

# Customer Feedback Report: Complaints, compliments and suggestions Quarter 1 report 2014/15



*Altogether better*



## Overview

1. This report provides the performance information and learning outcomes in relation to Customer Feedback: Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions received for all Council Services during quarter 1 2014/15.
2. Complaints are categorised as:
  - **Statutory.** A complaint which arises from the duties placed on a local social services authority to provide assessments and care services under the provisions of relevant adult and children's social care legislation. The process followed for managing these complaints is prescribed in Regulations.
  - **Non-Statutory.** All other complaints
3. The report is divided into 2 main parts; overall performance summary and detailed information for each service grouping.

### **PART ONE: Summary of complaints, compliments and suggestions received across the Council during quarter 1 2014/15**

4. Between 1 April and 30 June 2014, Durham County Council received 617 non-statutory complaints, 238 compliments and 67 suggestions. During the quarter, 62 complaints were escalated to stage 2 of the complaints process.

#### **Responding to Complaints**

5. The council's service standards for dealing with non-statutory complaints are:
  - Acknowledging all complaints within 2 working days;
  - Responding to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days
  - Responding to stage 2 complaints within 20 working days.
6. During quarter , 96% of Stage 1 and 97% of Stage 2 complaints were acknowledged within 2 working days and 79% of Stage 1 and 54% of Stage 2 complaints were investigated and responded to within target, showing an improvement when compared with the same period in 2013/14
7. The table below shows numbers of complaints received across Service Groupings since 2012/13:

Service Grouping	2012-13 Total	2013-2014					2014-2015
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1
ACE	7	3	3	2	1	9	1
CAS	33	10	15	18	11	54	6
NS	2,398	724	614	446	446	2,230	447
RED	357*	92*	128	97*	95*	412*	67
RES	809	180	141	139	132	592	96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,634</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>3,298</b>	<b>617</b>

\*Please note that the data has been updated from the Q4, 2013/14 report, as a result of data cleansing following quality assurance.

## Key Improvements

8. The number of complaints received across the Council since April 2012 is illustrated in the graph below. Complaints received during quarter 1 2014/15 have decreased by 11% from the previous quarter and by 33% when compared with the same period in 2013/14



9. We have seen a number of improvements in relation to the most common complaints received across the Council since 2012 as detailed below:

