

COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

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

Summary and Recommendation:

In the first 6 months of 2007/2008, 78 complaints were investigated through the Councils Comments, compliments and complaints procedure.

The total investigated for the whole of 2006-2007 was 106, which was a significant reduction to the 173 recorded in 2005/06.

Recommendations are:

1. Members to note the report and
2. Managers to be encouraged/reminded to record and feedback details of complaints and compliments received to the Customer Relations Officer for monitoring and reporting purposes.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council has had a written procedure for the resolution of customers' formal complaints since 1992, it has been revised several times since then, most recently in April 2007. The procedure is based on the Local Government Ombudsman's published recommendations for best practice on Local Authority complaints procedures.
- 1.2 In the first half of 2007/08 the Customer Relations Officers recorded 78 complaints, summary attached.
- 1.3.1 We currently have ongoing complaints in relation to the Regeneration Planning Department, which were referred to the Ombudsman for investigation. The result is that the issues have been given a specific time line in which should be addressed by Sept 2008.
- 1.3.2 The Ombudsman is currently investigating a Complaint with regard to the Regeneration Planning Department and has requested the relevant documents and details in order to make an informed decision.

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 To refine the process to ensure that all complaints are logged by the relevant department to enable thorough monitoring and accurate reporting.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 In order to achieve 3. we will be investigating 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 Officer will have access to this information for monitoring and recording purposes.

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

- 5.1 One £200.00 payment was paid in compensation for distress and/or inconvenience.
- 5.2 The Enforcement Team had to waive the Fee of £150.00 for the retrieval of a vehicle removed from the Ginns Car Park due to the lack of Signage. This has since been addressed and should not occur in the future.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 None

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 Report of Aug-Sept 07 Complaints Register

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

