

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 8
7 APRIL 2014	Public Report

Report of the Executive Director of Strategic Resources

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COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT 2012 - 13

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1
- To provide a summary of formal complaints monitored between 1st April 2012 and 31st March 2013 which fall under the Corporate Complaints' Policy.
 - To provide an update on proposed changes to the current Corporate Complaints Policy
 - To comment on the annual report from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about the council's performance on complaints.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1
- Members to note the information presented in this report regarding complaints received between 1st April 2012 and the 31st March 2013.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 The effective management of complaints is important to ensure action is taken when customers express dissatisfaction about the delivery of any of our services. Failure to do so could impact upon any of the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy:-

- Creating opportunities – tackling inequalities;
- Creating strong and supportive communities;
- Creating the UK's environmental capital; and
- Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee requested this item at its first meeting on 16 June 2003 and it is agreed that they will continue to receive regular monitoring reports.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1
- Complaint volumes have continued to decrease this year.
 - More complaints are being resolved at Stage 1 with less escalation to both Stage 2 and Stage 3.
 - Better compliance with the 15 day timescale at Stage 2.

- Speed of response to Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) enquiries has successfully been maintained at 15 days average response time against a target of 28 days for the 2nd year running.
- A change to the complaints process from 3 stages to 2 is currently being piloted.
- Compliments about council services continue to exceed complaints and have shown an increase on the previous year.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Customer Service

Customer service and perception of the council will improve if complaints are processed quickly and effectively. If complaints are resolved at the earliest opportunity this ultimately saves time, particularly of senior officers when complaints are escalated. If service improvements are identified and acted upon this will lead to fewer complaints in the future and improve the Council's reputation and efficiency.

Financial

The report contains no financial implications

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The report has been shared with relevant senior managers and comments have been incorporated.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Any comments and suggestions from Committee will be considered and incorporated in subsequent complaints reports.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1 • Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review 2012-13

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix 1 - Complaints Monitoring Report 2012-13

Appendix 2 – Service Improvements Detail

Appendix 3 – Proposed changes to the complaints process

APPENDIX 1

1. COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT 2012-13

1.1 This report will analyse the performance of the council's formal Corporate Complaints Procedure between 1st April 2012 and 31st March 2013. It is important to note that this report does not include complaints that fall outside the Corporate Complaints Policy, for example, complaints relating to schools, Statutory Children Social Care and Adult Social Care.

1.2 The Corporate Complaints Policy has three-stages:

Stage	Action	Timescale
1	The council aims to settle the majority of complaints quickly and satisfactorily through the 'front line' employees who provide the service or the relevant manager. The complaint may be resolved informally by way of an apology, by providing the service required, or providing an explanation to the customer.	10 Working Days *
2	If the customer is not happy with the decision at Stage 1, he/she can appeal to the Central Complaints Office, who asks the relevant Head of Service or Assistant Director to investigate the complaint fully and provide a written response to the customer.	15 Working Days
3	If the customer is not happy with the decision at Stage 2, he/she can appeal to the Chief Executive who will appoint an independent person to investigate the complaint fully and provide a written report to the customer.	30 Working Days

- Stage One (First Contact Complaint)
- Stage Two (Service Review)
- Stage Three (Independent Person Review)

Note: *Stage 1 complaints can be responded to in various ways depending on how the customer contacts the council and the complexity of the complaint. For example, it is hoped that the majority of complaints will be resolved without delay on the telephone or in person, but those that are sent in by letter should be responded to within the corporate standard of 10 working days.

1.3 Where a complaint is received by the central complaints office, a decision is made on where the complaint should be forwarded to. If it is known that a complaint falls outside of the complaints process, as for example, there is a different appeal route, then the customer will be advised of that. However, if a complaint is referred to a service and they decide that a matter cannot be resolved via the complaints process as there is a different route available, then the service area is expected to liaise with the central complaints team to decide how to proceed with the matter.

2. STAGE ONE COMPLAINTS (FIRST CONTACT COMPLAINTS)

2.1 The table below shows the number of Stage 1 complaints received for each department during 2012/13 including those that were received and logged by the Central Complaints Office (CCO). The data for the previous year is included to allow comparisons to be made.