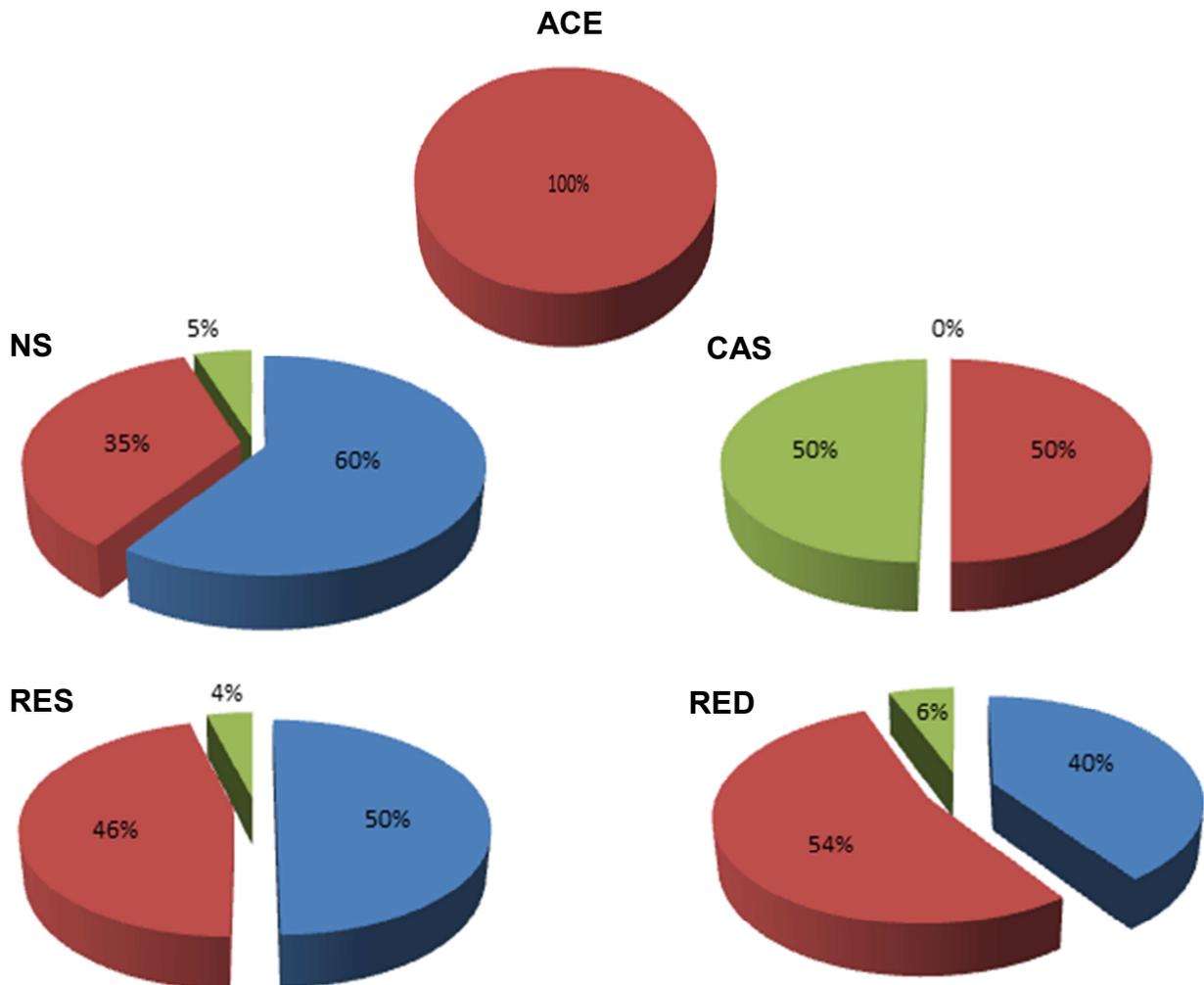
- Missed Bins:** The number of complaints received in relation to missed bins has seen a significant reduction throughout the year. This improvement can be attributed to a number of factors including the 'bedding in' of the Alternate Weekly Collection service; the introduction of a new strengthened 'Repeat Missed Container' Monitoring Process; improved communications in relation to collection dates during bank holidays and the implementation of the incab 'Bartec' system that has improved information capture and in support of the operational delivery of the service. During quarter 1, 96 complaints were received regarding missed bins, a 41% decrease when compared with the same period in 2013/14.
- Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** Engagement and communication mechanisms with our contractor have been strengthened and customer care training has been delivered to all of their staff to address complaints regarding staff attitude. As a result, the number of complaints regarding HWRCs has decreased throughout the year. 31 complaints were received regarding HWRCs during quarter 1 2014/15, a 55% decrease when compared with Q1 2013/14.
- Revenues and Benefits Service:** As a result of ongoing improvements to practices & procedures to ensure the maximum level of service is being achieved the Revenues and Benefits Service has seen a significant reduction in the number of complaints received during quarter 1. The Benefits Service received 37 complaints, a 48% reduction when compared with the same period in 2013/14. The Revenues Service received 49 complaints, a 47% reduction when compared with the same period in 2013/14.
- Flooding and Drainage Issues:** The number of complaints received in relation to flooding and drainage issues has also seen a significant reduction due to strengthened operations and improved communications, resulting in an 85% decrease when comparing with quarter 1 2013/14.

## Key Challenges

10. During the quarter we received an increased number of complaints in relation to the Garden Waste service. This is in line with expected seasonal demand and complaints were mainly from customers who have been advised that they are unable to join the current scheme.

## Outcomes

11. Further investigation of stage 1 complaints received shows that during quarter 1 2014/15 there were 242 occasions (39% of complaints processed) where the complaint was not upheld. This indicates that, although service users were dissatisfied, the service had acted properly and followed the correct procedures.
12. If the not justified complaints and those that are ongoing are removed, DCC is left with 341 (55%) justified complaints, from which there is possibility of learning.
13. The charts below show a breakdown of the categorisation of complaints in terms of justification for each Service Grouping.



