

## COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Councillor Norman Williams  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Jane Salt, Head of Customer Services  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Marissa Joyce, Alison Walton Customer Relations Officers

### Summary and Recommendation:

In July & August 2008, 24 complaints were investigated through the Councils Comments, compliments and complaints procedure, taking the total number received between April and August to 47.

62 complaints were received in the same period in 2007/08

Recommendation is for the Members to note the report.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council has had a written procedure for the resolution of customers' formal complaints since 1992 and has been revised several times since then. The procedure has very recently been revised to reflect the new arrangements for dealing with allegations of misconduct by Councillors, which took effect on 8 May 2008. The procedure is based on the Local Government Ombudsman's published recommendations for best practice on Local Authority complaints procedures.
- 1.2 In July & August the Customer Relations Officers recorded 24 complaints, summary attached.

### 2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 Please note these figures do not include anonymous complaints, complaints about Councillors, complaints about a Policy and initial requests for a service.
- 2.2 Neither do they include complaints dealt with by the department which have not subsequently been reported to the Customer Relations Officer for monitoring and recording purposes.

### 3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 Discussions are ongoing to investigate the functionality within the new Customer Relations Management system to ensure that we can automatically record and monitor all comments, compliments and complaints received via e-mail and letter. The intention is that each department will then be able to record incoming correspondence and the system will automatically confirm receipt of e-mails and issue reminders when responses are due. The Customer Relations Officers will have access to this information for monitoring and recording purposes.

3.2 We are also looking at an additional Bolt On to the Covalent Performance Management System. South Lakes District Council currently use this system thereby giving us the opportunity to observe the system in operation.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 To continue to investigate both the above options and pursue the preferred one.

#### 5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

5.1 Approximate minimum costing for the above proposals are as follows

3.1 £15000.00

3.2 £4375.00 includes 1<sup>st</sup> year support charge

#### 6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Evaluate the selected programmes against our requirements.

#### 7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

7.1 The lessons learnt from comments, compliments and complaints should help CBC deliver the 2.5 objective in the Corporate Plan.

#### List of Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of complaints received in July and August 2008

List of Background Documents: None

List of Consultees: Cllr N Williams

#### CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	Ensure complaints are properly dealt with
Impact on Sustainability	Ensure complaints are properly dealt with
Impact on Rural Proofing	Ensure that the whole borough is dealt with equally
Health and Safety Implications	Ensure complaints are properly dealt with
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Ensure complaints are dealt with equally and sensitively
Children and Young Persons Implications	Ensure complaints are properly dealt with
Human Rights Act Implications	Ensure complaints are properly dealt with

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision NO

**Appendix A**

**SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN JULY AND AUGUST 2008**

<b>Dept</b>	<b>Number of Complaints</b>	<b>Amount of Compensation Awarded £</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 1</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 2</b>	<b>Still ongoing</b>	<b>Within timescale/</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>
Leisure and Env Services	<b>6</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
Finance	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Customer Services	<b>12</b>	<b>250.00</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
Regeneration	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Legal	<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Policy & Performance	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Other – CBC/Highways	<b>1</b>					<b>1</b>	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>250.00</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>

Details of individual complaints are available upon request from Marissa Joyce or Alison Walton, Customer Relations Officers, The Copeland Centre, Catherine St, Whitehaven. tel 598525.

**Compliments received: July**

**Open Spaces**

Thanks for facilitating workshop "Governance, neighbourhoods and Service Delivery. Held at M.U.F.C.  
Egremont Team Ministry sent a big THANK YOU for the flower arrangements for the flower festival.  
Thanks from OSC members re the CCTV Monitoring Station Presentation.

**Enforcement**

Cross Houses resident expressed his thanks to the team responsible for patrolling re Dog Fouling as the area is now much cleaner.  
Queen St resident praised the work of the parking enforcement officers in the town centre.

**Waste Management**

Street Cleansing team thanked for keeping the streets around Solway View really clean.  
Refuse team thank for clearing a trailer full of rubbish from Seascale.

**Copeland Direct**

Thanks for helping to arrange a replacement bus pass.  
Thank you, very helpful staff to sort out ladies problem.

**Compliments received: August**

**Open Spaces**

Thanks for work on Bench and Plaque.

**Enforcement**

Whitehaven resident expressed his thanks to the team responsible for patrolling the area commenting on there friendly and affiant manner.  
2 Letter sent in to praise the work of the team with regard to Litter in the town centre.

**Waste Management**

Thanks received re the Dog Waste bins at Rheda.

**Copeland Direct**

Praise for an improved service both on the phones and face to face.

**Legal**

Thanks from Wasdale Parish Council regarding efforts to conclude the Parish Review.

<b>Dept</b>	<b>Complaint</b>	<b>Amount of Compensation Awarded</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 1</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 2</b>	<b>Within timescale</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>
Copeland Direct	Attitude of Receptionist Re CTax enquiry		Staff reminded of level of service expected	√		Yes	Yes
Enforcement	Re on street parking on Cross St			√		Yes	Yes
Enforcement	Bullying behaviour of an enforcement officer	FPN Cancelled £50.00	Customer Service training to be undertaken	√		Yes	Yes
Enforcement	Re strays and lack of enforcement of nuisance dogs			√		Yes	Yes
Enforcement	Over 12 months since original complaint re barking dogs		Ongoing				
Finance Concessionary Travel	Alleging we lost original Birth Certificate	refund cost of copy cert awaiting receipt		√		Yes	Yes
Highways	Access and egress onto A595			√		Yes	Yes

Human Resources	Not responding to e-mails re request for feedback on an interview			√		Yes	Yes
<b>Dept</b>	<b>Complaint</b>	<b>Amount of Compensation Awarded</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 1</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 2</b>	<b>Within timescale</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>
Legal	Re appointment system for personal searches		2 Days per week now available	√		Yes	Yes
Planning	Admin of Planning app for 81 dwellings at Poolside			Ongoing			
Regeneration	Drainage issues at The Chase Hotel development			√		Yes	Yes
Revs & Bens	Re Non Domestic Rates recovery action			√		Yes	Yes
Revs & Bens	Delay in processing change in rateable value			Ongoing			
Revs & Bens	Upset by letters addressed to deceased husband		Staff reminded to check address	√		Yes	Yes
Revs & Bens	Asking for compensation due to stress caused by summons's over a 10 year period	£250.00			√	Yes	Yes

Revs & Bens	Wording of letter after death of Mother		We are amending the stationary	√		Yes	Yes
<b>Dept</b>	<b>Complaint</b>	<b>Amount of Compensation Awarded</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 1</b>	<b>Resolved at Stage 2</b>	<b>Within timescale</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>
Revs & Bens Recovery	Sent Bailiffs when no debt.			Ongoing			
Revs & Bens	Having to send original docs after provided copies.			√		Yes	Yes
Revs & Bens	Summons received without prior notification			Ongoing			
Revs and Bens	Received via the Ombudsman, not accepting her offer of £30p/m to pay arrears.		Arrangement agreed	√		Yes	Yes
Revs and Bens – Ctax recovery	Officer attitude			√		Yes	No
Revs and Bens - NDR	Refusing arrangement for NDR		Arrangement agreed	√		Yes	Yes
Waste	Non collection of waste for 3 weeks			√		Yes	Yes

Waste	Website quoting wrong re charge for collection of TV	Collected free of charge	Website amended	√		Yes	Yes
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