

6 Month Report

April 2012 to September 2012

Complaints

Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council
Where Everyone Matters



Executive Summary

This report provides information about complaints made between **1 April 2012 and 30 September 2012** to the Local Authority, under the Corporate Complaint's Procedure, the Adult Social Services and Childrens Social Services complaint regulations

The figures in the report include details of the number of customers and the number of complaints they have made, each Directorate area has provided information and a breakdown summary.

In total over the last 6 months the number of complaints received by the Council is 335 (on target decrease - 724 received 2011-12)

This reduction is due to improved management of complaints, the expected improvements through creation of a centralised complaint function in 2012 have begun to be realised and complaints are on target for a best ever position by the end of year.

Complaint information is shared and monitored by the Council through a centralised reporting function and a quarterly / annual reporting mechanism to its Strategic Leadership Team and to Cabinet. Directorate Services also report monthly and quarterly at both a Directorate and Service area level and to Directorate Cabinet Members.

Overall **98%** of all complaints were responded to within the timescales promised, compared to **94%** (2011/12). This continues the Council's progressive approach to performance management, leading to year on year improvement. All Directorate leads are targeted to achieve 100% performance.

Headline Results April 2012 to September 2012

- Number of informal complaints* received, **807**, decrease from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**1975** received 2011-12)
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **292**, increase from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**531** received in 2011-12)
- Number of formal complaints (at all levels), **335**, decrease from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**724** received 2011-12)
 - Complaints for Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, **213** decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**478** received 2011-12)
 - Complaints for Resources, **37**, increase from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**44** received 2011-12)
 - Complaints for Children and Young Peoples services, **36**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**87** received 2011-12)
 - Complaints for Environment and Development services, **49**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**115** received 2011-12)
- **98%** of complaints were responded to within timescales.
- The proportion of complaints (at all stages) upheld, **123, 36%**. (**319, 43%** upheld 2011-12)

- The number of complaints escalating, **7%**, **25** Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2. (**8%**, **61** escalated in 2011-12)
- Complaints about quality of service, **120**, increase from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**195** received 2011-12)
- Complaints about actions of staff, **77**, decrease from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**176** received 2011-12)
- Ombudsman average response time was **28** days. **5** first enquiries were received. There were no decisions of Maladministration leading to the publication of a report.
- Total compensation awards made, **£378**, increase from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**£540** received 2011-12)
- External complaint investigation costs in CYPs, **£8,127.87**, increase from 6 month position in 2011-12. (**£12,592** in 2011-12)
- Number of compliments received was **306**.

** Please note, informal complaints are defined as contacts by customers who are expressing dissatisfaction but the Council has been previously unaware of the concern and has not had an opportunity to put things right. These complaints have been dealt with and resolved to the customer's satisfaction at this first point of contact and as a result the customer has not wanted to enter formal complaint proceedings. This is done with the agreement of the customer and it means that a large number of enquiries are dealt with much quicker and at less cost to the Council.*

The Directorate complaints team has maintained the recent significant improvements in the following areas:

- Learning from all Complaints to identify service improvements
- Improved performance on enquiries responded to in time
- Reduced the number of complaints received
- Increased the number of informal complaints received
- Reduced number of complaints escalating through the complaint procedure
- Less complaints upheld
- Reduction in Ombudsman complaints
- Improved performance on complaint timescales
- Improving the quality of responses
- Embedded 2011/12 improvement actions and actions from internal complaint review - Aligned corporate complaint function.

Learning from Complaints

Learning from Complaints discussions with accountable managers to promptly identify service improvements and changes in current practice now take place in respect of all complaints responded to.

Learning outcomes case studies are presented in the Directorate Performance update sections in the shaded text boxes;

Directorate Performance in 2012/13

Neighbourhood and Adult Services

Neighbourhood and Adult Services Directorate complaints are split into statutory (Adult Services) and non statutory complaints (Housing and Neighbourhood Services). They are usually recorded and reported separately.

However, combined results for the whole Directorate are as follows;

Over the last 6 months the total number of complaints received for Neighbourhood and Adult Services was 213 (Total received in 2011/12 – 478)

Overall 100% of all complaints were responded to within the timescales, compared to 91% in 2011/12.

- Number of informal complaints **272**. (**774** in 2011/12)
- Total number of complaints upheld was **85**. (**233** in 2011/12)
- Number of complaints escalating :-
- **15** Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2. (**44** in 2011/12)
- **£0** compensation payments. (**£440** in 2011/12)
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **146**.
- Number of Compliments received was **230**.

Adult Services

Adult Services Complaints are dealt with under the complaints and representations procedures established through the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (Making Experiences Count).

Over the last 6 months the total number of complaints received for Adult Social Services was 47 (Total received in 2011-12 - 108)

Overall 100% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales. This performance again benchmarks the best against the regional Yorkshire and Humberside Local Authority complaints group based on numbers received (15 Local Authority areas).

