

APPENDIX 1

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: Chief Executive Delivery Unit

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Strategy & Communications and Regeneration and include:

- Issues with online council tax advice; errors with My Account; lack of contact numbers available
- Lack of action by staff within Regeneration Team
- Lack of communication with regard to consultations

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
Strategy & Communications	6 (18)	1 (1)	1 (1)	100% (100%)	- (1)	1 (1)	0% (0%)	- (0)	2 (0)	0% (0)
Regeneration Service	1 (2)	- (0)	1 (2)	100% (0)	- (1)	1 (1)	- (100%)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

Learning from upheld complaints as identified by the service includes:

- Strategy and Communications - A review of the Council Tax registration process outlined on the web page to ensure the advice provided is clear.
- Regeneration – To ensure residents are updated swiftly without any delays.

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: Chief Executives Office

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Corporate Finance, Democratic and Electoral Services, Complaints and Legal Services and include:

- Claim for damages to vehicle due to potholes, and how compensation payment was handled
- Data Protection breach due to papers sent to the incorrect recipient.
- Lack of contact from complaints team

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
Corporate Finance	6 (8)	0 (3)	2 (6)	0% (16%)	0 (2)	1 (2)	0% (0%)	1 (1)	2 (2)	0% (0%)
Democratic & Electoral Services	4 (4)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0% (0%)	1 (0)	2 (1)	0% (0%)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0% (0%)
Complaints	2 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	100% (0%)	0 (0)	0 (2)	0% (0%)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0% (0%)
Legal Services	0 (2)	0 (0)	1 (2)	0% (0%)	1 (1)	4 (2)	25% (50%)	2 (1)	2 (1)	50% (0%)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

Learning from upheld complaints as identified by the service includes:

- Complaints Team – Staff have been spoken to ensure residents/individuals are updated in a timely manner.
- Legal – A data protection breach has been addressed in line with HR procedures.

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: Children's Services

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Special Educational Needs and School Admissions and include:

- Lack of communication and the handling of SEN cases.
- Unhappy with school placements received, and online registration and process of notification of placement.

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
SEN	4 (3)	0 (0)	7 (0)	71% (0%)	1 (0)	1 (2)	0% (50%)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0% (0%)
Admissions	3 (10)	1 (1)	6 (3)	0% (66%)	1 (1)	1 (5)	0% (0%)	0 (3)	0 (3)	0% (33%)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

Learning from upheld complaints as identified by the service includes:

- SEN - Meetings arranged to discuss concerns which were then addressed by the SEN Case Management Panel.

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: Environment

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Waste & Recycling services (missed collection and non-return of bins).

- Bins not being collected on dedicated collection day
- Bins not being put back in the correct place

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
Missed bin collection	388	37	89	76%	22	28	68%	3	3	66%
	(226)	(24)	(47)	(85%)	(11)	(23)	(82%)	(3)	(4)	(50%)
Non return of bins	90	10	19	79%	4	5	60%	3	3	66%
	(41)	(8)	(12)	(83%)	(2)	(4)	(100%)	(0)	(0)	(0)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

Points to Note:

- **Missed Bins** - There has been an increase in concerns received for 2015/16 (388) compared with 2014/15 (226). There has also been an increase in Stage 1 complaints received for 2015/16 (89) compared with 2014/15 (47). Further root cause analysis must be undertaken to ensure service improvements are delivered, however Waste Management are of the view that the increase could be due to a number of factors (see below):
 - Bins not being presented to the kerbside in time for the collection or not presented at all. This is a normal year-on-year problem.
 - Bins are contaminated and are therefore not collected by the crews.
 - Blocked access to the road may have stopped the vehicle from accessing the road to enable the team to empty the bin. Waste are now exploring an in cab system that will report this information straight to the back office.
 - During Christmas 2015 the council brought forward the bin collections a day early which it has never been done before, and this caused confusion with many residents.

- 2015/16 is the first year that bins were collected on Bank Holidays and the Easter Bank Holiday collection would have fallen within 2015/16. This change may not have been picked up by many residents and a number would have continued to put out their bin a day later, at which point the bin would not have been collected.
- **Non-return of bins to the correct location** – There has been an increase in concerns received for 2015/16 (90) compared with 2014/15 (41). Waste Management are tackling this as an operational issue and throughout the year crews were reminded of the service standards via meetings, toolbox talks and on a team by team basis.
- During 2014 Environment implemented the use of “Love my Street” and “My Account” as a mechanism for residents to use to report service requests and other types of customer feedback. Since April 2015, approximately 11000 service requests have been recorded via these channels. Due to this, there may be a significant number of concerns that have been reported via these channels of which the Corporate Complaints Team were not aware of. However for 2016/17, a process has been established to ensure that concerns/complaints reported via these channels are retrospectively included within complaints reports.