Table 2: STAGE ONE COMPLAINTS RECEIVED				
Department	2011/2012		2012/2013	
	Total complaints received	Logged by CCO	Total complaints received	Logged by CCO
Chief Executive's Dep't	15	10	13	3
Children's Services	16	16	29	14
Operations	86	65	92	65
Strategic Resources	170	102	143	63
TOTAL	287	193	277	145

2.2 We have continued to collect more detailed data from departments. This allows us to analyse all Stage 1 complaints received by the council. The next two tables show the category and outcomes for all stage 1 complaints.

2.3 All complaints are classified into a category, the table below shows the breakdown by category for all stage 1 complaints logged for 2012/13.

Table 3: Department	Not To Standard	Poor Facility/Building	Broken Promise/Appointment	Staff Attitude Conduct	Breach Of Confidentiality	Denial/Withdrawal Of Service	Delayed/Failed Service	Lack Of/Incorrect Info About A Service	About Legislation	About Policy	Other	Overall
Chief Executives	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	2	2	13
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Growth & Regeneration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Governance Team	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	2	2	13
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strategic Resources	2	0	5	27	3	3	90	4	7	0	2	143
Customer Services	2	0	0	26	2	0	17	2	0	0	0	49
STS (formally Revs and Bens)	0	0	5	1	1	2	72	2	7	0	2	92
Business Transformation	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Children's Services	1	0	0	0	2	1	13	1	6	2	3	29
Admissions, Transport & Assets	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	6	0	3	15
Attendance/Ed Welfare	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education & Resources	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
SEN/Inclusion/Ed Psychology	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	7
Social Care (corporate)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Commissioning & Prevention	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Operations	11	1	2	13	0	1	42	5	0	13	4	92
Planning Delivery Services	0	0	0	2	0	0	9	0	0	4	0	15
Commercial Operations (City Centre)	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	5
Environment, Transport & Engineering	4	1	1	1	0	0	16	0	0	3	3	29
Neighbourhood Services	7	0	1	8	0	1	16	3	0	6	1	43
Overall	14	1	7	40	6	5	153	10	13	17	11	277

2.4 'Delayed/failed service' remains the most common category with 55% of the total number of stage 1 complaints. The second most common remains 'Staff Attitude/ Conduct' at 14% - which has shown a slight drop from last year. Staff attitude complaints are most common in the areas where customer contact levels are high.

2.5 To put the number of complaints received into perspective it is useful to have an understanding of the number of contacts a service may receive and to indicate the complaints received as a percentage of total contacts. For example, within customer services there were 561,924 customer contacts during 2012/13 either via telephone or face to face. As customer services received 49 complaints during the year this equates to 0.0087% or 1 complaint for every 11467 contacts.

2.6 Table 4 shows the outcomes for all stage 1 complaints registered for 2012/13.

Table 4 : Department	Upheld	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Overall
Chief Executives	9	3	1	13
Communications	0	0	0	0
Legal Services	0	0	0	0
Growth & Regeneration	0	0	0	0
Governance Team	9	3	1	13
Human Resources	0	0	0	0
Strategic Resources	69	42	32	143
Customer Services	28	8	13	49
Shared Transactional Services	39	34	19	92
Business Transformation	2	0	0	2
Children's Services	7	16	6	29
Admissions, Transport & Assets	2	12	1	15
Attendance/Ed Welfare	0	0	0	0
Education & Resources	1	1	1	3
SEN/Inclusion/Ed Psychology	3	1	3	7
Social Care (corporate)	1	1	1	3
Commissioning & Prevention	0	1	0	1
Operations	16	54	21	91
Planning Delivery Services	1	12	2	15
Commercial Operations (City Centre)	0	2	3	5
Environment, Transport & Engineering	8	14	7	29
Neighbourhood Services	7	26	9	42
Overall	101	115	60	276

2.7 There was a slight rise in the number of upheld cases this year at 37% of all stage 1 complaints, an increase of 5% from the previous year. There was a corresponding drop in the not upheld cases which decreased to 42% from 47%. The remaining 21% were partially upheld. A high uphold rate confirms that responsibility is accepted where problems have occurred and this generally leads to more resolution of issues at the earliest stage of the process.

3. **STAGE TWO COMPLAINTS (SERVICE REVIEW)**

3.1 Table 5 provides a breakdown of Stage 2 complaints by department, which have dropped in volume since the previous year. This supports the fact that more cases are being upheld at Stage 1 leading to earlier resolution for customers and fewer escalations to Stage 2.

