

Report to Finance & Performance Sub-Committee

11th August 2016

By David Plank Customer Services Manager

INFORMATION REPORT

Not exempt



**Horsham
District
Council**

Complaints & Compliments Monitoring Report for Horsham District Council 1st April- 30th June 2016

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform the Finance & Performance Working Group of the details of the complaints and compliments notified to the Council's Complaints and Feedback Officer for the period 1st April to 30th June 2016. The intention is to learn from the feedback that the Council receives to prevent reoccurrence of complaints, improve Council services and promote areas of good practice.

For the period 1st April to 30th June 2016 the Complaints and Feedback Officer was notified of 56 complaints and the number of complaints received at the Council's leisure centres for the period was 127.

The trend of a decrease in complaints from the year 2015/16 has continued into the first quarter of 2016/17. I am pleased to report that the number of complaints received for this period has decreased by 48% from the same time last year.

Whilst there is always progress to be made, the use of root cause analysis and the Covalent software to rigorously monitor complaints, in terms of their content and how they are addressed has continued to yield positive results. For the third consecutive quarter we have recorded more compliments than complaints.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

- i) To Note the contents of this report and comment as appropriate.

Reasons for Recommendations

- i) To increase awareness of the Council's corporate complaints procedure and improve our learning and understanding from the complaints received.

Background Papers: Local Government Ombudsman's (LGOs) Guidance on Running a Complaints System, LGO Guidance on Good Administrative Practice, LGO Guidance on Remedies

Consultation: Director of Community Services & Monitoring Officer

Wards affected: All

Contact: David Plank, Customer Services Manager ext 5371

Background Information

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to show the number and type of complaints and compliments received by Council departments to identify trends and help monitor the situation. This excludes any representations, appeals or disagreements with Council policy – these are not classed as complaints under the Council's current definition of a complaint.

This report is intended for managers, staff and Councillors to help everyone at the Council learn and act upon customer feedback.

2 Statutory and Policy Background

2.1 Local Government Act 2000

Relevant Government policy

- 2.2 Current LGO Guidance recommends that information gathered from front line staff about complaints, questions and comments be collated and reviewed on a regular basis as it can be a valuable source of information about how users view service provision. This provides a mechanism for identifying emerging issues that might be addressed before they escalate into complaints.

Relevant Council Policy

- 2.3 The Council's complaints procedure is available on the Council's website and intranet.

