



STANDARDS AND ETHICS

QUARTER 1 REPORT

2017/2018

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This is the quarterly report to the Audit & Governance Committee detailing both the figures for the Ethical Indicators and the figures for the Local Determination of Complaints process for 2017/18.

For clarification purposes the months covered by the quarters are as follows:

Quarter 1 – 1 April to 30 June

Quarter 2 – 1 July to 30 September

Quarter 3 – 1 October to 31 December

Quarter 4 – 1 January to 31 March

The report is split into 2 parts for ease of reference; Part 1 refers to the local determination of complaints, part 2 is the table showing the ethical indicators figures.

The report will enable the Audit & Governance Committee to build up a picture over time of how many complaints are received and where these are coming from. The parts of the Code of Conduct which have been breached will also be recorded to enable training to be targeted effectively.

The Monitoring Officer received 0 complaints in Quarter 1 of 2017/18.

2.1 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

There has been 0 Assessment Sub-committee meetings in this quarter.

As members will be aware, the Monitoring Officer now pursues an informal dispute resolution process prior to initiating formal proceedings via the Sub-committee route.

0 complaints have been resolved informally in Quarter 1.

2.2 Timeliness of Decision

The Standards for England Guidance stated that the Assessment Sub-committee should complete its initial assessment of an allegation “within an average of 20 working days” to reach a decision on what should happen with the complaint. The Council has taken this standard and adapted it under the new rules to aim to hold an Assessment Sub-committee within 20 working days of notifying the parties that informal resolution is not possible.

2.3 Review Requests

There have been no review requests in Quarter 1. Review requests can only be made following a decision of ‘No further Action’ by the Assessment Sub-committee where there is submission of new evidence or information by the complainant.

2.4 Subsequent Referrals

None to report – see above.

2.5 Outcome of Investigations

There were no investigations concluded in this period.

2.6 Parts of the Code Breached

This section is intended to show where there are patterns forming to enable the Audit and Governance Committee to determine where there needs to be further training for Councillors. Targeting training in this way makes it more sustainable and, hopefully, more effective.

So far this year, the following areas of the code were found to have been breached:

N/A

Part 2 – Ethical Indicators

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REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible For Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
1.0	Objections to the councils accounts	Financial Planning Team Manager	0	0						
1.1	Follow up action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (Members)	Head of Legal And Support Services	0	0						
1.2	Disciplinary action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (staff)	Human Resources Team Manager	0	0						
1.3	Public interest reports	Senior Auditor	0	0						
1.4	Number of whistle blowing incidents reported		0	0						
1.5	No. of recommendations made to improve governance procedures/policies		11	17	3		9		17	
1.6	No. Of recommendations implemented		8	12	18		12		9	

Stage 1 Complaints

Definition of a Stage 1 complaint:

First stage of a formal complaint. A formal complaint can be made if a customer believes a service within the Council has let them down, we did something wrong or a service we provided was unfair. We have 10 working days to provide to response to the complaint.

Complaints responded to on time in Q1
64%

We received an average of
9 Complaints a month in Q1

Our average response time was
15 days

26 Stage 1 complaints were resolved in Q1, This is an increase of **20%** from Q1 16/17

Top 3 types of Stage 1 complaints Q1

- Housing Repairs
- Council Tax
- Noise

REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Stage 1 Complaints Received			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
2.0	Total no. of Stage 1 complaints received	Corporate Complaints Officer	70	28						
2.1	No. of Stage 1 complaints Resolved		39	26						
2.2	No. of customers who raised their Stage 1 complaint to a Stage 2		10	5						
2.3	No. of Stage 1 complaints still open and within 10 days		31	2						

Stage 2 Complaints

Definition of a Stage 2 complaint:

If the customer is dissatisfied with our response to their Stage 1 complaint, they can ask for this to be raised to a Stage 2 for further investigation. These investigations are carried out by Heads of Service. We have 10 working days to provide a response to the complaint.

Stage 2 Complaints responded to in Q1
60%

We received an average of **2** Complaints a month in Q1

Our average response time was **3 days**

3 Stage 2 complaints were resolved in Q1, This is an increase of **7%** from 16/17

Top 3 types of Stage 2 complaints Q1

- Housing repairs
- Waste
- Allegation of a littering offence

REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Stage 2 Complaints Received			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
3.0	Total no. of Stage 2 complaints received	Corporate Complaints Officer	13	5						
3.1	No. of Stage 2 complaints Resolved		6	3						
3.2	% of stage 2 complaints answered on time		53	60						
3.3	No. of Stage 2 complaints still open and within 10 days		7	2						

Definition of an MP Enquiry:

These are enquiries sent in from local MP's on behalf of their constituent. These can be independent enquiries or could be linked to an earlier complaint which we may not have resolved to the customer's satisfaction. We have 10 working days to provide a response to the enquiry.