## Compliments and Suggestions

**KEY**    ■ Justified    ■ Not Justified    ■ Ongoing

14. The following table shows the numbers of compliments and suggestions received across service groupings during quarter 1 2014/15:

Service Grouping	Compliments	Suggestions
ACE	8	1
CAS	54	0
NS	129	52
RED	15	8
RES	32	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>67</b>

15. A large proportion of compliments are for staff in recognition of their support and help in resolving the customer's concerns and issues. On each of these occasions, the individual officer is notified of the compliment and thanked by their line manager. Many of these relate to the professionalism, speed of service and general helpfulness of staff.

## **PART TWO: Detailed report for each service grouping for quarter 1 2014/15**

16. The following sections provide details for each Service Grouping in relation to Customer Feedback received in quarter 1 2014/15 and any learning outcomes.

### **Assistant Chief Executive's Office (ACE)**

#### **Overview**

17. During quarter 1 2014/2015, 1 complaint, 8 compliments and 1 suggestion were received. A summary of feedback since 2012/2013 is shown below:

Service Grouping ACE	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14				13/14 Total	14/15				14/15 Total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<b>Complaints</b>	<b>7</b>	3	3	2	1	9	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Compliments</b>	<b>25</b>	3	9	25	12	49	8	-	-	-	8
<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>9</b>	3	3	4	14	24	1	-	-	-	1

#### **Complaints**

18. The complaint related to a customer banned from posting on DCC's Facebook page.

#### **Compliments and Suggestions**

19. All 8 compliments related to thanking staff in the County Records Office for help and support with enquiries. The suggestion was from an organisation offering its services.

## Children and Adults Services (CAS)

### Corporate Complaints Overview

20. During quarter 1 2014/2015, 6 complaints, 54 compliments and 0 suggestions were received. A summary of feedback since 2012/2013 is shown in the table.

Service Grouping CAS	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14				13/14 Total	14/15				13/14 Total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	33	10	15	18	11	54	6				6
Compliments	547	88	42	47	7	184	55				55
Suggestions	26	0	0	1	4	5	0				0

21. The total number of corporate representations (complaints, compliments and comments) received by CAS has increased between quarter 4 2013/14 and quarter 1 2014/15 (from 22 in quarter 4 to 60 in quarter 1). This is attributable to an increase in compliments. When compared with the same period last year, total representations have decreased by 39%

### Complaints

22. The numbers of complaints received in quarter 1 have decreased by 40% when compared with the same period in 2013/4. Complaints related to the following service areas:
- Children's Services received 2 complaints, both in relation to the One Point service.
  - Education received 4 complaints (1 in relation to school transport, 1 relating to school places, 1 relating to the Special Educational Needs team and 1 relating to the Music Service).

### Compliments and Suggestions

23. During the quarter, 55 compliments were received, a decrease of 38% in comparison to the corresponding period in 2013/14. Children's Services received 23 compliments (10 for the One Point service and 13 for the Youth Offending Service) and Education received 32 compliments (18 for the Educational Development Service, 7 for School Admissions and Transport, 3 for School and Governor Support Service, 2 for SEN Placement and Provision and 1 each for LACES and Improving Progression of Young People team).

### CAS Statutory Complaints, Compliments and Comments Q1 2014/15

24. The table below shows that the total number of statutory complaints compliments and comments received during the quarter has decreased by 6% when compared to the same period in 2013/14; complaints have decreased by 9% when compared with the same period in 2013/14.

Service Grouping CAS	Number Received									
	13/14				13/14 Total	14/15				14/15 Total
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	64	75	43	47	229	58				58
Compliments	155	100	97	99*	451*	148				148
Comments	0	0	0	0	0	0				0
Total	219	175	140	134	668	206				206

\*Please note that the data has been updated from the Q4, 2013/14 report, as a result of data cleansing following quality assurance.