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: HOUSING

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Housing remedial repairs, Transforming Homes programme, delays by contractors and service provision for homeless applications. These include:

- Quality of work in Transforming Homes programme, quality of work, attitude of contractors
- Damp and mould, lack of updates regarding progress, unable to speak with officers, delays by the contractor and quality of work
- Lack of updates, staff attitude
- ASB issues, no response to emails, delays with repairs to garage and incorrect advice being given.
- Repair works when property was void still not completed

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
Transforming Homes	38	7	48	79%	13	15	67%	3	6	33%
	(90)	(25)	(48)	(46%)	(18)	(26)	(81%)	(7)	(7)	(71%)
Repairs	660	79	447	77%	106	149	69%	40	46	13%
	(532)	(136)	(301)	(57%)	(100)	(121)	(55%)	(31)	(38)	(10%)
Housing Solutions	108	9	77	18%	19	31	29%	7	8	25%
	(98)	(16)	(44)	(18%)	(11)	(32)	(6%)	(3)	(4)	(0%)
Estate Management	157	13	79	49%	19	53	32%	14	18	22%
	(259)	(43)	(97)	(32%)	(27)	(55)	(31%)	(13)	(15)	(20%)
Voids	47	8	31	65%	14	15	47%	6	7	14%
	(23)	(3)	(17)	(41%)	(6)	(7)	(14%)	(3)	(3)	(66%)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

The Corporate Complaints Team will assess all cases where the resident requests an escalation of their complaint in line with the current procedure. If the assessment concludes that the case does not require formal investigation but feels that the service could undertake more work the complaint is returned for further action to the service.

Points to Note:

- **Transforming Homes** - There has been a decrease in concerns received for 2015/16 (38) compared with 2014/15 (90). However 79% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld and 67% of Stage 2 complaints are upheld. It should be noted that the total number of concerns/complaints received in the period (107) represents 0.6% of the total contacts required (17875) to complete these works. Despite this Housing are working on the following learning activities:
 - The Housing Department has implemented an enhanced inspection process for works in progress to address any concerns as they arise. The department is also closely monitoring the % of properties handed over by the contractors snag free.
- **Repairs** - There has been an increase in concerns received for 2015/16 (660) compared with 2014/15 (532). The reporting period has also seen an increase in Stage 1 complaints received for 2015/16 (447) compared with 2014/15 (301). Root cause analysis and discussions with Housing Management have identified the following:
 - A number of concerns escalated into complaints as residents reported that follow up works have not been completed. This is an area that Housing is working on closely with our partnering contractors to ensure the process is more robust and communications to residents are improved.
 - The reporting period has seen a change in contractor for dealing with Gas repairs. This resulted in an increase in complaints received in this area, due to a slower response from the new contractor in dealing with repairs, particular during the autumn/winter periods.
 - During March 2015 the council's new repairs policy was implemented. This resulted in some key changes in the way the council manage repairs which would have resulted in an increase in concerns/complaints being received. These changes included tenants now having responsibility for the maintenance of some internal property elements (and not the council) along with the batching of repairs relating to fencing/glazing/plastering instead of the council dealing with these as individual repairs.
- **Repairs** - 77% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld and 69% of Stage 2 complaints are upheld. However the following information should be taken into context:
 - The service has completed a total of 48,831 responsive repairs during 2015/16 and 1302 concerns/complaints have been received during the same period. This represents a concern/complaint rate of 2.7% based on the total number of repairs carried out (48,831).
 - Based on 3458 satisfaction surveys completed with residents, 86.4% of residents rate the repairs service as good or excellent.

- **Estate Management** - There has been a decrease in concerns received for 2015/16 (157) compared with 2014/15 (259). However 49% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld and root cause analysis has identified the following:
 - A number of upheld complaints were in relation to a lack of communications with tenants (e.g. not responding back to emails/phone calls).
 - A number of upheld complaints were in relation to contractor delays (e.g. tenant was informed that trees would be removed, however this did not take place due to delays from the appointed contractors).
- **Housing Solutions** - There has been an increase in Stage 1 complaints received for 2015/16 (77) compared with 2014/15 (44). Root cause analysis and discussions with Housing Management have identified that:
 - There has been a substantial increase in the number of households approaching the authority for homelessness assistance. In doing so there has been a corresponding increase in complaints.
 - The service has seen applicants, who have received a negative outcome from their statutory application or who have not been provided with a more immediate rehousing solution, lodging a complaint. However 18% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld
 - For those complaints upheld, a number relate to customers not feeling they have been kept updated regarding the status of their application or rehousing option. This has been identified as a service improvement area for Housing.

