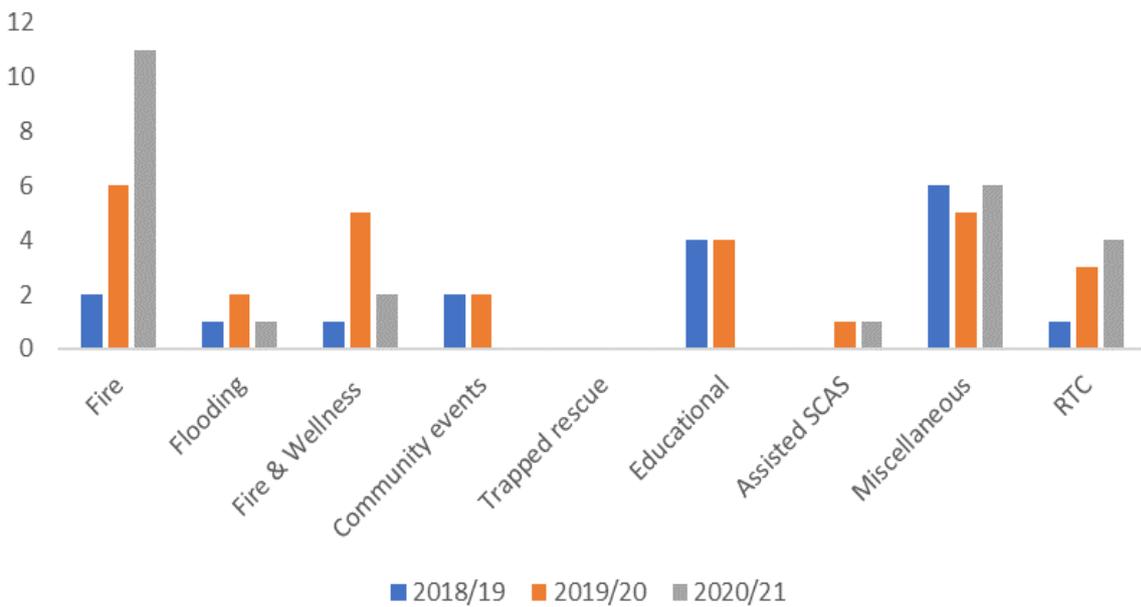
4. Compliments

2018/2019 - 17 compliments

2019/2020 - 28 compliments

2020/2021 - 25 compliments

Compliments 2018/19 - 2020/21



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5. After the incident - Customer satisfaction survey 2018/19 - 2020/21

The Authority continues to subscribe to the annual confidential survey which measures the satisfaction of members of the public who have experienced an incident in the home or in a non-domestic dwelling. The questionnaires are returned to an independent social research practice¹ who analyse the returns and publish the results annually.

The survey runs from 1 April to 31 March each year and the report compares Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services' (BFRS) performance with previous years and other fire and rescue services (FRS) participating in this national survey. The surveys capture respondent perceptions of FRS performance across the following areas:

- The incident;
- Initial contact with the FRS;
- At the scene;
- Information and advice;
- Overall service;
- Previous experience;

Respondents are also invited to make an overall assessment of satisfaction with the service provided.

These surveys are a good indication of how well the community is served when an incident occurs, and a useful supplement to the compliments, concerns and complaints, received from other sources, to provide a broader range of feedback.

Table 1 Domestic incidents 2018/19 – 2020/21

Domestic	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Respondents	51	140	207
Very Satisfied	92%	97%	94%
Fairly Satisfied	6%	2%	4%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	2%	1%	2%
Total:	98%	100%	98%

The list below are some of the comments submitted by people completing the survey of incidents in the home:

- Call out was very fast.
- Calm, friendly and reassuring manner.
- Caring, cheerful, excellent.

¹ <https://www.ors.org.uk/>

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- Friendly, courteous and determined to finish the job. Very impressed.
- Didn't make me feel stupid for calling them.
- Gave me confidence.
- Kind and helpful, reassuring that it was alright to call them out.
- Kept us informed.
- Reassuring, helpful, kind and polite.
- Surpassed the level of service I expected.

Table 2 Non-domestic incidents 2018/19 – 2020/21

Non-Domestic	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Respondents	61	128	106
Very Satisfied	90%	91%	94%
Fairly Satisfied	10%	9%	5%
Very Dissatisfied	0%	0%	1%
Total:	100%	99%	99%

The list below are some of the comments submitted by people completing the survey of incidents in non-domestic properties:

- Arrived very promptly.
- Excellent, polite service and communicated actions very well. Very reassuring and professional manner.
- Rapid attendance, sound advice and patient.
- Their knowledge of the building helped.
- They acted quickly and avoided damage to my property where they could.
- They were effective, polite, and professional at all times.
- Very polite and reassuring.
- Excellent response and service throughout. Thank you.
- Fast polite, professional and friendly.
- Rapid attendance, sound advice and patience.

Overview of Key Findings:

- Overall user satisfaction with the emergency service received from BFRS has remained fairly consistent over time, ranging between 95% and 100% for the domestic survey and 94% and 100% for the non-domestic survey over a ten-year period.
- A higher level of response to the Domestic survey was received in 2020/21 compared with the previous year (207 v 140). Overall satisfaction levels remained high although there was a fall-off in the very satisfied category (94% v 97%).

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- A lower level of response to the Non-Domestic survey was received in 2020/21 compared with the previous year (106 v 128). However, there was an improvement in very satisfied levels (94% v 91%).
- Benchmarking – not enough FRS took part in the survey for a benchmarking report to be produced for 2020/21.
- During the year a new online questionnaire facility was piloted alongside the traditional postal response service. However, take up for this new response facility was low with only 6 domestic and 7 non-domestic responses.