
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

30 January 2018

Audit and Scrutiny Committee

Title: **Q2 2017 YTD Complaint Report**

Purpose: To inform the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of the Council's complaint performance and the volumes and trends of complaints received in the first 6 months of Financial Year 2017/18.

Recommendation: That the Committee notes the report and the information provided and that Executive Directors provide a report to the next Committee with details of Upheld/Partially Upheld complaints for their respective Directorates.

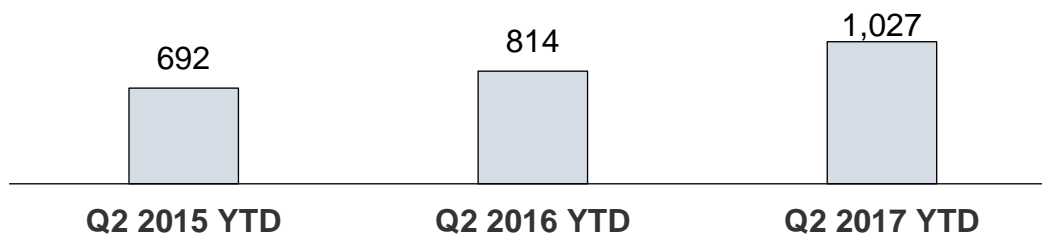
1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report details complaint information relating to North Ayrshire Council (NAC) during Q2 2017 YTD, covering the period from 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017.
- 1.2 In order to allow comparisons the report also details complaint data covering the first 6 months of 2016 and 2015 (referred to in the report as Q2 2016 YTD and Q2 2015 YTD).
- 1.3 Performance is measured through a number of Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) performance indicators, some of which have national targets.

2. Background

- 2.1 This section contains statistical information and commentary on some of the key complaint performance indicators devised by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in conjunction with all 32 Scottish councils. More details about each indicator can be found in the attached report.

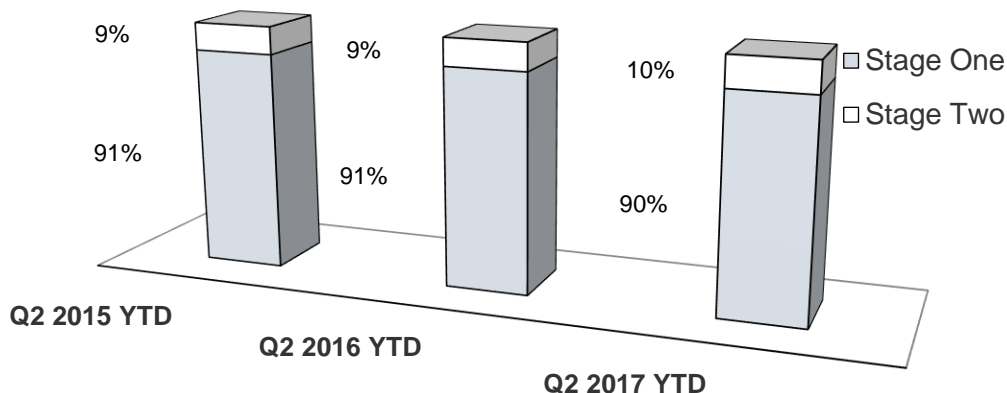
2.2 Volume of complaints received and closed



2.2.1 A higher volume of complaints was received in Q2 2017 YTD compared to previous years for a number of reasons and more details are contained in the attached report.

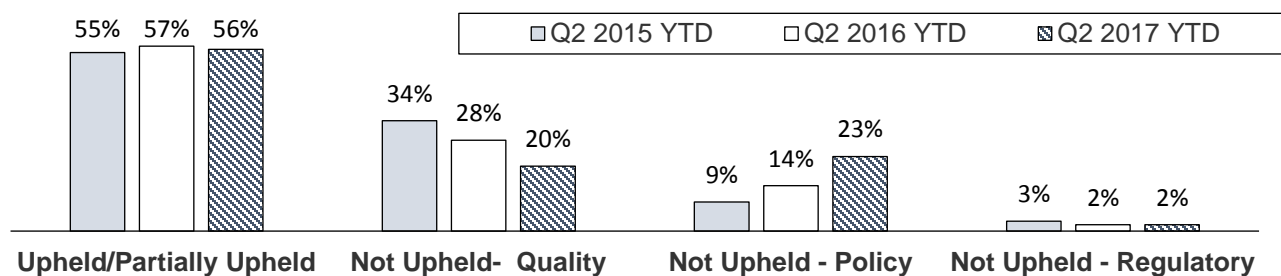
2.2.2 There is no target for the volume of complaints the Council should receive as this is an unknown quantity and cannot be predicted.

