

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

21st June 2011

## QUARTERLY MONITORING OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS: JANUARY TO MARCH 2011 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter)

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Michael Braley – Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Services
Non-Key Decision	

### 1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report provides a view on aspects of the Council's Formal Complaints Procedure. It shows the numbers of complaints at each Stage (Formal, Complaint Appeal and Ombudsman) whether they were responded to on target and what has been learnt/service improvements that have been made.
- 1.2 The report also shows the compliments recorded during the same period and details the Ombudsman Enquiry response times and outcomes.
- 1.3 This report provides Members with an opportunity to review the Council's performance for quarter 4 of the 2010/11 financial year.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

**the update on complaints and compliments for the period  
January - March 2011 be noted.**

### 3. BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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- 3.3 A new Customer Feedback Strategy and Procedure was launched on the 1st April 2011, but for the purposes of this report it is focusing on the 4th quarter leading up to that.

### **4. KEY ISSUES**

#### Basis of Quarterly Reporting

- 4.1 The report sets out the statistical details of Formal Complaints, Complaint Appeals, Member Complaint Appeals and Ombudsman Enquiries.
- 4.2 This will enable a baseline to be set for further reporting and monitoring. This report presents the year end monitoring.
- 4.3 77% of Stage 1 complaints in the 4th quarter were responded to within the 10 day target compared to 92% in the same quarter last year. The response time for the whole of 2010/11 was 81% compared to 76% for the whole of 2009/10. Although performance fell in the 4th quarter in comparison to last year, the overall response time for the whole of the year was up. The reason was that some complaints took longer to respond to due to their nature, in all of these cases letters were sent out advising the customers that there would be a delay and giving them a timeframe within which we would conclude investigations and respond to them.
- 4.4 66% of Stage 2 complaints in the 4th quarter were responded to within the 10 day target compared to 50% in the same quarter last year. The response time for the whole of 2010/11 was 79% compared to 74% for the whole of 2009/10. Again, where a delay occurred customers were advised of the reasons for this and given a timescale for a full response.
- 4.5 We recorded a total of 80 complaints over the whole of 2010/11 of which 19 were taken to Stage 2. This is comparable with last year when a total of 83 complaints were received.
- 4.6 There were five Ombudsman enquiries for the whole of 2010/11, with one during the 4th quarter of 2010/11. The average response time to date for the year is 23.2 days. This is a slight improvement on the previous year when it was 23.8 days. Redditch Borough Council recorded the average as 16.6 days as Ombudsman double counted one complaint (two complaints about same issue) and did not include another as it was made by e-mail rather than formal process.

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4.7 The Ombudsman Response times for previous years are as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Enquiries</b>	<b>RBC average days</b>
06/07	8	39.6 days
07/08	6	26.7 days
08/09	5	14.6 days
09/10	6	23.8 days
10/11	5	23.2 days

4.8 There were a total of 233 compliments formally received in 2010/11, compared to 288 in 2009/10. We are unable to ascertain a reason for the drop and it could simply be that we have not recorded many of the favourable comments received about our services.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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.

## **7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

Well Managed Organisation.

## **9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

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 learned in order to improve the Council performance and service to the Customer.

## **10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

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It is important to customers to know that we respond properly to complaints and report on them. 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 learned in order to improve the Council performance and service to the Customer. Customer feedback is a valuable tool for understanding what is going well, and what not so well, within the organisation.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None Specific.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

None Specific.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

None Specific.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

None Specific.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

None Specific.

**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

None Specific.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None Specific.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

None Specific.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

None Specific.

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**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix One            Monitoring data 4th Quarter (Jan-March 2011)  
Appendix Two            Quarterly Complaints Statistics  
Appendix Three         Quarterly Compliments Statistics  
Appendix Four          What has been learnt and Service Improvements  
Appendix Five          LGO provisional complaint statistics.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

**24. KEY**

None.

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**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Susan Tasker, PA to Chief Executive  
E Mail: susan.tasker@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk  
Tel: 01527 53400 ext 3299