MP enquiries responded to in Q1
63%

We received an average of
6 MP enquiries per month in Q1

Our average response time was
13days

12 MP enquiries were resolved in Q1, This is a decrease of
1% from 16/17

What the MP Enquiries were about:

- Housing repairs
- Planning
- Environmental issues

Working to improve MP Enquiries:

- Reviewed and introduced improved process
- More robust / improved communication

REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
MP Enquiries received			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
4.0	Total no. of MP enquiries (req) received	Head of Legal and Support Services	28	19						
4.1	% of req responded to on time		64	63						

Definition of an Ombudsman complaint:

If the customer has followed our Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints procedure and is still unhappy with the outcome, they are entitled to take their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman for independent judgement. They will review the details and decide whether we, as a Council, have a case to answer in respect of the complainant.

Ombudsman Complaints responded to in Q1
100%

We received an average of
0 Complaints a month in Q1

Our average response time was
0 days

1 Ombudsman complaints were resolved in Q1, This is an increase of
0% from 16/17

What the Ombudsman complaints were/are about:

- **Housing repairs**

REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Ombudsman Complaints received			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
5.0	Total no. of Ombudsman Complaints received	Head of Legal and Support Services	2	0						
5.1	No of req still open and within 10 working days		1	0						



Total No. of
Complaints
responded to
in Q1
61

We received
an average of
17 Complaints
per month in
Q1

Our average
response time
was
X days

46 complaints
were resolved in
Q1. This is an
increase of **7%**
from the same
period in 16/17

What we do differently as a result of the complaints received:

- Set up a dues cases list every week to enable us to chase cases that are reaching their due date
- Having more face-to-face interaction with teams to ensure cases are completed on time
- Being proactive with the allocation of cases, i.e. is it a complaint or a request for service?
- Meetings with teams who have higher volumes of complaints e.g. Housing Repairs

Freedom of Information (FOI)

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Type of FOI requests received:

Business as usual (BAU) requests:

If the requested information can be quickly and easily sent to the requester then it may be dealt with within the normal course of business and treated as BAU.

Total number of BAU requests in Q1 36

Transfers:

Are FOI requests received by us but do not fall within our remit– i.e. Adult Social Care, Children's Services or Highways are a few examples.

Total number of Transfers in Q1 9

Subject Access Requests (SAR):

A SAR is a request from an individual to see information an organisation holds on them.

Total number of SAR received in Q1 5

Land charges (LC) searches:

Specific information about a particular property and the surrounding area for buyers and sellers.

Total number of LC Searches in Q1 23

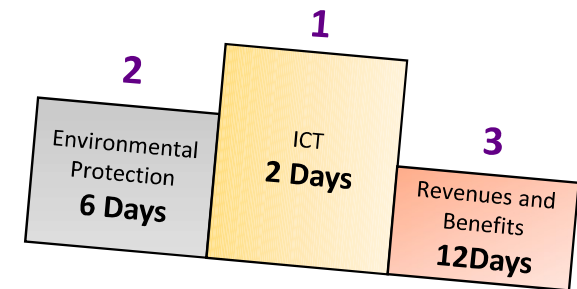
41 unique visitors to the council's open data page

We received an average of **40** FOI's a month in Q1

Our average response time was **16** days

We had an **increase** of **0%** compared to Q1 (16/17) for number of FOI's received

Top 3 service areas with the **quickest response times** FOI's



REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Freedom of Information Act Indicators			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
6.0	Total no. of requests (req) received	Records Management Officer	143	120						
6.1	% req answered on time		%	100						
6.2	No. of non compliant req		9	9						
6.3	No of FOI appeals		0	0						
6.4	Number withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		10	5						

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Indicators

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REF	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18	Actual 2016/17	2017/18
7.0	No. of directed surveillance authorisations granted during the quarter	Senior Auditor	0	0						
7.1	No. in force at the end of the quarter		0	0						
7.2	No. of CHIS recruited during the quarter		0	0						
7.3	No. ceased to be used during the quarter		0	0						
7.4	No. active at the end of the quarter		0	0						
7.5	No. of breaches (particularly unauthorised surveillance)		0	0						
7.6	No. of applications submitted to obtain communications data which were rejected		0	0						
7.7	No. of notices requiring disclosure of communications data		0	0						
7.8	No. of authorisations for conduct to acquire communications data		0	0						
7.9	No. of recordable errors		0	0						