2.3 Complaints closed as each Stage



2.3.1 The Council cannot predict how many complaints will be closed under each stage, however, most should be straightforward in nature or easy to resolve and will be handled as Stage Ones. There is no target set for the volume handled under each Stage.

2.4 Complaint outcomes

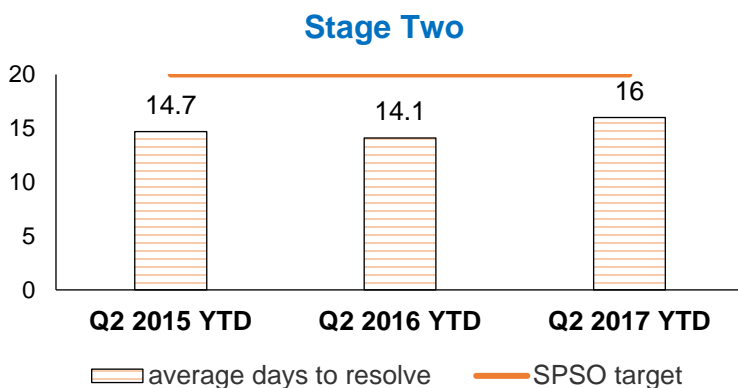
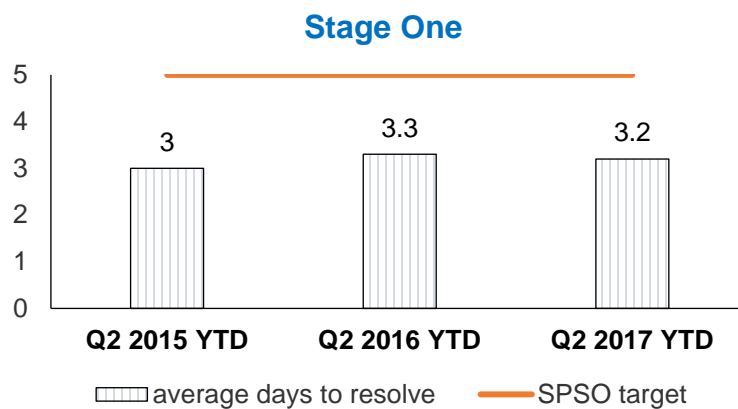


2.4.1 The volume of complaints closed as poor quality has reduced when comparing Q2 2016 with Q2 2017. This is due in part to an improvement in the quality of complaint submissions, which has allowed better complaint outcomes to be determined.

2.4.2 Policy complaints increased in Q2 2017 YTD due to three issues – the changing of the flag flying protocol outside Cunninghame House; the removal of a free bus facility for pupils travelling between the Lawthorn/Perceton areas to Greenwood Academy and the removal of public conveniences on Arran.

2.4.3 There is no target for the number of complaints the Council should uphold as complaint outcomes are unique to each complaint and cannot be predicted.

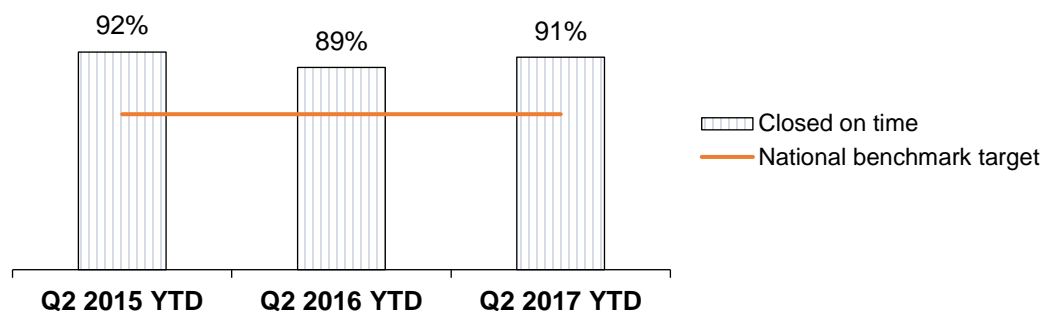
2.5 *Average time in working days for a full response at each Stage*