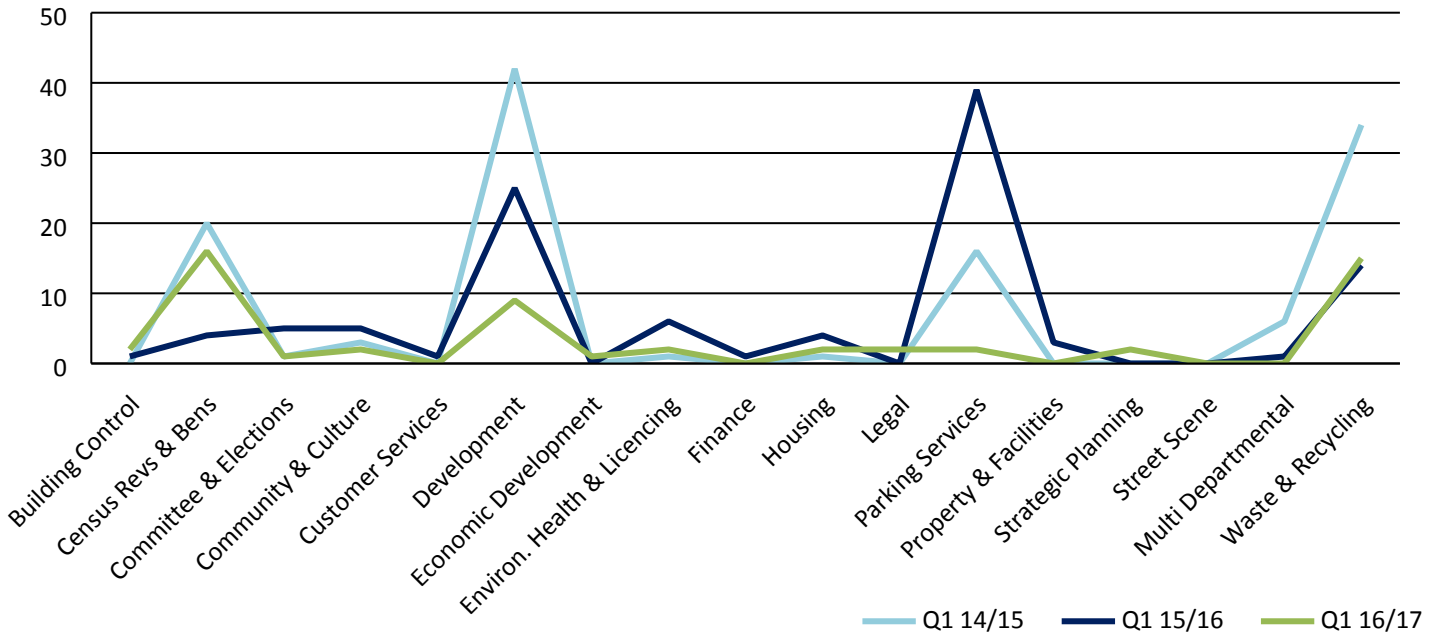
3 Details

Complaints notified to the Complaints and Feedback Officer 1st April to 30th June 2016.

- 3.1 The number of complaints notified to the Complaints and Feedback Officer for the period 1st April to 30th June 2016 is 56 complaints. A further 127 were received by the Leisure centres.
- 3.2. When the results of quarter one 16/17 are compared with the same period in the two previous years the significant improvements in complaint numbers for typically challenging departments becomes clear.

This has been a very positive start to the 2016/17 year on the whole and we will work to ensure that this continues in quarter two.

