



SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 15 JUNE 2016

CORPORATE COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS
ANNUAL REPORT 2015–2016

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present for the Commission's consideration the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. This is attached as appendix A to this report.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Authority adopted a new Corporate Complaints Procedure in April 2010 that requires an Annual Report to be produced, analysing and reviewing complaints received during the preceding 12 months.

Background

3. The Customer Relations Team manages and co-ordinates complaints relating to 3 separate complaints systems –
 - (i) Adult Social Care statutory process;
 - (ii) Children's Social Care statutory process;
 - (iii) Corporate Complaints process – these are complaints relating to other services provided by the Council where there is no other form of redress.
4. This third category is the subject of this report. Both statutory processes are subject to other reporting processes and annual reports on both areas will follow shortly to the Adults and Communities and the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
5. As detail is included in the Annual Report itself, the purpose of this report is simply to pick out some of the main, headline issues emerging from the analysis of complaints activity for 2015/2016.

Headline statistics

Complaints received and outcomes

6. During 2015-16 the following complaints were received (2014-15 figures in brackets)
 - 325 Corporate complaints (293) – an 11% increase.
 - 50 Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) complaints (33) – a 50% increase.
7. 98 Corporate complaints were upheld - 42 totally; 56 partially - which is 30% of the total received (51% in 2014-15).
8. 53 Ombudsman decisions were made during 2015/16 as follows:
 - 24 - Closed after initial enquiries;
 - 9 - No fault found after full investigation;
 - 8 - Outside of LGO remit;
 - 5 - Premature;
 - 5 - Maladministration with injustice;
 - 2 - Maladministration without injustice

Response times

9. During 2015-16, complaint response times were again similar to prior year (2014-15 figures in brackets):
 - 77% of all complaints received a response within 10 working days (80%);
 - 96% received a response within 20 working days (96%);
 - 100% received a response within the maximum 60 days recommended by LGO (100%).

Issues complained about and numbers upheld

10. The top three issues complained about were as follows:

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| ○ Quality of Work | 51 or 16% of cases |
| ○ Delays in providing services | 42 or 13% of cases |
| ○ Professional Judgement / Decision making | 42 or 13% of cases |

11. The top three issues most likely to be upheld were as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ○ Accuracy / Clarity of Information | upheld in 71% of cases. |
| ○ Quality of work | upheld in 53% of cases |
| ○ Collaborative working | upheld in 50% of cases |

12. Of the complaints adjudicated on by the Ombudsman, financial remedies totalled £2,520. The comparative figure for 2014/15 was (£1,473).

New Developments

13. The Complaints Manager now has more direct engagement with Heads of Service following establishment of quarterly attendance at Senior Leadership Team meetings to discuss complaints themes and explore any support required to managers.
14. Revised processes for capturing learning from complaints has been introduced and is being developed to continually improve this important area and ensure this is followed up via service plans.
15. Further Effective Complaints handling training delivered to managers within the organisation. Feedback from participants has been extremely positive and in many cases, the quality of their responses has demonstrably improved.
16. Work has also started to develop a suite of model response templates that can be provided to managers to assist in delivering quality responses to complaints.

Conclusions

The Commission is asked to note the contents of the Corporate Complaints Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 and provide comment and feedback on the content and analysis within the Report.

Background Papers

Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2014 – 2015: Scrutiny Commission - 3 June 2015

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Officer to Contact:

Simon Parsons, Complaints Manager
Tel: 0116 3056243
Email: simon.parsons@leics.gov.uk

Appendix

Appendix - Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2015– 6

Equality and Human Rights Implications

None

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