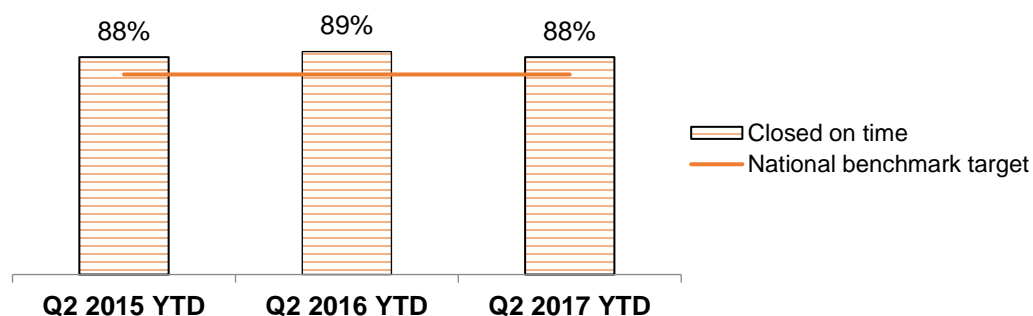
2.5.1 The average time in working days for a response under both Stages met the SPSO target response timescales in each of the three periods.

2.6 *Complaints closed within timescale*

Stage One



Stage Two



2.6.1 Some complaints did not meet timescale during Q2 2017 YTD due to several factors, including employees and complainants not being available to assist with investigations and timescales breaching due to the complexity of the issues being investigated. Extensions could have been approved for some of these, resulting in more complaints being closed on time.

2.6.2 Volumes of complaints not closed on time across the Directorates during Q2 2017 YTD are detailed in the attached report.

2.7 ***Complaint time scale extensions***

2.7.1 Stage One complaints should be responded to within 5 working days but we can extend them an additional 5 working days (10 if the complaint relates to Social Work) under certain circumstances. Stage Two complaints should be responded to within 20 working days but again we can extend the timescale of these to a date in the future if certain circumstances are met.

2.7.2 A total of 13 complaints had their Stage One timescale extended during Q2 2017 YTD and three of these were closed just beyond the new timescale. A total of 5 Stage Two complaints that had their timescales extended and all met the new agreed due dates.

2.7.3 More information on extended complaints in Q2 2017 YTD are detailed in the attached report.

2.8 *Changes or Improvements made as a result of complaints*

2.8.1 Not all Services are able to implement improvements from complaints due to a number of factors, including the feasibility of making changes and resource/budget considerations. That said, there were some improvements made to service provision as a result of complaints received during Q2 2017 YTD and a selection are noted in the attached report under Appendix 3.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed the Committee approves the report and recognises NAC performance in relation to the indicators listed in Section 2 above.

4. Implications

Financial:	None
Human Resources:	None
Legal:	None
Equality:	None
Children and Young People:	None
Environmental & Sustainability:	None
Key Priorities:	<p>The Two Stage CHP supports the Council's key priority of delivering more effective and efficient service provision.</p> <p>Timely reports are produced with a focus on analysing trends and identifying improvements.</p> <p>Support and guidance from the Complaint & Feedback Manager ensures greater consistency in complaint handling, improvements in response times and a reduction in duplication of effort.</p>
Community Benefits:	The Two Stage CHP demonstrates a commitment to improve service delivery for North Ayrshire customers and residents.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Complaint Handling Satisfaction Surveys are issued quarterly to customers who have complained to capture their views on the Two Stage CHP and how Services handled their complaints.
- 5.2 The full survey results are contained within the attached report under Appendix 2.



Laura Friel
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

For further information please contact **Darren Miller** on **(01294) 322988**.

Background Papers



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath



Q2 2017 YTD Complaint Report



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Foreword

Our complaint handling procedure reflects North Ayrshire Council's commitment to valuing complaints and is designed to resolve customer dissatisfaction as close to the point of service delivery as possible. The procedure allows the Council to conduct thorough, impartial and fair investigations of customer concerns so that, where appropriate, we can make sound decisions on the facts of the case.

The procedure was introduced in 2013 by the Council's complaints handling experts, working closely with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to help us 'get it right first time' and allow quicker, simpler and more streamlined complaint handling by capable, well-trained employees.

Complaints give the Council valuable information to help improve customer satisfaction and prevent the same problems from happening again. They also provide a first-hand account of a customer's views and experiences and can highlight problems we may otherwise miss.

As a result, the North Ayrshire Council complaint handling procedure can help our employees do their jobs better and help the Council better understand how to improve its services.

Elma Murray
Chief Executive

Introduction

North Ayrshire Council always strives to deliver the best services possible to all our customers and residents and it is recognised that dissatisfaction will sometimes occur. When it does, we want to know what went wrong, why it went wrong and what we can do to make things right.

As a Council we recognise valuable lessons can be learnt from complaints and like all other councils in Scotland, we implemented a new model Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) in 2013.