Headline Results 2012/13 – 6 months

- Number of informal complaints received, **29**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12 (**100** received in 2011-12)
- Number of complaints, **47**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**108** received 2011-12)

- The proportion of complaints (at all stages) upheld, **14**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**43** upheld in 2011-12)
- The number of complaints escalating, **20%**, **7** Stage 1 complaints escalating to Stage 2, from **35** Stage 1 complaints. Increase from **15%** in 2011/12. (**14** Stage 2 complaint and **90** Stage 1 complaints)
- Complaints about quality of service, **14**, same as 6 month total in 2011/12 (**28** received in 2011/12)
- Complaints about actions of staff reduced, **11**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12 (**23** in 2011/12).
- Ombudsman average response time was **29** days from **1** first enquiries
- Total compensation awards made, **£0**
- External complaint investigation costs, **£0**
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **6**
- Number of Compliments received was **73**

Adult Social Services has maintained the recent significant improvements in the following areas:

- Reduced the number of complaints received
- Maintained performance at 100%
- Maintained high levels of satisfaction with the complaint process
- Learning from complaints – all complaints interrogated for learning.
- No compensation paid.
- Reduction in cost of responding to complaints, investigations (no external investigators were procured in 2011/12).

Learning from complaints case studies

1

Adult Services

Unable to see FAC's bandings on RDASH multidisciplinary teams customer assessment documents.

In response to their concerns we have;

- Agreed to change assessment document to show FAC's banding. The documentation is brought in line with Council assessment documentation.

Housing and Neighbourhood Services

Housing and Neighbourhood Services' complaints are dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaint's Procedure, Tell Us Your Views.

There was a **9%** reduction in the number of complaints in the period. The decline in complaints suggests the service is putting right what has gone wrong and learning from the customer experience to improve services. At the same time there has been a **47%** reduction of complaints progressing to stage two, this appears to reflect improved investigation of complaints and communication skills.

100% of complaints were responded to within the target timescales compared to **89%** in 2011/12.

Headline Results 2012/13 – 6 months

- Number of complaints (at all levels) was **166** representing a comparative **9%** reduction on the **370** received in the whole of 2011/12.
- **155** New (stage 1) complaints were received representing a comparative **8%** reduction on the **336** received in the whole of 2011/12.
- The total number of complaints upheld was **71** representing a comparative 25% reduction on the **190** received in the whole of 2011/12
- **8** complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2 or equivalent to a **47%** reduction on the **30** received in the whole of 2011/12
- New complaints about lack of service decreased from **110** in the whole of 2011/12 to **33** in the first half of 2012/13 representing a comparative **40%** reduction
- New complaints about delays in service decreased from **93** in the whole of 2011/12 to **30** in the first half of 2012/13 representing a comparative **35%** reduction
- New complaints about actions of staff decreased from **71** in the whole of 2011/12 to **33** in the first half of 2012/13 representing a comparative **7%** reduction
- There were **35** new complaints about the quality of service representing a 46% comparative increase on the 51 received in the whole of 2011/12.
- There were **3** new complaints about the lack of information or the same as in the whole of 2011/12.
- There was **1** new complaint about the cost of the service or the same as in the whole of 2011/12.
- **No** compensation awards made in the first six months of 2012/3
- **243** informal complaints were received in the period, representing a significant reduction on the **674** received in 2011/12.
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **140**
- Number of Compliments received was **157**

Housing and Neighbourhood Services has maintained the recent significant improvements in the following areas:

- Reduced the number of complaints received
- Maintained performance at 100%
- Learning from complaints – all complaints interrogated for learning.
- No compensation paid.
- Reduction in the number of informal complaints recorded and dealt with

Learning from complaints case studies

2

Housing and Neighbourhood Services

A new tenant experienced delays in having a gas supply connected, after the previous tenants gas supply was disconnected. The Utility Company will only schedule the work once they have been paid and then place the work onto a 12 week programme. In this case the problem was exacerbated by the service not having access to a credit card to place the order and simultaneously pay.

In response to their concerns;

- Housing and Neighbourhood Services has reached an agreement with the Purchase to Pays Team to use emergency credit card if such incidents occur in the future.
- A customer information leaflet was created to provide advice and support to the customer.

Children and Young People Services

Children and Young People's Services complaints are responded to in accordance to The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

The Service records customers and complaint points as is required under their regulations.
The number of people making complaints was 36, (87 in 2011/12)

Overall 92% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales, compared to 91% (2011/12).