25. The following is a breakdown of the compliments and complaints received about Children's Services and Adult Care in quarter 1:

	Children's Services	Adult Care	Totals
<b>Complaints</b>	30	28	<b>58</b>
<b>Compliments</b>	104	44	<b>148</b>

### Children's Services Statutory Complaints, Compliments and Comments Q1 2014/15

26. During quarter 1, a total of 30 complaints were recorded in relation to children's social care services, 29 Stage 1 complaints and 1 complaint was taken to Stage 2.
27. Of the 29 Stage 1 complaints, 100% were acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt, and 23 (79.3%) of these complaints were resolved within the prescribed timescale of 20 working days. This is an improvement on the 75% resolved within timescale in quarter 4 of 2013/14.
28. One of the Stage 1 complaints was resolved outside timescale with the complainant's agreement. The remaining 5 Stage 1 complaints were received near the quarter end and couldn't be resolved within timescale.
29. There are continued efforts to resolve complaints as soon as possible, avoiding going to Stage 2. This includes senior managers meeting with complainants and working with staff in the service areas to achieve resolution where possible. Despite these efforts, 1 complaint was taken to Stage 2 in quarter 1. The independent investigation is on target to be completed within the 65 working day timeframe.
30. Stage 1 complaints received, by team, are broken down as follows:

Teams	Current Q1
Assessment and Intervention – Bishop Auckland	1
Assessment and Intervention - Durham	1
Assessment and Intervention – Peterlee & Easington	1
Assessment and Intervention - Seaham	3
Assessment and Intervention - Spennymoor	2
Assessment and Intervention – Stanley 1	1
Child Protection - Peterlee	5
Child Protection - Spennymoor	4
Child Protection - Stanley	1
Disability social work	1
Fostering	1
Independent Reviewing Officers	1
Initial Response Team	4
Looked After and Permanence 2 - Durham	1
Safeguarding Children - Chester-le-Street	1
Safeguarding Children - Peterlee	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>

### Declined Complaints

31. No complaints were declined in the quarter.

### Themes of Complaints

32. *Lack of Service - Communications/Information* was the category with the highest number of complaints, with 16 complaints. *Professional Conduct of Staff* was a theme in 7 complaints, followed by *Provision of Service – Delay/Lateness of Actions* which was an element in 6 complaints. It is possible for a complaint to contain more than one theme.

### Outcome of Complaints

Outcome of Children's Complaints received in the Quarter					
Team	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Upheld	tbc	Total
Assessment and Intervention – Bishop Auckland		1			1
Assessment and Intervention - Durham		1			1
Assessment and Intervention – Peterlee & Easington		1			1
Assessment and Intervention - Seaham	1		1	1	3
Assessment and Intervention - Spennymoor	1	1			2
Assessment and Intervention – Stanley 1				1	1
Child Protection - Peterlee			3	2	5
Child Protection - Spennymoor	3		1		4
Child Protection - Stanley	1				1
Disability social work	1				1
Fostering	1				1
Independent Reviewing Officers	1				1
Initial Response Team	3	1			4
Looked After and Permanence 2 - Durham				1	1
Safeguarding Children – Chester-le-Street			1		1
Safeguarding Children - Peterlee		1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>

### Actions as a Result of Statutory Complaints

33. Improvement actions have included staff briefings to clarify a number of operational processes and procedures.

### Compliments

34. 104 compliments were received in quarter 1 as follows:

Service Area	Number of compliments
Aycliffe Secure Services	3
Assessment and Intervention Teams	6
Children's Homes	10
Community Support Team	21
Disabled Children and Families Team	3
Emergency Duty Team	5
First Contact and Prevention service	1
Looked After Children	2
4 Real	2
Pathfinder teams	49
The Full Circle	2

### Adult Services Statutory Complaints, Compliments Comments Q1 2014/15

35. During the quarter, 28 complaints were received in relation to adult social care services; an increase of 5 complaints (21.7%) in comparison to the previous quarter. Whilst there is no obvious reason for the increase, in the first quarter of previous years this appears to be a characteristic pattern.

Comparison of Complaints received by quarter					
Service Area	Q2 13/14	Q3 13/14	Q4 13/14	Q1 14/15	Direction of Travel from previous quarter
Adult Care	21	20	23	28	↑

36. All complaints received were acknowledged within 2 working days. Complaints Resolution Plans (CRPs) were completed for all 28 complaints. Of the 28 complaints received, 13 were completed within the quarter and responded to within the timescales set out in the CRP. The remaining 15 cases were ongoing at the quarter end but were still within their agreed completion timescales.
37. The table below shows a breakdown against Teams of the complaints received:

Service area	Number of compliments
Adult Social Work Teams: Older Persons /Mental Health Services for Older Persons/Physical Disability/ Sensory Support services	14
Adult Social Work Teams: Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Substance Misuse services	5
Commissioning	5
County Durham Care and Support	3
Emergency Duty Team	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>

### Declined Complaints

38. Two complaints were declined in the quarter both on the grounds that the complaints had previously been concluded.

### Category of Complaint

39. *Disputed Decision and Communications/Information* constituted the category with the highest number with 6 complaints containing this as an element. *Professional Conduct of Staff* constituted the next highest category with 4 complaints.