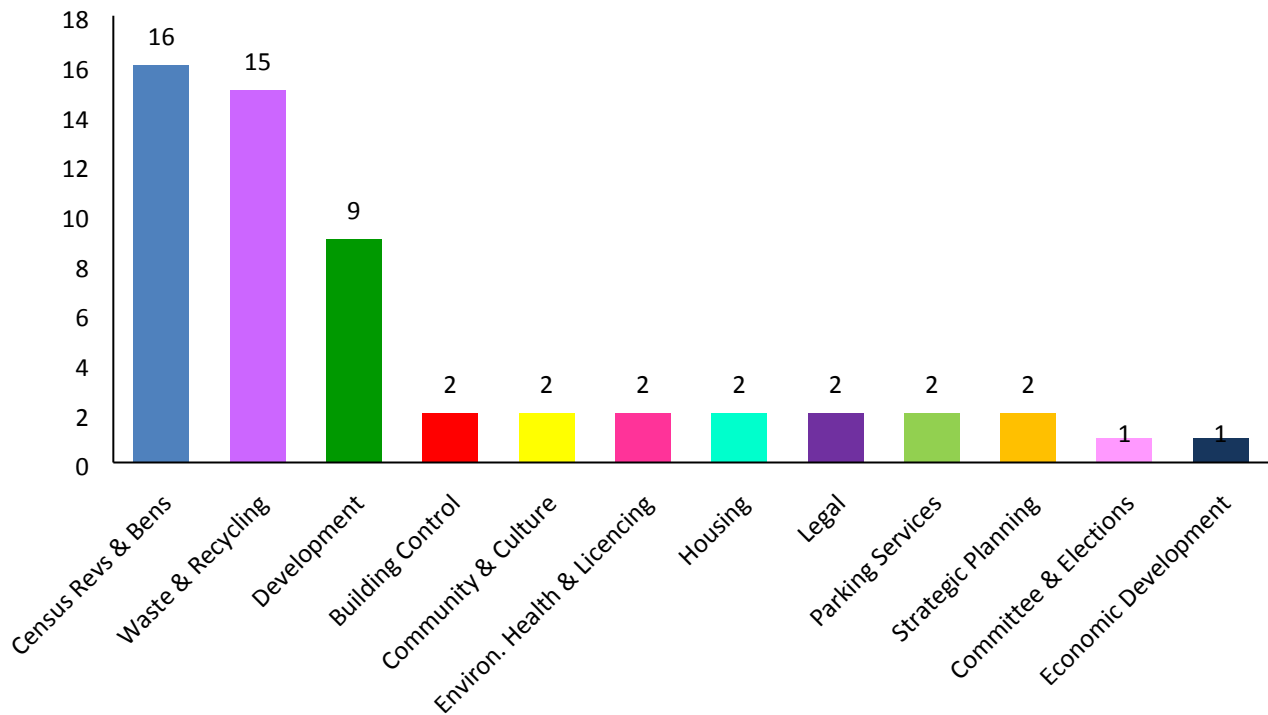
Complaints by Department in Quarter one



3.3 Horsham District Council's current definition of a complaint is:-

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response, about the standards of service, action or lack of action by the Council, its staff or a contractor working on the Council's behalf affecting an individual customer or resident or group of customers'

3.4 Complaints received by department 1st April to 30th June 2016.



Development and Parking Services especially have seen a very positive continuation of low numbers of complaints for this quarter. Community & Culture has also seen a very positive quarter, recording only two complaints.

The spike for Census Revenue & Benefits is a natural consequence of the billing run for the year sent in April. It is expected that increased contact for this department will see a few more complaints and this number is already decreasing as expected in Quarter two.

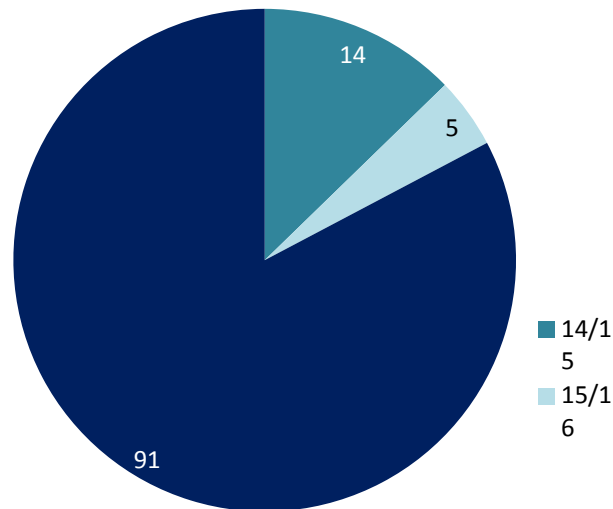
Waste & Recycling has recorded a figure that matches that of 2015/16 and I will be working with the department to analyse the root cause of this. It should be noted that Quarter one is traditionally a very busy period for the department which has recently experienced some upheaval with staff and this may have contributed to the higher number of complaints. The changes are now in place and I expect improvements now that this has settled down.

3.5 Compliments received for the period 1st April to 30th June 2016.

Department	Compliments Received 1st April – 30th June 2016
Committee & Elections	4
Community & Culture	43
Customer Services	10
Development	12
Economic Development	1
Environ. Health & Licensing	3
Housing	1
Parking Services	1
Property & Facilities	2
Spatial Planning	1
Street Scene	5
Waste & Recycling	8
Leisure Centres	103
TOTAL	194

Note The total number of compliments *excluding* leisure centres has again increased this quarter from last. We have received a total of 91 compliments excluding leisure centres in quarter one, the biggest for a single quarter to date.

Compliments received in Quarter One



We understand that these numbers of compliments have always been received by the various departments, but they have not been accurately recorded until now. The Complaints and Feedback officer has encouraged staff to inform their managers of compliments they receive and as such we now have a much more accurate reflection of the positive experiences that our customers have.

4 Outcome of Consultations

4.1 Not applicable

5 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected

5.1 Not applicable

6 Staffing Consequences

6.1 There are no staffing consequences as a result of this report.

7 Financial Consequences

7.1 Whilst each complaint does have its own costs, there are no financial consequences as a result of this report.