Headline Results 2012/13 – 6 months

- Number of informal complaints received, **71**, increase from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**121** received 2011-12)
- Number of complaints (at all levels), **36**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**44** received 2011-12)
- The proportion of complaints (at all stages) upheld, **10, 28%**. (**30, 34%** upheld 2011-12).
- The number of complaints escalating, **6%**, **2** Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2. (**6%**, **5** escalated in 2011-12)
- Complaints about quality of service, **20**.
- Complaints about actions of staff, **9**.
- Ombudsman average response time was **8.4** days from **8** first enquiries.
- Total compensation awards made, **£0**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**£125** received 2011-12)
- External complaint investigation costs in CYPS, **£10,092.95**, increase from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**£6,296** in 2011-12)
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **4**.
- Number of Compliments received was **13**.

Children and Young People's services has maintained the recent significant improvements in the following areas:

- Reduced the number of complaints received
- Learning from complaints – all complaints interrogated for learning.
- Reduced the amount of compensation paid.
- Reduction in the number of informal complaints

Learning from complaints case studies

3

Children and Young People services

Customer was not happy that some of the details included in the Section 7 Welfare Report were not accurate and they had felt that they had not been able to have their views represented within the assessment.

In response to their concerns we have;

- Revised template for Section 7 Welfare Report
- Included statement about complaints within Section 7 Report template.
- Have reported the issue to our Practice Improvement Group to contribute to improvements in social work practice through workforce development.

Environment and Development Services

Environment and Development Services' complaints are dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaint's Procedure, Tell Us Your Views.

Over the last 6 months the total number of complaints received for Environment and Development Services has been 49. This represents a projected decrease in 12 month figures from **115** to **98**. However **381** customer informal complaints (unofficial complaints) have also been received. **57%** of complaints received centred around the quality of service received.

Overall 85% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales.

Headline Results 2012/13 – 6 months

- Number of complaints (at all levels) reduced from **53** (6 month total 2011/12) to **49**.
- Complaints regarding Streetpride **32**.
- Complaints regarding Planning, Regeneration & Cultural Services **17**
- Complaints from investigated by LGO **6**.
- Total number of complaints upheld was **20, 40%** compared to **46, 40%** 2010/11.
- Reduction in the number of complaints escalating reduced:-
 - From **16** (6 month total 2011/12) to **7** for Stage 1 complaints escalating to Stage 2.
- Complaints about quality of service decreased to **28, 57%**.
- Complaints about actions of staff reduced to **6, 12%**.
- One compensation award made **£28**.
- Number of informal complaints, **381** decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12. (**902** received 2011-12)
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **134**.
- Number of Compliments received was **50**.

Environment and Development Services has maintained the recent significant improvements in the following areas:

- Improving the timeliness of responses to customers
- Improving the quality of responses
- Improving satisfaction of the complaint management process
- Learning from all Complaints to identify service improvements
- Training in complaint handling delivered to new Managers

Learning from complaints case studies

4

Environment and Development Services

A complaint was received relating to a pre-arrange visit to a Household Waste Recycling Centre not being communicated to the site which lead to them being refused access after they had travelled to empty a relatives house when they had gone into a home.

In response to their concerns we have;

- Revised administrative processes which meant that a Business Support Assistant would contact the site via telephone and fax to advise of any authorised visits covering a weekend period.
- Site attendants were reminded of the need to use discretion when allowing people onto the sites over a weekend and check the contact of material to be disposed of to ensure it is household waste.
- Site attendants asked to seek clarification from customers as to where they had travelled from and the purpose of their journey if they aren't registered on their authorised visit log.

Resources

Resources' complaints are dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaint's Procedure, Tell Us Your Views.

Over the last 6 months the total number of complaints received for Resources has reduced from 44 to 37 - 84 % reduction. However **83** customer informal complaints (unofficial complaints) have also been received.

Overall 95% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales.

Headline Results 2012/13 – 6 months

- Number of complaints (at all levels) was **37**, increase from 12 month total in 2011-12 – **44**.
- Total number of complaints upheld was **9, 24%** compared to **17, 38%** (12 month total) in 2010/11.
- Maintained the number of complaints escalating:-
 - **0** Stage 1 complaints escalating to Stage 2.
- Complaints about quality of service was **16, 43%**.
- Complaints about actions of staff was **12, 32%**.
- **1** compensation award made of **£100**.
- Number of informal complaints was **83**, decrease from 6 month total in 2011-12.(**178** received 2011-12)
- Number of Councillor Surgery's received was **8**.
- Number of Compliments received was **13**.

Resources maintained the recent significant improvements in the following areas:

- All complaints dealt with in time
- All complaint and informal complaints Quality Assured
- More timely responses to customer enquires
- More learning from all complaints issues identified

Learning from complaints case studies

5

Resources

A customer complained that he wasn't advised his call was being recorded to update contact details and that new details may be shared with other Agencies as part of a benefit review.

In response to their concerns we have;

- The customer received an apology for the fact that he wasn't advised his call was being recorded and new details may be shared.
- Staff were reminded not to take new details unless the customer have consented to them being taken