Data Quality Note – In last years (2014/15) annual report the figures for concerns and concerns escalated excluded Mears figures (under Repairs). However the above statistics have been amended to include Mears.

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: Planning & Transportation

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Planning advice, Planning decisions, and parking issues. These include:

- Length of time taken to respond to planning query
- Disputes over planning decisions made and not being able to speak with anyone in planning to discuss the application.
- Complaints about Civil Enforcement Officers
- Potholes, conditions of paths and lack of updates

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
Planning Advice	20 (12)	2 (3)	8 (9)	50% (11%)	2 (2)	4 (3)	25 (0%)	1 (1)	1 (1)	0% (0%)
Planning Decision	7 (14)	5 (2)	18 (8)	22% (12%)	9 (3)	9 (5)	33% (20%)	1 (3)	1 (4)	0% (0%)
Parking	57 (82)	4 (8)	17 (23)	6% (9%)	2 (5)	9 (15)	33% (27%)	3 (3)	3 (3)	0% (0%)
Road / path conditions	81 (58)	6 (5)	32 (11)	47% (27%)	8 (2)	9 (3)	33% (33%)	3 (0)	3 (1)	66% (100%)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

Learning from upheld complaints as identified by the service includes:

- Planning - Staff reminded to respond to residents in a timely manner and management of the generic mailbox to be revised. Call groups have also been updated to ensure telephone contact can be improved.
- Parking – Staff complaints dealt with in line with HR procedures
- Road /path conditions - Staff to improve communications with residents

DIRECTORATE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS SUMMARY: 2015/2016

DIRECTORATE: SERCO

Summary:

Top expressions of dissatisfaction relate to Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Sundry Debtors and Contact Centre and include:

- Complaints about enforcement action
- Delays in assessing housing benefit claims
- Attitude of staff within sundry debtors service
- Length of time on the telephone with the contact centre

	Concerns rec'd	Concerns escalated	S1 rec'd	% upheld	S1 escalated	S2 rec'd	% upheld	S2 escalated	S3 rec'd	% upheld
Council Tax	137	8	77	17%	17	37	13%	6	6	17%
	(167)	(21)	(55)	(22%)	(12)	(76)	(10%)	(6)	(7)	(0)
Housing Benefit	119	11	50	46%	9	16	21%	5	5	20%
	(109)	(13)	(39)	(36%)	(13)	(20)	(30%)	(2)	(3)	(0)
Sundry Debtors	25	4	28	12%	6	61	23%	7	7	14%
	(8)	(0)	(8)	(37%)	(1)	(11)	(9%)	(3)	(3)	(0%)
Contact Centre	17	1	10	50%	3	14	43%	2	2	0%
	(49)	(5)	(9)	(11%)	(0)	(8)	(50%)	(1)	(1)	(0)

*Last year's figures in brackets

Please note: The Complaints Team will investigate a complaint direct at stage 3 when an assessment of the case is deemed appropriate

Learning from upheld complaints as identified by the service includes:

- Benefits - Assessors to be more proactive when dealing with customers

Points to Note:

- **Council Tax** - There has been a decrease in concerns received for 2015/16 (137) compared with 2014/15 (167).

- **Debtors** - There has been an increase in Stage 2 complaints received for 2015/16 (61) compared with 2014/15 (11). However, in considering this comparison it is important to note that debt complaints often fluctuate in line with the volume of debt activity undertaken. Within 2015/16 increased initiatives have been introduced within the Sundry portfolio to enhance recovery rates, which has proportionally increased the number of complaints received. It should be noted that 23% (14) of Stage 2 complaints have been classified as upheld. Root cause analysis has identified that:

- Complaints were upheld in some cases by the Complaints Team, due to a form of acknowledgment within the complaints response that the customer service experience offered by Debtors Staff was not to the desired standard.
- However further discussions with the service have established that when producing Debtors complaints responses, a conscious effort is made to produce a balanced customer friendly response which can result in a misunderstanding as to whether the complaint is upheld or not. Going forward complaint classifications will be confirmed with the service.

Example – Statements are included along the lines of “*staff will be reminded of service standards*” when in some cases the call/case was handled professionally and appropriately by Debtors Staff.