Table 5: Stage Two Complaints By Dept	2011-12	2012-13
Chief Executive's Department	2	3
Children's Services	8	4
Operations	24	27
Strategic Resources	16	9
Overall	50	43

3.2 Table 6 gives greater detail of the business units who have had Stage 2 complaints during 2012/13 as well as which category the complaint fell into. The table shows that Delayed/failed service is still the most common category with 30% of the stage 2 complaints falling into this category. For the second year the second highest category has been about policy at 25% this year. Not to Standard was the third most common reason for complaint at 16%. It is reassuring that staff attitude complaints are a very small percentage of complaints that escalate to Stage 2.

Table 6: Department	Not To Standard	Poor Facility/Building	Broken Promise/Appointment	Staff Attitude Conduct	Breach Of Confidentiality	Denial/Withdrawal Of Service	Delayed/Failed Service	Lack Of/Incorrect Info About A Service	About Legislation	About Policy	Other	Overall
Chief Executives	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Democratic Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Growth & Regeneration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strategic Resources	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	3	0	9
Customer Services	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Revenues and Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	5
Business Transformation	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
Children's Services	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	4
Admissions, Transport & Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Attendance/Ed Welfare	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education & Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
SEN/Inclusion/Ed Psychology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Care (corporate)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Commissioning & Prevention	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Operations	6	0	1	1	0	1	6	2	1	8	1	27
Planning Delivery Services	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	5
Commercial Operations (City Centre)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environment, Transport & Engineering	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	4	0	9
Neighbourhood Services	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	1	2	1	13
Overall	7	0	1	1	0	2	13	5	2	11	1	43

3.3 Table 7 shows the outcomes for all stage 2 complaints registered for 2012/13.

74% of complaints were not upheld – a major increase from 2011/12 when the percentage was 58%. A higher Not Upheld rate at Stage 2 is expected as most upheld cases will stop at Stage 1. However a high upheld rate can only be justified where the decision is correct and can stand up to scrutiny when escalated further. Where a complaint is not upheld at Stage 2 this was the last opportunity by the service concerned to identify any fault that they may have been responsible for.

	Upheld	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Overall
Table 7: Department				
Chief Executives Department	0	2	1	3
Communications	0	0	0	0
Legal Services	0	2	0	2
Democratic Services	0	0	1	1
Human Resources	0	0	0	0
Growth & Regeneration	0	0	0	0
Strategic Resources	3	5	1	9
Customer Services	1	0	0	1
Revenues and Benefits	1	3	1	5
Business Transformation	1	2	0	3
Children's Services	0	2	2	4
Admissions, Transport & Assets	0	1	0	1
Attendance/Ed Welfare	0	0	0	0
Education & Resources	0	0	1	1
SEN/Inclusion/Ed Psychology	0	0	0	0
Social Care (corporate)	0	0	1	1
Commissioning & Prevention	0	1	0	1
Operations	2	23	2	27
Planning Delivery Services	0	5	0	5
City Centre Operations	0	0	0	0
Environment, Transport and Engineering	0	9	0	9
Neighbourhood Services	2	9	2	13
Total	5	32	6	43

3.4 All Stage 2 complaints were acknowledged within the 2 working days target. This task is undertaken by the Central Complaints team.

- 3.5 Table 8 shows that in 2012/13, there was a slight improvement in the number of stage two complaints which were responded to within 15 working days. It is important that Stage 2 complaints are responded to promptly to prevent premature escalations.

	2011-12	2012-13
Chief Executive's Dep't	100%	100%
Children's Services	50%	75%
Operations	87%	81.48%
Strategic Resources	73%	88.88%
Overall	77.6%	84.8%

4. STAGE THREE COMPLAINTS (INDEPENDENT PERSON REVIEW)

- 4.1 Complaints at stage 3 are investigated by the Governance Team, although occasionally it is necessary to appoint other independent investigators due to capacity within the Governance team. In 2012/13 there were two cases where independent investigators were used. The remaining ten investigations were conducted by the Governance team investigators. The Complaint Manager in consultation with the Chief Executive can also decline to offer a Stage 3 investigation where it is considered there is no merit in continuing with further investigation, or where the complainant may have recourse to an alternative process such as an appeals process. In such cases the complainant will usually be given the option of early referral of the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 4.2 In 2012/13 only 12 complaints were investigated at Stage 3 of the complaints process. This is a substantial reduction from 22 in the previous year. However another 5 complaints were assessed for a Stage 3 investigation but were declined in favour of early referral to the Local Government Ombudsman. If these complaints had been investigated at Stage 3 the reduction in Stage 3 investigations would still have been significant at 23%.
- 4.3 The purpose of a Stage 3 investigation is to ensure the customer has access to a fair investigation process which concludes in an investigation by experienced officers who are not employed by the service the complaint refers to. It also ensures that the council's Chief Executive is satisfied that any resolution possible has been offered before the complaint is referred externally.
- 4.4 In 2011/12 the outcome of complaints at Stage 3 indicated that there was a declining need for Stage 3 investigation with the outcome on only one case changing significantly from the Stage 2 findings. Therefore the complaints manager proposed a review of the process to establish if a two stage complaints process would offer a more efficient way of proceeding with complaints whilst still