The CHP has two stages for handling complaints from the public:-



Stage One complaints (also known as *Frontline Resolution*) are straightforward, non-complex complaints the Council can resolve at the initial point of contact or as close to the point of service delivery as possible. The Council has up to **5 working days** to resolve these.



Stage Two complaints (also known as *Investigations*) are complaints the Council are typically unable to resolve at Stage One and need more time to carry out further investigation. This may be because the nature of the complaint is complex, serious or high risk. The Council has up to **20 working days** to resolve these.

This report summarises North Ayrshire Council's performance handling complaints under both Stages covering the period 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017 (referred to in the report as Q2 2017 YTD). Performance is measured through a number of SPSO performance indicators, some of which have targets.

In order to allow a year on year comparison, the report also includes complaint data covering Q2 2016 YTD and Q2 2015 YTD.

Social Work complaints received within our Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) aligned with the Two Stage CHP used by the rest of the Council on 1 April 2017 and complaint data relating to these is now incorporated into the report.

Reporting complaints is a statutory requirement and is monitored by Audit Scotland in conjunction with the SPSO.

Q2 2017 YTD Summary

Just over 1,000 complaints were received and closed in Q2 2017 YTD and just over half were upheld or partially upheld.

The two main complaint categories were services not being available/provided and service requests not being completed to an appropriate standard.

A number of policy related complaints were received during Q2 2017 YTD that related to three key decisions taken by the Council and Elected Members.

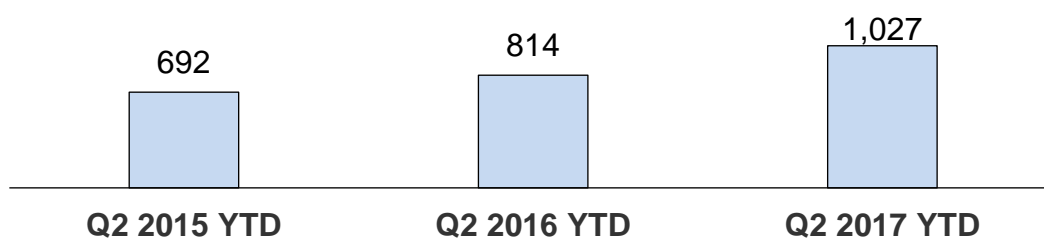
90% of complaints received were resolved at Stage One, supporting the notion most are straightforward to resolve or non-complex in nature.

The average time in working days to close complaints under both Stages were within SPSO target timescales and the percentage of complaints closed on time under both Stages met national benchmark targets. A small number of complaints had their timescales extended.

Over half of all customers who responded to the latest complaint handling customer satisfaction survey were generally satisfied with how their complaints were handled. 25% of all respondents thought their complaint experience was excellent.

Over 280 compliments were logged in Lagan cross-Council from internal and external customers during the period.

1(a) – Volume of complaints received and closed



- A higher volume of complaints was received in Q2 2017 YTD compared to the previous years and the table below shows the volume breakdown for each Directorate during all three periods:

Directorate	Q2 2015 YTD	Q2 2016 YTD	Q2 2017 YTD	Variance (2016 - 2017)
Chief Executive Service	3	1	-	n/a
Democratic Services	1	5	3	-40%
Economy & Communities	18	19	16	-16%
Education & Youth Employment	52	40	50	+25%
Finance & Corporate Support	81	93	131	+41%
HSCP (Social Work complaints)	-	-	64	n/a
Place	508	625	700	+12%
Multi-service (Complaint Team)	29	31	48	+55%
Total	692	814	1,012	+24%

