

Meeting:	Audit and Governance Committee	Date:	1 July 2015
Subject:	Annual Complaints Monitoring		
Report Of:	Monitoring Officer		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Ross Cook, Corporate Director		
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Appendices:	1. Summary of total complaints and compliments for last 4 municipal years		
	2. 2014/15 complaints shown by service area		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider statistics relating to complaints and compliments received by the Council between April 2014 and March 2015 and complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman about the Council during the same period.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is asked to **RESOLVE:**

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) Following consideration of the information contained in the report, to make any other recommendations it wishes to make.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council has a process for dealing with complaints about its services and for receiving compliments and other comments. The Council's Complaints Policy and procedure is being reviewed at present and, following public consultation, is in the process of being finalised. When a revised Complaints procedure has been approved, training on how to use the procedure will be provided to relevant officers within the Council.
- 3.2 Any complaints received by the Council are recorded and monitored to ensure that we know whether or not we are meeting our targets for responding to complaints.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 contains a summary of the total numbers of complaints and compliments for each municipal year from 2010/11 onwards to enable the Committee to understand how the number of complaints and compliments received in 2014/15 compares with previous years.
- 3.4 Appendix 2 shows the complaints received in 2014/15 broken down by service area, together with the numbers of those complaints which are found to be justified or unjustified and whether the number of complaints is an increase or decrease on the previous year.

3.5 Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the Council's response to their complaint, they can refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). In 2014/15, a total of seven complaints were made to the LGO. The Ombudsman decided that two of the complaints should not be investigated and one was not upheld. Two complaints were upheld, one of which required no further action and one which found maladministration. The remaining two complaints have been accepted by the LGO and are ongoing.

3.6 Examples of things that have changed within the Council following consideration of complaints include:

- Where customers have referred to certain information not being available on our website, we arrange for the information to be uploaded to the website;
- We have redesigned the ticketing system display in Reception and renamed some of the buttons in response to customer feedback;
- We now have portable hearing loops in Reception following customer comments that the hearing loop wasn't working very well.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 There are no alternative options relevant to this matter.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The Audit and Governance Committee needs to be kept informed about the Council's performance in dealing with complaints as part of its governance role. Monitoring of complaint volumes, response times and services against which complaints are raised can help with early identification of issues that might need addressing or to identify service improvements.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

6.1 Information on complaints handling will continue to be recorded during 2015-16 for presentation to the Committee in June 2016.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 Regular consideration of complaints enables the Council to ensure that its governance arrangements are appropriate and up-to-date.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 There are no community safety implications.

Sustainability

- 11.2 There are no sustainability implications.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 There are no staffing implications.

Background Documents: None.

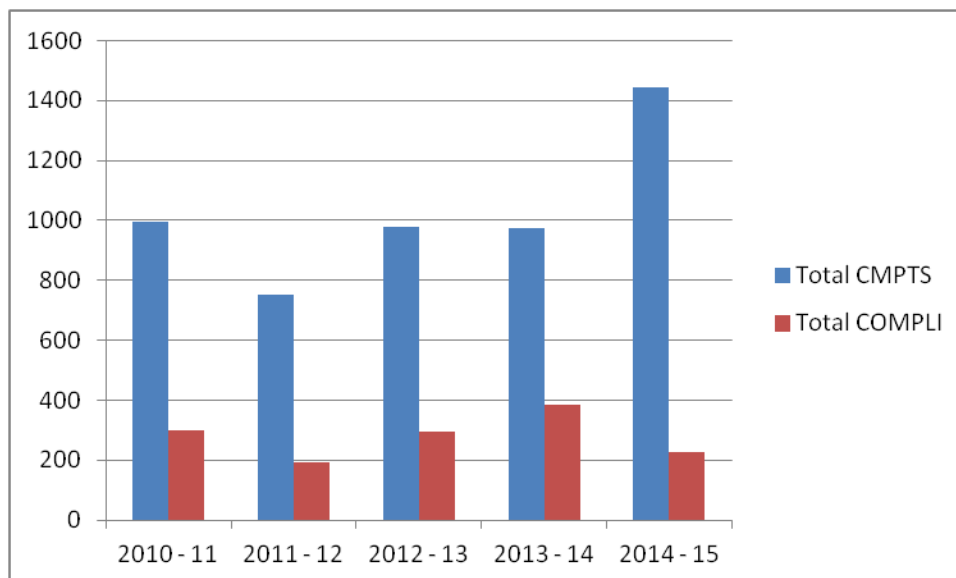
Appendix 1

Complaints Stats Year on Year comparison – 2010 - 2015

Stage 1													
	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Stage 1
2010	125	72	68	90	127	82	37	53	40	68	42	126	930
2011	95	77	75	57	66	69	60	49	45	49	46	48	736
2012	49	52	101	115	108	105	82	65	48	105	56	59	945
2013	52	112	103	87	91	73	82	68	56	53	59	100	936
2014	89	95	88	139	130	152	98	76	97	124	183	138	1409

Stage 2													
	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Stage 2
2010	10	10	15	4	6	5	5	2	2	2	2	3	66
2011	0	4	1	0	1	5	0	0	0	2	3	1	17
2012	2	2	2	5	4	2	3	2	2	4	4	0	32
2013	6	4	5	7	1	3	4	1	3	1	2	2	39
2014	3	4	2	4	1	1	4	3	6	4	0	3	35

	Total CMPTS	Total COMPLI
2010 - 11	996	300
2011 - 12	753	193
2012 - 13	977	293
2013 - 14	975	385
2014 - 15	1444	227