providing a fair and considered response to the complainant. A new process was developed and a pilot of this new process has commenced.

4.5 The outcome on Stage 3 complaints this year has changed from the position last year. Of the 12 cases which were investigated there were 4 where the Stage 3 complaint investigation partially upheld the complaint where the complaint was not upheld at stage 2. This indicates some type of independent scrutiny is still required to ensure that issues are recognised and resolved from within the Authority without the need for external scrutiny.

4.6 Table 9 breaks down the stage 3 complaints by directorate.

	2011/12	2012/13
Chief Executive's Dep't	1	0
Children's Services	2	3
Operations	14	8
Strategic Resources	5	1
Overall	22	12

4.7 The complaints at Stage 3 are detailed as follows:- Children's Services had three complaints at Stage 3; with only four at Stage 2 this is a high escalation rate – all of these were partially upheld at Stage 3 and relevant feedback was given to the Heads of Service concerned to improve practise. Operations had the majority of Stage 3 complaints with eight cases but there was a reduction against the previous year. Of these cases four were Partially Upheld, three were Not Upheld and one was withdrawn by the customer. The final Stage 3 was in regards to the Waste 2020 team within Strategic Resources and this complaint was Partially Upheld. Only 4 of the cases reviewed at Stage 3 were escalated by the complainant to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Council's decision was not challenged by the LGO in any of these cases.

4.8 The five complaints which were considered at Stage 3 which did not result in an investigation were all in relation to the Operations department. One of these cases was subsequently upheld following review by the Local Government Ombudsman.

4.9 Table 10 break down the stage 3 complaints received during 2012/13 by category and final outcome. It should be noted that the Upheld/Partially upheld rate at Stage 3 is much higher than the Stage 2 Upheld/partially upheld rate. This indicates that a percentage of customers have the conviction that their case has merit and will pursue the matter rigorously. The fact that independent scrutiny will identify issues that the department concerned may not have acknowledged at Stage 2 indicates the continuing need for a stage which looks at the complaint outside of the department concerned.

Table 10 : Stage 3 Category Breakdown	No.	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Withdrawn
Not to standard	0	0	0	0	0
Poor Facility/Building	0	0	0	0	0
Broken Promise/Appointment	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Attitude Conduct	2	1	1	0	0
Breach Of Confidentiality	1	0	1	0	0
Denial/Withdrawal Of Service	0	0	0	0	0
Delayed/Failed Service	5	0	3	1	1
Lack Of/Incorrect Info About A Service	1	0	1	0	0
About Legislation	0	0	0	0	0
About Policy	3	0	1	2	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Total	12	1	7	3	1

5 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN (LGO)

5.1 Each year the LGO provide an annual review to the Council. For 2012/13 the LGO's review letter only presented the total number of complaints received and not the more detailed analysis they had offered in previous years.

The reason for this is that the LGO changed their business processes during the course of 2012/13 and therefore did not feel able to provide a consistent set of data for the entire year.

They confirmed that in 2012/13 they received 28 complaints about our authority. This compares particularly favourably with the 60 complaints they received about our authority the year before and compares favourably with the average for Unitary Authorities which was 36 (although recognising considerable population variations between authorities of a similar type).

Although the LGO have not provided more detailed analysis the council's central complaints team capture some data about LGO cases on their database. This confirms that of the 28 cases which the LGO received about Peterborough City Council in 2012/13 they made formal enquiries on only 19 cases, compared with 18 in the previous year. There were no maladministration reports from the LGO in 2012/13 which is the most serious finding that the LGO will make on a case. The average response times on LGO enquiries was also maintained at a low level of 15 days against the target of 28 days for all responses.