### Outcome of Complaints

40. Of the 13 complaints completed in the quarter, 9 were not upheld, 1 was partially upheld and 1 was upheld.

Outcome of Complaints received and completed in the quarter				
	Not upheld	Partially Upheld	Upheld	Total

Social Work Teams: Older Persons /Mental Health Services for Older Persons/Physical Disability/ Sensory Support services	9	1	0	<b>10</b>
Adult Social Work Teams: Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Substance Misuse services	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Commissioning	2	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>

### Actions as a result of statutory complaints

41. During the period a briefing note was issued to staff in Adult Care by the Operations Manager for Older People's Services/MHSOP/PD/SS Services. This included the following areas for learning:

Staff were reminded that:

- Notifications of Service/Change of Circumstances should provide clear information to avoid miscommunication. (In this case a further briefing is being prepared aligned to the findings of the Ombudsman referred to below)
- Service users must be informed if they are no longer to have an allocated worker and the reasons for this. They need to be given information on the team's duty system and the contact details.

### Compliments

42. There were 44 compliments received in the quarter. This represents a decrease of 31.3% from the previous quarter.

Service area	Compliments Received	
	Current Q1	Previous Q4
County Durham Care and Support	29	43
Social Work Teams: (Older Persons /Mental Health Services for Older Persons/Physical Disability/ Sensory Support services)	13	19
Social Work Teams (Learning Disabilities/Mental Health/Substance Misuse Services)	1	1
Commissioning	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>64</b>

43. Work continues in regard to strengthening the receipt of compliments as much as possible by communications to and speaking with management teams.

## Neighbourhood Services (NS)

### Overview

44. During quarter 1 2014/2015, 447 complaints, 129 compliments and 52 suggestions were received. A summary of feedback since 2012/2013 is shown in the following table:

NS	Number Received				
	2012-	13/14 split by quarter	13/14	14/15 split by quarter	14/15

	13	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Complaints	2,398	724	614	446	446	2,230	447				447
Compliments	402	126	134	125	121	506	129				129
Suggestions	215	62	57	41	88	248	52				52

45. Analysis shows that when compared to the same quarter in 2013/14, the number of complaints received decreased by 38%, this can be largely attributed to reduced complaints regarding the Refuse and Recycling Service and HWRCs.

### Improvement

- **Missed Bins:** 96 complaints were received regarding missed bins during quarter 1 2014/15, a 41% decrease when compared with the same period in 2013/14. This improvement can be attributed to a number of factors including improved logging and monitoring of missed bins following the implementation of the Bartec system.
- **Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** We received 31 complaints regarding HWRCs during quarter 1 2014/15. Complaints related to a number of issues including tighter control of the waste being put through the sites, waste permit issues and staff attitude. However, this is a 55% decrease when compared with quarter 1 2013/14.
- **Charges for replacement wheeled bins:** 21 complaints were received from residents objecting to the £20 charge for replacement bins. Complaints of this kind have reduced by 40% when compared to the same period last year.
- **Grass cutting issues:** Customers submitted 14 complaints regarding various aspects of the grass cutting service during quarter 1 2014/2015. This can be attributed to seasonal demand. Complaints include standard of grass cutting, areas being missed off grass cutting schedules and mess left by grass cutters. When looking at quarter 1 2013/14, complaints regarding this service have reduced by 44%.

### Challenges

- **Customer services administration / misplaced documents:** 14 complaints were received from customers who were unhappy with their customer service experience. Complaints regarding this service included; service request details being logged incorrectly by staff, documents being misplaced by customer services and customers being asked to provide supporting information that has already been handed in.
- **Garden waste service:** During the quarter we received an increased number of complaints regarding the garden waste service. These complaints were mainly from customers who have been advised that they are unable to join the current scheme. We received 14 complaints regarding this matter. We also received 1 complaint in relation to the introduction of a charge for the service under the new scheme.

