

ANGUS COUNCIL

SCRUTINY & AUDIT COMMITTEE – 25 NOVEMBER 2014

COMPLAINTS

REPORT BY RICHARD STIFF, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to highlight the complaint statistics and satisfaction for 2013/14 and to update members on the action being taken to ensure the effectiveness of the complaints handling procedure and to learn from complaints.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Scrutiny & Audit Committee consider:-

- (i) the key performance indicators on complaints closed between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014; and
- (ii) the results of the satisfaction survey sent to everyone who made a complaint which was closed during 2013/14.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Angus is a place where a first class quality of life can be enjoyed by all.

3. BACKGROUND

Since 1 April 2013, the council has been operating the new Complaints Handling Procedure for Local Authorities as required by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Report 282/14 considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 24 June 2014 updated on the complaints received during the period.

4. COMPLAINTS STATISTICS

Analysis of key indicators for 2013/14 shows that:-

- 341 complaints were recorded as closed off during the year (this excludes complaints about Social Work as they are not subject to the model Complaints Handling Procedure and there are statutory complaints procedures for Social Work matters.
- 75.4% (257 complaints) were closed at the frontline resolution stage, 21.7% (74 complaints) at Stage 2 and 2.9% (10 complaints) escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2.
- Of the Stage 1 complaints received 35.4% (91) were upheld, 30% (77) not upheld and 30% (89) partially upheld.
- Of the Stage 2 complaints received 23% (17) were upheld, 27% (20) not upheld and 50% (37) partially upheld.
- Of the escalated Stage 2 complaints 10% (1) was upheld, 50% (5) was not upheld and 40% (4) were partially upheld.

- The average time, in working days, for a full response to be issued at each stage was Stage 1 – 7.11 days, Stage 2 – 16.37 days and Stage 2 escalated 11.2 days.

In accordance with SPSO guidance Stage 1 complaints should be dealt with within five working days and Stage 2 complaints 20 working days.

- The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days:-
 - Stage 1 – 59% (154)
 - Stage 2 – 55.4% (41)
 - Stage 2 escalated – 80% (8)
- The number and percentage of complaints where an extension to 5 or 20 working days timeline had been authorised:-
 - Stage 1 – 3.1% (8)
 - Stage 2 – 2.7% (2)

A full copy of the indicators is attached at [Appendix 1](#).

5. SATISFACTION WITH THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Indicator 7 of the Performance Management Framework requires councils to report on customer satisfaction with complaints process. To achieve this, we issue satisfaction surveys six weeks after the complaint has been closed to all complainers. During 2013/14 18 completed questionnaires were returned.

The results for 2013/14 are shown in the table below. Given the survey sample consisted entirely of people who had made complaints about the council, the majority of which were not upheld, it is not surprising that there are high levels of dissatisfaction.

1. Is our complaints handling procedure easy to follow?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	66.7%	12
No	38.9%	7
Unaware of complaints handling procedure	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		2
<i>answered question</i>		18
<i>skipped question</i>		0

2. If the investigation into your complaint took longer than 20 working days, did the council keep you informed on the progress of your complaint?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	22.2%	4
No	33.3%	6
Not applicable	44.4%	8
Other (please specify)		2
<i>answered question</i>		18
<i>skipped question</i>		0

3. Did we address all the issues raised in your complaint?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	38.9%	7

No	66.7%	12
Other (please specify)		2
<i>answered question</i>		18
<i>skipped question</i>		0

4. Were you satisfied with the quality and clarity of our response?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	22.2%	4
No	77.8%	14
Other (please specify)		2
<i>answered question</i>		18
<i>skipped question</i>		0

5. Did we treat you fairly when dealing with your complaint?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	9
No	55.6%	10
Other (please specify)		3
<i>answered question</i>		18
<i>skipped question</i>		0

6. Even if you did not agree with the outcome, overall how satisfied are you that we handled your complaint well?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	16.7%	3
Fairly satisfied	0.0%	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	27.8%	5
Fairly dissatisfied	16.7%	3
Very dissatisfied	38.9%	7
Other (please specify)		1
<i>answered question</i>		18
<i>skipped question</i>		0

7. If you would like to make any further comments or suggestions, please do so.

Answer Options	Response Count
	14
<i>answered question</i>	14
<i>skipped question</i>	4

6. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

Each Directorate has been asked to identify and act on the key learning points from the complaints received about their service.

Complaints are detailed in the attached [Appendix 2](#) along with key learning points and procedures/processes that have changed as a result of the complaint.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

The Strategic Directors of People, Communities and Resources, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**RICHARD STIFF
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Richard Stiff
EMAIL DETAILS: StiffR@angus.gov.uk

List of Appendices:-

[Appendix 1 – Complaints Management Reporting](#)
[Appendix 2 – Learning from Complaints – Resources](#)
[Appendix 3 – Learning from Complaints – Communities](#)
[Appendix 4 – Learning from Complaints – People](#)
[Appendix 5 – Learning from Complaints – Chief Executive’s Unit](#)