6 PERSISTENT COMPLAINANTS

- 6.1 The complaints policy contains provision to restrict customer's access in exceptional circumstances.

Complainants can sometimes pursue their complaints in a manner which can impede an investigation or can cause a significant resource issue for the council. In these circumstances, the behaviour of the complainant may be defined as unreasonably persistent. The council defines an unreasonably persistent complainant as:-

'those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the council, hinder the council's consideration of their, or other people's, complaints.'

During 2012-13 this was applied to four customers who had their access formally restricted in various ways.

A policy on when and why to restrict access is in place. The decision to place a customer on this register and restrict their access to the complaints process is taken as a last resort and following recommendation by the Complaint Manager this must be authorised by the Head of Customer Services.

The process involves a review every six months to ensure where the customer complies with the restrictions they can be removed from the register at the earliest possible point.

The policy includes a right of referral to the Local Government Ombudsman if the customer believes the policy has been applied to them unfairly.

7 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

It is important that where faults and system weaknesses are identified that improvements are recommended and implemented at a departmental level to ensure a service improves and future complaints are reduced.

Appendix 2 shows a full list of service improvements which were identified and delivered following investigation into individual complaints in 2012-13

8 HOW COMPLAINTS ARE RECEIVED

Table 11 shows how complaints are received. The most popular contact method continues to be email, with letters next and telephone calls third. This trend is repeated across all departments with the exception of Customer Services who take the majority of calls that our customers make with the council and therefore receive most of their complaints this way.

Table 11: Department	Email/Online Form	Letter	Person	Telephone	Overall
Chief Executives	12	1	0	0	13
Communications	0	0	0	0	0
Legal Services	0	0	0	0	0
Growth & Regeneration	0	0	0	0	0
Governance Team	12	1	0	0	13
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0
Strategic Resources					
Customer Services	14	10	1	24	49
Shared Transactional Services	33	35	8	16	92
Business Transformation	2	0	0	0	2
Children's Services					
Admissions, Transport & Assets	6	8	0	1	15
Attendance/Ed Welfare	0	0	0	0	0
Education & Resources	3	0	0	0	3
SEN/Inclusion/Ed Psychology	4	2	0	1	7
Social Care (corporate)	2	1	0	0	3
Commissioning & Prevention	0	0	0	1	1
Operations					
Planning Delivery Services	9	5	1	0	15
Commercial Operations (City Centre)	1	0	0	4	5
Environment, Transport & Engineering	17	11	0	1	29
Neighbourhood Services	19	12	2	10	43
Overall	122	85	12	58	277

9 COMPLIMENTS

- 9.1 This data is captured by all Council departments and sent to the Complaints team to provide annual figures. This is showing an upward trend with 794 in the first year, 822 in the second year and 853 this year.

As can be seen from table 12 we have recorded both internal and external compliments. External compliments are compliments received by members of the public or external organisations and internal compliments are from Councillors or from one department to another. Both internal and external compliments have seen a rise against the previous year.

Table 12: Compliments	External	Internal	Overall
Chief Executives Department			119
Communications	0	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services	68	40	108
Human Resources	0	11	11
Strategic Resources			240
Customer Services	145	66	211
Shared Transactional Services (inc Revs & Bens)	27	2	29
Children's Services			17
Admissions, Transport & Assets	3	1	4
Attendance/ Education Welfare	2	1	3
Education & Resources	4	1	5
SEN/ Inclusion/ Ed Psychology	2	0	2
Commissioning & Prevention (inc 8-19 service)	3	0	3
Operations			477
Planning Delivery Services	177	36	213
Commercial Operations (City Centre Services)	15	2	17
Environment, Transport and Engineering	24	18	42
Neighbourhood Services	201	4	205
Overall	671	182	853

PARTNER COMPLAINTS

10 VIVACITY

10.1 In May 2010, management of Peterborough City Council's Key Theatre, Museum and Art Gallery, Public Libraries and Sports Centre's transferred into a specially created culture and leisure trust called Vivacity.

The table below details the complaints for Vivacity during 2012/13.

Table 13: Department	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Sports Services	5	6	5	9	25
Libraries	0	0	0	2	2
Arts	3	1	1	1	6
Heritage	2	2	0	2	6
Total	10	9	6	14	39

This is an increase of 20% over the previous year where **32** complaints were received. Complaints about Sports Services and Heritage have increased, whilst Libraries and Arts have seen a decrease in complaints.

