

Meeting:	Audit and Governance Committee	Date:	20 June 2016
Subject:	Annual Complaints Monitoring		
Report Of:	Head of Finance		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Jon Topping, Head of Finance		
	Email: jon.topping@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel: 396242	
Appendices:	1. Summary of total complaints and compliments for last 5 municipal years		
	2. 2015/16 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 2015 and March 2016 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** that:
- (a) 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.
- 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 2015/16 compares with previous years.
- 3.4 Appendix 2 shows the complaints received in 2015/16 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 2015/16, a total of 11 complaints were made to the LGO. The Ombudsman decided that six of the complaints should not be investigated and one was not upheld. Four complaints were upheld, one of which required no further action and three which found maladministration (these were reported to Committee during the year).

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;

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 2016-17 for presentation to the Committee in June 2017.

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.

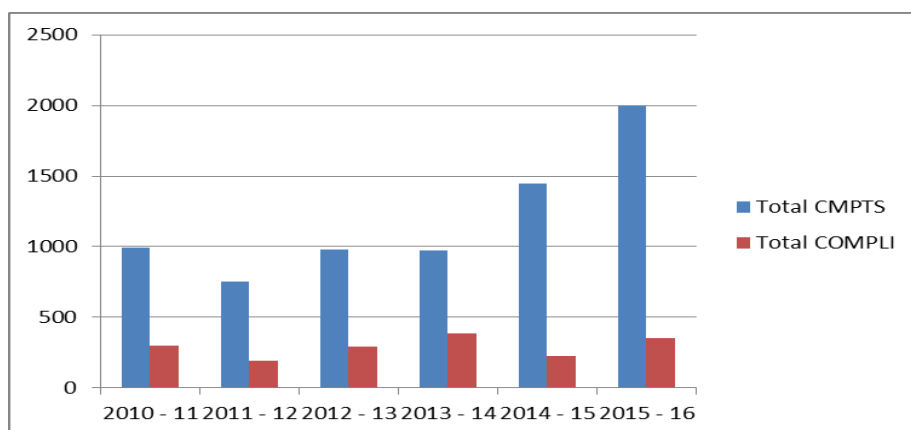
Background Documents: None.

Complaints Stats Year on Year comparison

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
2015	132	155	141	177	223	239	131	98	91	130	229	212	1958

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
2015	2	0	4	2	1	0	11	5	5	0	6	7	43

	Total CMP TS	Total COMPLI
2010 - 11	996	300
2011 - 12	753	193
2012 - 13	977	293
2013 - 14	975	385
2014 - 15	1444	227
2015 - 16	2001	355



Resolved in 10 days

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Apr	81	83	37	47	77	124
May	53	67	28	96	83	145
Jun	79	69	92	70	75	132
Jul	72	51	81	72	123	171
Aug	102	59	73	82	123	214
Sep	70	64	72	62	143	233
Oct	27	57	68	57	94	141
Nov	43	47	46	54	75	92
Dec	33	41	35	51	86	93
Jan	60	35	77	77	119	126
Feb	38	38	13	49	174	220
Mar	109	43	13	43	126	208
	767	654	635	760	1298	1899

Complaints received in 2015-16

Department Name	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total	Justified	Unjustified	Other	Current	Change in total from 2014/15
AMEY	1314	19	1333	1107	179	47	0	217
ASSET MANAGEMENT	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	-8
BENS, INVESTIGATIONS, W.R. (CIVICA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-16
BUILDING STANDARDS AND CONTROL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-5
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-3
CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUM	3	0	3	1	1	1	0	1
CHIEF EXEC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2
COUNCIL TAX (CIVICA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-12
CUSTOMER SERVICES	63	3	66	31	29	6	0	12
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	5	1	6	0	4	1	1	-2
DIRECTORATE	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	2
ELECTORAL ROLL	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	-3
Env Health - Planning Enforcement	2	1	3	0	2	0	1	-35
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	10	2	12	1	6	5	0	12
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT	2	1	3	1	2	0	0	0
ENVIRONMENTAL HOUSING TEAM	7	0	7	0	6	1	0	7
ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSING TEAM	3	0	3	0	2	1	0	3
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING	9	0	9	1	2	6	0	-2
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TEAM	10	0	10	1	8	1	0	8
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
GL1 LEISURE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
GLOS CITY HOMES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-9
GLOUCESTERSHIRE HIGHWAYS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
GUILDHALL	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	-4
HOMELESS	11	1	12	3	9	0	0	3
HOUSING RESOURCE TEAM	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	-7
HOUSING STRATEGIES AND ENABLING	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
LEGAL SERVICES	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
MARKETS	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	1
MUSEUMS	4	0	4	3	0	1	0	3
NMS ENVIRONMENTAL	372	11	383	86	242	55	0	345
NMS NEIGHBOURHOODS	19	0	19	7	4	8	0	7
NMS PARTNERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT TEAM	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	2
PARKING	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	-3
PARKING PARTNER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-3
Pest Control Contractor	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
PLANNING	9	3	12	5	6	1	0	1
REVENUES,FEES AND CHARGES (CIVICA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-4
SPATIAL PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	-1
SUNDRY DEBTORS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-6
TOURIST OFFICE (TIC)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2
	1861	43	1904	1256	510	136	2	

The above table shows a modest change, both upwards and downwards, in complaints against most services. However the large increase in the number of complaints against AMEY and the NMS Neighbourhoods must be noted.

The Waste Reduction Project which was in operation throughout 2015/2016 involved the Council reminding residents of the need to manage their waste capacity more effectively by recycling more. An element of this work was encouraging residents to comply with our closed bin lid policy through non collection of those residual waste bins that were dangerous to collect due to them being overfilled. This did result in an increase in complaints and further discussion with AMEY has resulted in a more pragmatic stance being taken by contractors which has reduced the number of complaints significantly during the latter stages of 2015/2016. The Waste Reduction Project has been a resounding success however with an extra 1000t of waste diverted from landfill in 2015/2016 and food waste recycling up by over 25%.

Another contributory factor towards the increase in complaints was the changes introduced to the Garden Waste Service in order to deliver it more efficiently thus allowing us to maintain the charge at its current price. October 2015 saw the move to one annual renewal date and this exercise affected more than 18,000 customers. All customers were sent an annual renewal sticker and we did receive a range of complaints that were sticker related. Having reviewed this project we have learnt several valuable lessons that we will look to implement up when processing this coming October's renewals.

The increase in AMEY complaints were about delivery of bins and boxes where AMEY had run out of stocks.

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 3.06% of the total number of households in Gloucester and 0.05% of the total number of collections carried out every year.

2015-2016

Justified	Unjustified	Misunderstanding/Other/Raised in error	Current
1256	510	136	2