### Learning and Future activity

45. Neighbourhood Services is currently undertaking a number of improvements which will take into account previous customer feedback. These relate to new ways of working to identify and address recycling contamination; development of service channels to support implementation of the new Garden Waste Scheme and a new process for the Highways Skips and Scaffold Service.

### Compliments and Suggestions

46. 129 compliments were received during quarter1 2014/15, this is a 3% increase when compared with the same period in 2013/14.
47. The majority of compliments relate to staff in the Refuse and Recycling, Clean and Green, Neighbourhood Wardens and Customer Service teams in recognition of their support and help in resolving customer enquiries in a professional and timely manner.
48. The remaining compliments relate to service provision; including the standard of work, e.g. keeping local areas clean and tidy, resolving pest control concerns and speed of work in relation to returning to collect missed bins and clearing litter.
49. There were 52 suggestions received, a 16% decrease when compared with the same period in 2013/14. A number of suggestions were in relation to the grounds maintenance service in particular regarding trees and hedges being maintained more frequently, increasing grass cutting and planting of more flower beds.

## Regeneration and Economic Development (RED)

### Overview

50. Between 1 April and 30 June 2014, 67 complaints, 15 compliments and 8 suggestions were received by the Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) Service Grouping.
51. As can be seen in the table below, the level of complaints has been decreasing since quarter 2 2013/14.

Service Grouping RED	Number Received										
	12/13	13/14 split by quarter				13/14	14/15 split by quarter				14/15
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	357	92	128	97	95	412	67				
Compliments	125	34	27	85	39	185	15				
Suggestions	33	11	6	13	10	39	8				

### Complaints

52. RED received 67 complaints, a decrease of 27% when compared with the same period in 2013/14. 68% of stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10 working day deadline and 19 complaints were escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints process, 15 of which were in relation to Planning Development.
53. Detailed analysis of the complaints received during quarter 1 shows that 3 areas of the Service Grouping received 81% of the complaints submitted; with 2 of these service areas showing significant reductions in the number of complaints received:

- **Planning Development:** 27 complaints received were in relation to Planning Development mainly in connection to planning decisions and building control. This is a slight increase on the same period of the previous year. 15 Planning Development complaints were escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints process during quarter 1.
- **Durham City Homes:** 17 complaints were received in relation to Durham City Homes, particularly in regard to the handling of repairs and maintenance issues and the associated contractors. This is a decrease of 41% from the same period in the previous year and 53% from quarter 4.
- **Strategic Traffic:** 10 complaints were received by Strategic Traffic in the quarter, the majority are parking and road works related. This is a decrease of 47% from the same period in the previous year and 41% from quarter 4.

### Compliments and Suggestions

54. The service grouping received 15 compliments in quarter 1. These are generally thanks to staff for the service they have provided.
55. RED received 8 suggestions during quarter 1, covering a wide range of subjects and service areas, including transport information and improvements to town centres.

### Resources (RES)

#### Overview

56. In the first quarter of 2014/15, Resources received 96 complaints; this represents a 30% decrease since quarter 4, and an encouraging 47% reduction compared to the equivalent quarter in 2013/14.

RES	Number Received										
	12/13 Total	13/14 split by quarter				13/14 Total	14/15 split by quarter				14/15
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Complaints	809	180	141	139	138	592	96				96
Compliments	69	14	10	17	38	79	32				32
Suggestions	24	3	5	3	8	19	6				6

57. The proportion of complaints responded to within the 10 days corporate target improved from 82% in quarter 4 to 84% in quarter 1 2014/15.