11. ENTERPRISE PETERBOROUGH (now AMEY)

In 2011/12 Enterprise provided complaints figures for the second half of the year only and these were provided in the annual report last year. This indicated 132 complaints had been recorded in a five month period November 2011 – March 2012.

This year a full set of complaints figures have been provided by Enterprise, Enterprise interacts with around 1,423,332 households per quarter and the services they offer have a direct impact on all of the residents of Peterborough. The table below sets out the total numbers of complaints and expresses these against a percentage of the interactions.

Enterprise Peterborough has provided the following commentary alongside these figures:-

Although there are increased interactions due to the food waste roll out, we have also decreased interactions by cutting the central ward from a weekly residual collection to a fortnightly collection.

It should be noted that Enterprise Peterborough implemented the food waste collection scheme in late October, this naturally has generated calls from service users.

To add to this Enterprise Peterborough have also taken on more tree and woodland officers to deal with PCC's tree stock, this is now moving at pace with the officers visiting and assessing many sites every day, this generates interest from members of the public and in cases where work takes place it can often attract complaints.

Month	Total	Justified	Unjustified	Customer Interactions	Percentage justified complaints/compared to customer interactions
April	67	43	24	474,444	0.009%
May	108	62	46	474,444	0.013%
June	111	34	77	474,444	0.007%
July	116	58	58	474,444	0.012%
August	115	51	64	474,444	0.011%
September	82	32	50	474,444	0.006%
October	102	25	77	474,444	0.005%
November	139	81	58	474,444	0.017%
December	81	36	45	474,444	0.007%
January	160	55	105	474,444	0.011%
February	83	36	47	474,444	0.007%
March	88	43	45	474,444	0.009%
TOTAL	1252	556	696		

APPENDIX 2 – SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Service Improvements are identified during the course of investigating complaints and these are recorded by the Central complaints team who then contact the relevant department later in the year to ensure the service improvement has been delivered.

Below is the full detail of service complaints which have been delivered following complaints investigated in 2012/13.

Reference	Description	Service Improvement	Feedback
C11/232	Complaint regarding the Council Tax department not liaising with Equita Bailiffs regarding money outstanding	Ensure that the bailiffs are chasing the correct balance	Council tax manager has confirmed that they have introduced a 'Daily Bailiff Cash Report' which is run every day and highlights any changes of circumstances/ balances etc
C11/233	Complaint regarding difficulties getting through to the Emergency Out of Hours service on Saturday night (31 March 2012)	2 operators should be available to cover the CCTV/ out of hours service	Manager has advised that they now have 2 operators on duty whenever possible.
C12/006	Complaint regarding lack of action by the parking attendants in the Dickens Street area	Extra CEO's are being employed and it is hoped they will patrol this area more frequently	The Parking Manager confirmed that extra Civil Enforcement Officers have been employed and they are currently recruiting a further two to bring the total up to 12.

Reference	Description	Service Improvement	Feedback
C12/038	Complaint regarding the lack of signage/ information about card payment facilities in the Car Haven car park	It is planned to upgrade the machines in car parks so that they will accept both coin and credit/debit card payments – as well as a cashless payment method through the use of mobile phones.	All surface car parks have now been upgraded to Solar Powered machines accepting payment by cash, credit and debit card. The machines in the Multi Storey Car Park have not been upgraded as they are all situated away from natural light. ALL car park spaces BOTH ON-STREET AND CAR PARK throughout the city are covered by Ring-GO the cashless payment system where drivers can pay for parking using their mobile phones.
C12/106	Foster carer complaining about his treatment by the Fostering dept.	In the process of completing a new guide for foster carers which will cover the issues of reviews and resignations making it clear for all foster carers	A new 'Foster Carers Handbook' has been updated with this information and reissued
C12/137	Complaint regarding handling of a Street Lighting report	Pass reports to the relevant developer if not council lighting - and explain this to customers	Now when reports are passed onto the developers customers are given the relevant contact details to contact the developer direct for future reference.
C12/150	Lack of response from the Passenger Transport department regarding her sons school taxi pick up when it was snowing.	Reviewing procedures regarding school transport in adverse weather conditions	Passenger transport team confirmed that they receive an update of school closures from the Education team, a process is in place to cancel transport and notify parents as soon as practically possible

