



Standards Committee

9 May 2011

Corporate Complaints Annual Summary Report 2010/2011

Purpose of the report:

To provide Standards Committee with an initial report for review that details complaint handling performance for all services except Adult Social Care and Children's, Schools and Families.

Introduction:

1. This initial report provides an analysis of complaint handling performance for the year 2010 / 2011. An in depth report will be available for the next meeting, if required.
2. Annex 1 provides a breakdown by service of
 - a. quarterly and year end complaint figures and performance
 - b. corrective action plan figures for complaints at stages 2 - 4
 - c. compensation paid

SCC Annual Performance:

3. There was a new, challenging performance target for services dealing with non-statutory complaints - *respond to 90% of stage 1 complaints within 10 working days*. This compares to the previous target of dealing with 88% of complaints within 20 working days. The overall performance of the council was below target at 84%. Those services excluding Adult Social Care and Children's, Schools and Families achieved the target with a figure of 91%. Please note, however, that these figures may be subject to revision by Children's Services who are finalising their figures at the time of writing this report.

Complaints	Annual performance
Adult Social Care and Children's Schools and Families services	74%
All other services	91%
Overall SCC Complaint performance	84%

Corporate Complaints

All services bar Adult Social Care and Children, Schools and Families

4. 634 stage 1 complaints were received, very similar to last years figure of 610. Of this figure, just under half were received by Surrey Highways (299). Please see the following table for a service breakdown based on the proportion of stage 1 complaints received.

% split of stage 1 complaints received	
Service	2010/11
Surrey Highways	47%
Transport for Surrey	14%
Cultural Services	8%
Shared Service Centre	7%
Environment Service	6%
Customer Services	5%
Surrey Fire & Rescue	4%
All other services (20 or fewer complaints each)	9%

5. Whilst 91% of stage 1 complaints were completed within 10 working days performance varied considerably between service areas. It is important to highlight that of the services receiving 20 or more complaints this year only Fire and Rescue Service achieved a figure of 100% completed within the 10 working day timescale with Transport for Surrey, Surrey Highways and Estate Planning and Management all achieving 95% and above.
6. There has been a consistent, year-on-year, increase in the amount of stage 2 complaints. In addition, there is an increase in the proportion of stage 1 complaints being escalated to stage 2 (as shown in row 2 below). Of greater concern however is the significant increase in stage 2 complaints being upheld this year (please note all these figures include complaints upheld either in-part or fully).

	Stage 2 complaints	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
1	Amount of S2s needing a response	40	72	98
2	Proportion of S1s escalated to S2	11%	18%	21%
3	Proportion of S2s being upheld in full or part	50%	41%	65%

7. Excluding Adults Social Care and Children's, Schools and Families, services paid out a total of £3,725 in compensation as a consequence of service failure identified through the corporate complaints procedure.

Adults Social Care and Children's, Schools and Families Complaint Performance

8. Both services will be providing their own reports.

Conclusions:

9. This year, for the council overall, there was a performance drop of 4%, from 88% to 84%. This drop in performance does not seem to be related to the change in the performance target, however, because neither Adults Social Care nor Childrens, Schools and Families were affected by this change.
10. The jump in stage 2 complaints being upheld (in full or part) is concerning. This may indicate that the more challenging target has had an impact on the quality and depth of stage 1 investigations, Customer Relations will investigate this.
11. Surrey Highways deal with the largest proportion of complaints, and their performance in dealing with stage 1 complaints to timescale was excellent, at 97%. Although the proportion of stage 1 complaints escalating to stage 2 was higher at 32% than the overall figure of 21%, the proportion of those upheld at 67% was consistent with the overall figure of 65%. This is an excellent result for Surrey Highways.
12. Customer Relations will continue to support services to comply with the corporate complaints procedure and to meet and exceed the new more challenging targets.

Recommendations:

13. Standards Committee to note the report and continue monitoring the Council's complaints procedure and performance.

Report contact: Julia Montalbetti, Customer Relations Manager, Customer Services.

Contact details: 020 8541 7988 - julia.montalbetti@surreycc.gov.uk