

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 24 SEPTEMBER 2014**  
**STANDARDS AND ETHICS 2014 – QUARTER 1 REPORT UPDATE**

1. Further to the analysis on the corporate complaints figures, the Housing Repairs Service Manager has provided the following comments:

“Complaints associated with the Decent Homes Improvement Programme (DHIP) fall into two categories – tenants who believe they should receive specific improvements as part of the project when they currently do not and those that have issues with the improvements and/or service they have received from the service provider as part of the project.

For the first category, the Council continues to reiterate to tenants the purpose of the DHIP project and the criteria for inclusion. Where their complaint refers to a broken or failing component outside of the project we arrange for a visit from one of our maintenance officers.

Complaints concerning the second category are discussed formally with the service provider at the monthly progress meetings - discussion centres on trend analysis and actions to deliver future improvements, including procedural, resource and training activities. More frequent weekly dialog takes place centred on specific cases and the learning opportunities they provide. Most of these complaints have been regarding delays and communicating with our tenants and actions have been put in place to improve both.

Additional short term capacity has also been sourced to help minimise delays in repair work.”

2. We now have a short analysis on the Freedom of Information Request figures to assist members in understanding the work that happens in that area.
  - A total of 178 FOI requests were received in Q1 which was a 53% increase on the same period for Q1 13/14.
  - On average, each year 6% of FOI requests come from the public, leaving 94% from the media, solicitors, business rates companies and regular requests from inheritance searches.
  - We have regular ‘customers’ for information on people with no known next of kins, Unison on HR issues and Commercial Rating Management firms.
  - From the media we are asked many questions on ‘hot’ subjects or issues that come about due to new legislation, e.g. what became known as the bedroom tax. We also received questionnaires on Obesity back in April this year which became a Channel 4 documentary. Most Horizon features have gained information via Councils through FOI.
  - Since the beginning of compiling our statistics, which started in Year 3 - 2007/2008, we now receive about the same number of requests in a month that were received in a year. This equates to a 592% increase in Year 9 from Year 3.