Resolved in 10 days

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Apr	81	83	37	47	77
May	53	67	28	96	83
Jun	79	69	92	70	75
Jul	72	51	81	72	123
Aug	102	59	73	82	123
Sep	70	64	72	62	143
Oct	27	57	68	57	94
Nov	43	47	46	54	75
Dec	33	41	35	51	86
Jan	60	35	77	77	119
Feb	38	38	13	49	174
Mar	109	43	13	43	126
	767	654	635	760	1298

APPENDIX 2

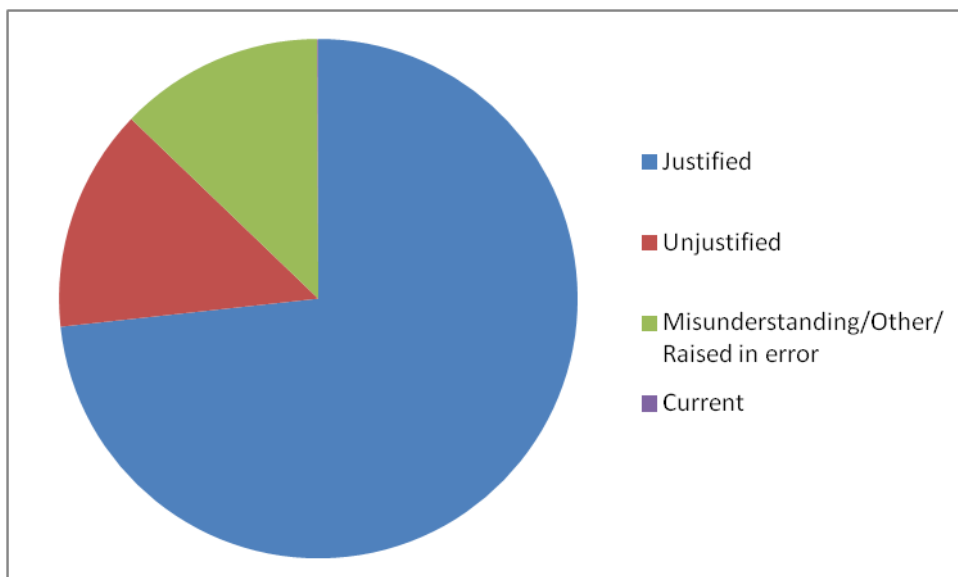
Complaints received in 2014-15

Department Name	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total	Justified	Unjustified	Other	Change in total from 2013/14
ASSET MANAGEMENT	10		10	9	1	0	-5
BENS, INVESTIGATIONS, W.R. (CIVICA)	16	1	17	1	2	14	-6
BUILDING STANDARDS AND CONTROL	5		5		4	1	+1
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT	2	1	3	3			+3
BUSINESS SUPPORT	1		1	1			+1
CHIEF EXEC	1		1			1	+1
CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUM	2		2	2			-1
CIVICA CLIENT TEAM	0		0	0			-3
COUNCIL TAX (CIVICA)	12		12			12	-24
CUSTOMER SERVICES	54	1	55	33	5	16	+9
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	1		1			1	=
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL-REGENERATION	8	2	10	3	7		-4
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	2		2	2			+2
ELECTORAL ROLL	4		4	1	3		+1
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT	3		3		3		=
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	38	1	39	9	21	9	+4
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CONSERVATION	0		0				-2
AMEY	1116	23	1139	933	118	88	+559
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	1		1	1			=
FOLK MUSEUM	0		0				-3
GL1 LEISURE	1		1	1			+1
GLOS CITY HOMES	9		9			9	+6
GLOUCESTERSHIRE HIGHWAYS	1		1			1	+1
MARKETING GLOUCESTER	1		1			1	=
GUILDHALL	5		5	1	2	2	-5
HOMELESS & HOUSING ADVICE MANAGER	4	1	5	1	3	1	+3
HOMELESS	5		5	1	4		+3
MARKETS	1		1	1			-12
COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING	2		2	2			+1
MUSEUMS	1		1	1			-5
NMS ENVIRONMENTAL	38		38	23	8	7	-50
NMS NEIGHBOURHOODS	12	1	13	9	3	1	-21
PARKING	5	1	6	5		1	-1
PARKING PARTNER	3		3	2	1		=
PEST CONTROL CONTRACTOR	0		0				-2
PLANNING	11	3	14	7	5	2	+8
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING	11		11	4	4	3	+5
HOUSING RESOURCE TEAM	9		9	1	4	4	+3
REVENUES,FEES AND CHARGES (CIVICA)	4		4			4	-4
SPATIAL PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT	2		2	1	1		+1
SUNDRY DEBTORS	6		6			6	+6
TOURIST OFFICE (TIC)	2		2		2		+1
Total	1409	35	1444	1058	201	184	

The above table shows a modest change, both upwards and downwards, in complaints against many services. You will note however the large increase in the number of complaints against Amey. These are in the main connected to two waste & recycling service changes that took place during the year, namely the re-introduction of garden waste stickers and changes to the Christmas/New Year collection schedule, which resulted in teething problems all of which were quickly resolved. As this service impacts on all 55,000 of our residents and involves approximately 2,860,000 collections per year, the level of complaints received is very low. In context the number of complaints received represents 2.09% of the total number of households in Gloucester and 0.03% of the total number of collections carried out every year.

It is pleasing to note that, although the total number of complaints made during 2014/15 increased by 469, the number of complaints going on to Stage 2 actually decreased from 39 to 35. This means that a higher proportion of complaints are being resolved at Stage 1.

Complaint Outcomes 2014/15			
Justified	Unjustified	Misunderstanding/Other/Raised in error	Current
1058	201	184	1



In comparison with last year's complaint outcomes, the proportion of complaints that are justified has increased by 11%, the % of unjustified complaints has fallen by 3 to 14% and the % of complaints made as a result of a misunderstanding or raised in error has fallen by 8% to 13%.