

Executive Committee

No Specific Ward Relevance

10th March 2010

QUARTERLY MONITORING OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS QUARTER 3, OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009

(Report of the Head of Community Services /Head of Customer & IT Services)

1. Summary of Proposals

This report provides a view on aspects of the Council's Formal Complaints Procedure. It shows the numbers of complaints at each Stage, whether they were responded to on target and what has been learnt/service improvements that have been made.

The report also shows the compliments recorded during the same period and details the Ombudsman Enquiry response times and outcomes.

This report provides Members with an opportunity to review the Council's performance for quarter 3 of the 2009/10 financial year and to comment upon it.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

**the update on complaints and compliments for the period
October 2009 – December 2009 be noted and commented upon.**

3. Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Climate Change / Carbon Management Implications

Financial

- 3.1 Poor performance may have an impact on the financial position of the authority.

Legal

- 3.2 No particular legal issues arising from this report – any legal issues arising from complaints or compliments are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Policy

- 3.3 No particular issues arising from this report – any policy issues arising from complaints or compliments are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Risk

- 3.4 Without analysing the Council's complaints or compliments the Council cannot identify whether there are any patterns to complaints/compliments which need to be addressed and any lessons learnt in order to improve the Council performance and service to the Customer.

Climate Change / Carbon Management

- 3.5 No particular issues arising from this report – any issues arising from complaints or compliments are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Report

4. Background

- 4.1 The Council's Formal Complaints Procedure has the following stages:

Stage 1 Formal Complaint	Relevant Director for that service areas responds. Target for response 10 working days.
Stage 2 Complaint Appeal	Chief Executive investigates and responds. Target for response 10 working days.
Stage 3 Member Complaint Appeal	Panel of Members consider complaint. Committee Services respond on Panel's behalf. No target set for response time.
Ombudsman	Chief Executive investigates and responds. Target of 28 working days (set by Ombudsman)

- 4.2 Quarterly reporting is intended to drive improvement based on organisational need and local priorities.

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5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The report sets out the statistical details of Formal Complaints, Complaint Appeals, Member Complaint Appeals and Ombudsman Enquiries.
- 5.2 This will enable a baseline to be set for further reporting and monitoring. Member involvement in monitoring performance for the remainder of the 2009/10 reporting year will involve:

Quarter	Period	Member Group	Purpose of reporting
4	Jan – Mar	May Executive Committee / Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Receive annual outturn statistics and to recommend any improvements to services

- 5.3 It was reported in the 1st quarter monitoring that only 50% of Formal Complaints (Stage 1) and Complaint Appeals (Stage 2) were responded to on time. The response time target is 10 working days. Officers have pursued an improvement in this area and actions have been successful. Response times for the 2nd quarter increased to 74% on target for Stage 1 and 80% for Stage 2 complaints. For the 3rd quarter response times have increased again, to 92% on target for Stage 1 and 86% for Stage 2 complaints.
- 5.4 The Audit Commission monitors the Ombudsman Response times and these are used in Audit Commission reports/reviews including Direction of Travel and Service Reviews.
- 5.5 The Ombudsman Response times had improved from 28 days at the end of the 1st Quarter to 25 days at the end of the 2nd Quarter. They remain at 25 days during the 3rd Quarter.
- 5.6 The Ombudsman Response times have improved greatly over the past two years, following efforts by officers.

Year	Number of Enquiries	RBC average days
06/07	8	39.6 days
07/08	6	26.7 days
08/09	5	14.6 days

6. Other Implications

Asset Management	-	None specific.
Community Safety	-	None specific.
Health	-	None specific.
Human Resources	-	None specific.
Social Exclusion	-	None specific.
Environment / Sustainability	-	None specific.

7. Lessons Learnt

Appendix 1 and 4 shows the lessons learnt and service improvement.

8. Background Papers

The details to support the information provided within this report are held by Chief Executive/Directors/Personal Assistants.

9. Consultation

There has been no consultation other than with relevant Borough Council Officers.

10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Susan Tasker (Senior Personal Assistant), who can be contacted on ext. 3299 (e-mail: susan.tasker@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1	-	Monitoring data 3rd Quarter (October-December)
Appendix 2	-	Quarterly Complaints Statistics
Appendix 3	-	Quarterly Compliments Statistics
Appendix 3-		What has been learnt and Service Improvements