

Report to Finance & Performance Sub-Committee

9th November 2016

By Customer Services Manager

INFORMATION REPORT

Not exempt



**Horsham
District
Council**

Complaints & Compliments Monitoring Report for Horsham District Council 1st July - 30th September 2016

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform the Finance & Performance Sub-Committee of the details of the complaints and compliments notified to the Council's Complaints and Feedback Officer for the period 1st July to 30th September 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 July to 30th September the Complaints and Feedback Officer was notified of 46 complaints and the number of complaints received at the Council's leisure centres for the period was 92.

The trend of a decrease in complaints from the year 2015/16 has continued into 2016/17. I am pleased to report that the number of complaints received for this period has decreased by 51% 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 fourth 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

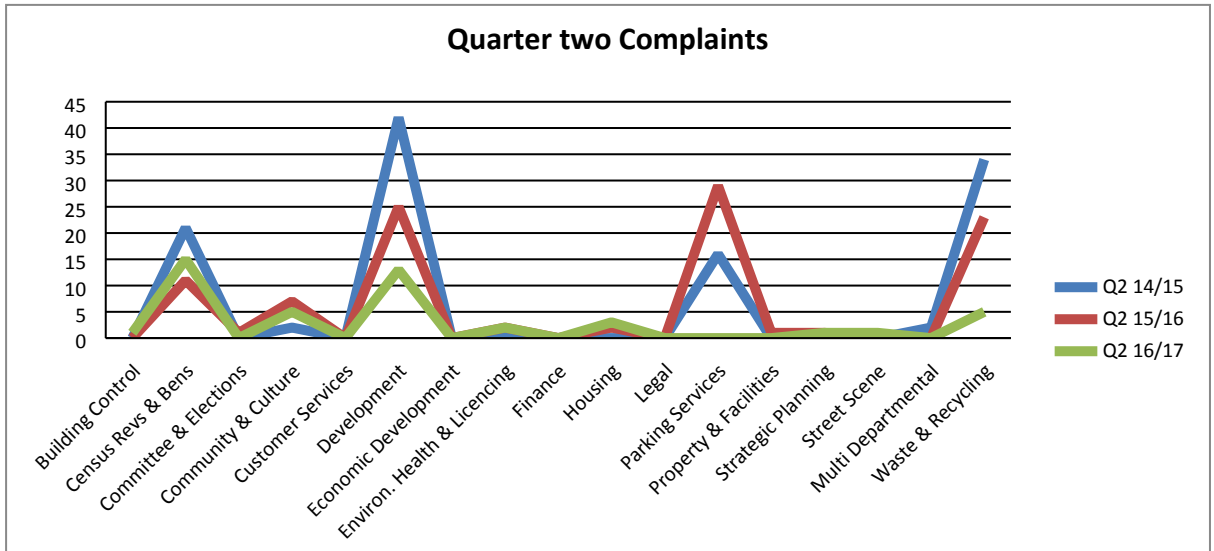
- 2.3 The Council's complaints procedure is available on the Council's website and intranet.

3 Details

Complaints notified to the Complaints and Feedback Officer 1st July to 30th September.

- 3.1 The number of complaints notified to the Complaints and Feedback Officer for the period 1st July to 30th September is 46 complaints. A further 92 were received by the Leisure centres.
- 3.2. When the results of quarter two 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.

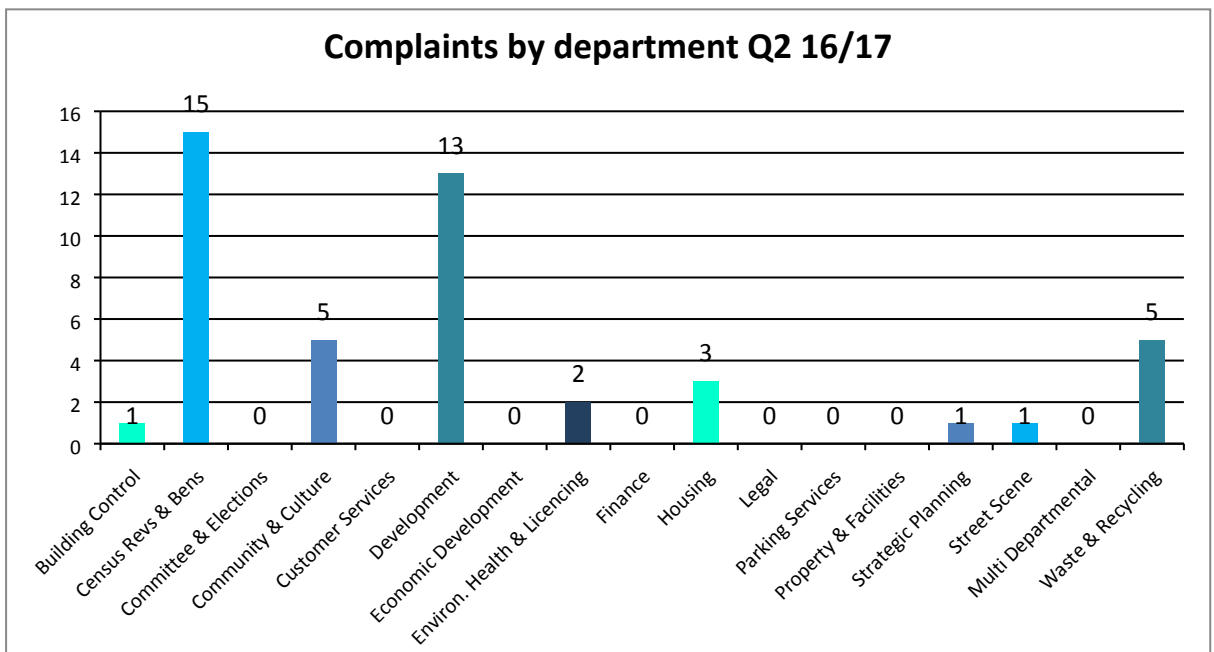
This has been a very positive start to the 2016/17 year on the whole and we will work to ensure that this continues in quarter three.