### Complaints and Improvements

58. The Revenues and Benefits service is committed to improving customer service and the customer experience and over recent months such efforts have resulted in a significant reduction in the number of complaints received. The 86 complaints received in quarter 1 2014/15 represents a 47% reduction over the same quarter in 2013/14 when 163 complaints were received.
59. Detailed analysis of customer feedback received during quarter 1 reveals that 98% of the complaints are attributable to the following:

- **Benefits Service:** The Benefits Service received 37 complaints in quarter 1, a 27% reduction over the previous quarter (51 in quarter 4). Twelve complaints (32%) were received from landlords or agents and 4 (11%) were made by claimants disputing the calculation of their benefit entitlement. Of the 12 made by landlords, 4 complained about payments being made directly to tenants.
- **Revenues Service:** The Revenues Service received 49 complaints this quarter (78 in quarter 4), a reduction of 37%. The reduction is a result of ongoing improvements to practices & procedures to ensure the maximum level of service is being achieved. The Quality Assurance team monitors all aspects of Council Tax billing and recovery to ensure that the correct discounts and exemptions are applied and the appropriate recovery action is taken as defined by legislation.

Analysis reveals that 13 (27%) of the complaints arose due to the council taking recovery action. Of these, 5 related to the attitude and behaviour of bailiffs. Contracts with bailiffs are subject to ongoing monitoring and any complaints received are forwarded onto the appropriate company. If an individual bailiff is subject to repeat complaints, the Revenues Service asks for their removal from working on the Council's contract. There were no other trends within the complaints received by the Revenues Service.

- **Legal & Democratic Services:** There was no pattern to the complaints received this quarter (8 in total), and each was subject to investigation. Of these, 4 related to electoral services, but all identified different issues.

### Compliments and Suggestions

60. There were 32 compliments received by the Resources service grouping in quarter 1 2014/15.
61. 18 compliments related to employees in Human Resources & Organisational Development. Four customers referred to the excellent service provided by individual members of staff in the Revenues and Benefits Service, and support for a community event was also subject to a compliment. Legal & Democratic Services continue to receive a number of compliments arising from conducting wedding ceremonies.
62. Suggestions received this quarter related to:
  - Legal & Democratic Services - online registration facility
  - Wording of recovery documentation to be made clear and in plain English.
  - Fast tracking housing benefit claims in emergency circumstances.
  - Not issuing council tax bills for information only purposes.

### Local Government Ombudsman (LGO): current activity

63. During the quarter the LGO made initial enquiries/ initiated investigations into 12 matters.

64. The Ombudsman discounted their involvement in 4 of these cases as they found no fault by the Council. These related to a School Admissions Appeal; Vehicle MOT; Benefits Claim and Exclusion from a Library.
65. 1 complaint, in relation to a highways issue was subject to a full investigation and the Ombudsman concluded that there had been injustice and maladministration. The complaint was closed when the Council agreed to various actions recommended by the Ombudsman, including a financial settlement.
66. Enquiries made by the Ombudsman in respect of the remaining 7 cases have now had the Council's response. The outcomes are currently awaited and relate to the following areas :
- Adult Social Care
  - Children's Services
  - Planning
  - Home to School Transport
  - Non-domestic Rates
  - 2 regarding the Council's list of contractors
67. The Ombudsman delivered decisions on 5 matters subject to investigations initiated prior to the beginning of the quarter relating to :
- Environmental Health issue – no fault by the Council.
  - Dog Fouling issue – no fault by the Council.
  - Refusal of a grant application – no fault by the Council.
  - Children's Services issue - The Ombudsman identified maladministration and injustice by the Council. The investigation was closed when the Council agreed to various actions to remedy the issues; including a financial settlement.
  - Adult Care Services - The Ombudsman identified maladministration and injustice by the Council. The investigation was closed when the Council agreed to various actions to remedy the issues; including a financial settlement. Actions implemented by the service include delivering clearer procedural documentation and staff refresher training
68. During the quarter the LGO also notified the Council of outcomes in relation to matters not subject to full investigation – these decisions are reached through consideration of details supplied by complainants, supplemented by information supplied by the Council:
- 2 Adult Care Services; 2 Planning and 1 Licensing issue – all referred to the LGO prematurely to be initially dealt with through the Council's complaints procedure.
  - 1 ASB and 3 Benefits/Tax issues were deemed outside the LGO's jurisdiction.
  - 1 Highways & Transport issue – Investigation not initiated.

### **Recommendation**

69. Corporate Issues, Overview and Scrutiny to note the report

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#### **Contact:**

**Alan Patrickson**

Head of Projects and Business Services

Tel: 03000 268161

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