Reference	Description	Service Improvement	Feedback
C12/013	Complaint regarding a mini bus being parked in a permit area (without a valid permit) for 6 days without being issued with a ticket	Parking enforcement team to undertake regular patrols of the area as part of their current rota arrangements. In addition they can now respond to urgent and immediate calls for service.	Patrols regularly cover York Road in line with other areas of the city. Residents can call the 747474 Peterborough direct. Reports are now usually responded to within a 24 hour period.
C12/147	Fletton Cemetery – the deceased's grave was still being dug when the funeral party arrived at the cemetery	Procedures have been amended to ensure graves are fully dressed a minimum of 30 minutes prior to scheduled funeral time) and will improve liaison arrangements with Funeral Directors.	Confirmation received that graves are now always prepared and dressed at least 30 minutes before the scheduled funeral. If the funeral is likely to arrive more than 30 mins early funeral directors have been advised to ring ahead to notify the cemetery.
C12/003	Concerns about the charge for bulky waste collections – and whether an Equality Impact Assessment was conducted.	Client team agreed to carry out an equality impact assessment on the charges for bulky waste collection to ensure this was done. It is recommended that individual officers involved in services where policy decisions may impact on the public undertake the e-learning programme for equality impact assessments to ensure these are always considered.	EQIA training undertaken by Client team in Nov 2012 to ensure EQIA could be completed Equality Impact assessment training recommendation referred to all Heads of Service to roll out to all relevant staff. EQIA's conducted are posted on the Council website for customer information. This provides evidence that EQIA's are being conducted in advance of service changes.
C12/044	Complaint regarding the 'History' page on the Peterborough Homes Website being out of date	New website is being launched ensuring the process is automated	New website has been introduced

Reference	Description	Service Improvement	Feedback
C12/049	Complaint regarding the answering service in the Housing Needs department	Suggestion to include a recommended time to call back will be implemented	Message has been updated on telephone line to ensure customers know the peak times and are asked to avoid calling at these times unless they have an emergency
C12/168	Complaint regarding failure to get through to Housing Options and the lack of response from a previous complaint	Investigating the possibility of implementing an improved call management system in order to give clients more information about how quickly we may be able to answer their call	Housing Manager in discussion with ICT to implement a system which explains the number of customers holding on the line for this service.
C12/131	Complaint regarding offer letter received from Housing Needs which offered a property which was subsequently withdrawn	Letters need to be reworded	Housing Manager has confirmed that it is now clear from the letter that applicants are being offered a viewing not guaranteed the property.
C12/159	Complaint regarding delays in housing assessment and band allocation and loss of personal possessions due to homelessness.	Introduce a policy to deal with personal property at risk in homeless situations and included this on homeless application forms so that applicants know what action the service will take.	Policy has been introduced and housing application forms updated with the new information.

Appendix 3

Review of Corporate Complaints Process

The Complaint Manager was asked to review the current three stage corporate complaints process in December 2012 and develop a two stage process to replace it.

This was following guidance by the Local Government Ombudsman that indicated that a two stage process should be achievable within most Authorities.

The benefits of a two stage process would be:-

- Earlier resolution for the complainant where resolution is possible
- Greater compliance with the Ombudsman's stated timescales of 12 weeks in total for a complaint to be handled through the Council's process
- Reduction in resources as less resource expended on complaint handling
- In addition, it is apparent from some cases that the same manager is providing the stage 1 and stage 2 responses and so this change will remove this duplication.

The Complaint Manager and Head of Governance developed a revised process during 2013 and in September 2013 the Chief Executive agreed to a pilot of this new two stage process to test its effectiveness. The pilot of the new process began in October 2013. The Head of Service, Neighbourhoods, Adrian Chapman, agreed to test the new process within the Neighbourhoods service and feedback to the Complaint Manager to decide if the new process was working well and if it could replace the three stage complaints process across the Council.

Feedback from the Head of Service, Neighbourhoods is that the new process is working well for the department. So far there have not been any cases where a complaint under the new process has not been resolved at Stage 1. Whilst this is positive it has meant that it has not yet been possible for the second stage of the new process to be tested. For this reason it has been necessary to extend the pilot further so that this can be tested and any amendments to the process made before full implementation across the other Council departments.

It is believed that the new process will prove to be a better process for all parties involved and that it can be adopted as the Council's corporate complaint process during Q1 of 2014/15.

The Chief Executive has endorsed the continuation of the pilot for a further quarter and requested that the Complaint Manager seek authorisation from Corporate Management team when the process has been fully tested.