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 July to 31st September 2016.



Parking Services have seen a very positive continuation of low numbers of complaints for this quarter, reporting none for Quarter 2. Waste and Recycling has also seen a very positive quarter, recording only five complaints.

Complaints for Census Revenue & Benefits have only slightly decreased from Quarter 1 (from 16 complaints to 15) which is surprising given that Q2 is

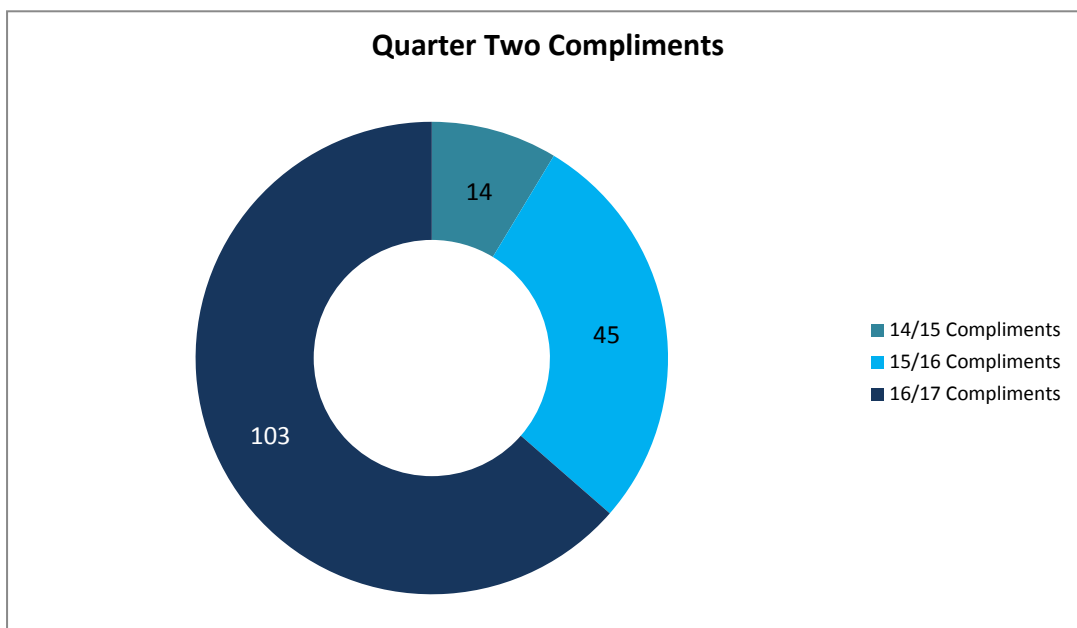
generally a quieter period. Analysis suggests there is no apparent theme but we will continue to liaise with the departments to examine the root cause of complaints.

Development has seen a slight increase (from 9 complaints in Q1 to 13 in Q2). However, they have made significant progress over the past 12 months and this encouraging work continues. I do not foresee an issue here but will continue to work closely with the team.

3.5 Compliments received for the period 1st July to 30th September 2016.

Department	Compliments Received 1 st July – 30 th September 2016
Census Revs & Bens	1
Community & Culture	60
Customer Services	5
Development	16
Economic Development	1
Environ. Health & Licensing	5
Property & Facilities	1
Multi-departmental	5
Waste & Recycling	9
Leisure Centres	114
TOTAL	217

Note The total number of compliments *excluding* leisure centres has again increased this quarter from last. We have received a total of 103 compliments excluding leisure centres in quarter two, the biggest for a single quarter to date.



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.