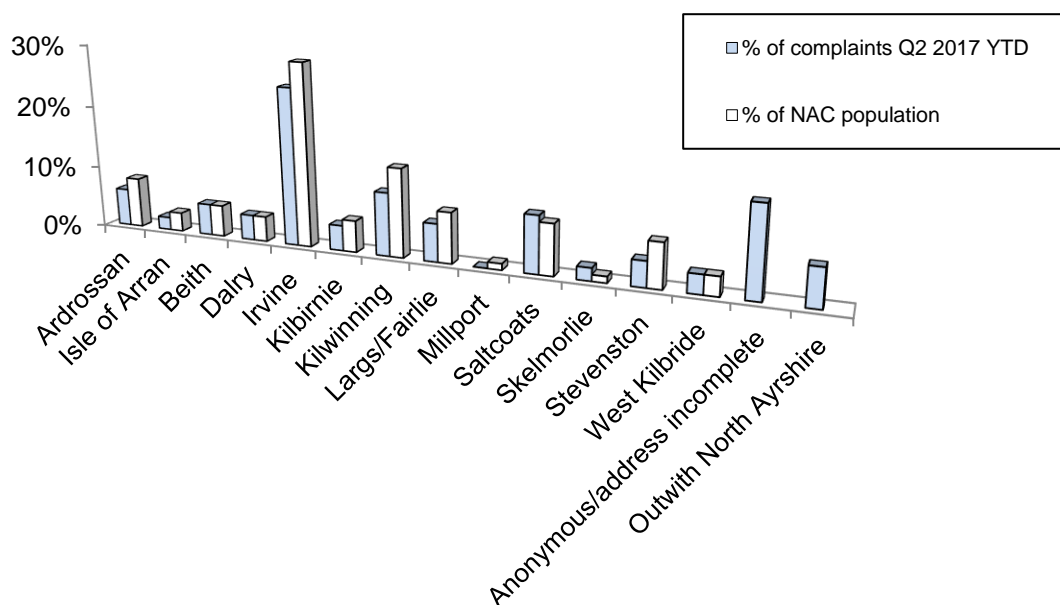
- The 41% increase in complaints for Finance & Corporate Support in Q2 2017 YTD can be attributed mainly to complaints relating to the introduction of self-payment kiosks in the Service Centres and a slight uplift in complaints in the Benefits and Revenues services.
- The uplift in Place complaints in Q2 2017 YTD can be attributed to more PMI complaints about the capital programme, communications, council stock and public convenience closures and an uplift in Streetscene complaints around grass cutting, grounds maintenance, play areas and weedkilling. Several complaints for the Transport service were also received relating to a school bus facility being cancelled. It should be noted however that some services had a significant reduction in complaints when compared to Q2 2016 YTD (including Housing, Roads and Waste Services).
- 15 complaints received in Q2 2017 YTD have been excluded from the above table as they are not complaints that relate to the Council (they relate to an Elected Members decision).
- Our HSCP (Health & Social Care Partnership) began using the Two Stage CHP from 1 April 2017 to handle all Social Work complaints and 64 were logged during the period.

1(b) – Complaints received per thousand population

Based on 135,890 residents (nrscotland.gov.uk June 2016 estimate)		
Q1 2015 YTD	Q1 2016 YTD	Q1 2017 YTD
5	6	8

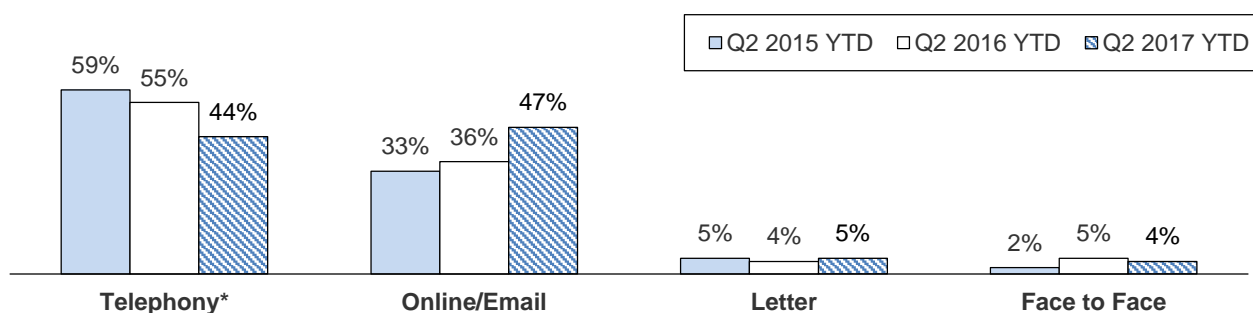
- 8 complaints per 1,000 residents is equivalent to 0.8% of the North Ayrshire population.

1(c) – Analysis by geographical area



- Residents and customers of Irvine, Kilwinning and Saltcoats raised the highest volume of complaints in Q21 2017 but this was expected given the population sizes. The complaints for these towns varied in nature and covered a range of services.
- 15% of online complainants provided incomplete addresses or chose to remain anonymous when raising their complaints. The substance of each complaint was investigated where sufficient information was provided.
- 7% of all complaints were made by individuals residing out with North Ayrshire. Again, the substance of each complaint was investigated, where possible, in line with our CHP.

1(d) – Analysis by channel



- There is a year on year trend of more customers using electronic means to raise their complaints instead of the traditional telephony methods. This increase is welcomed and helps the Council with its channel shift and digital strategies.

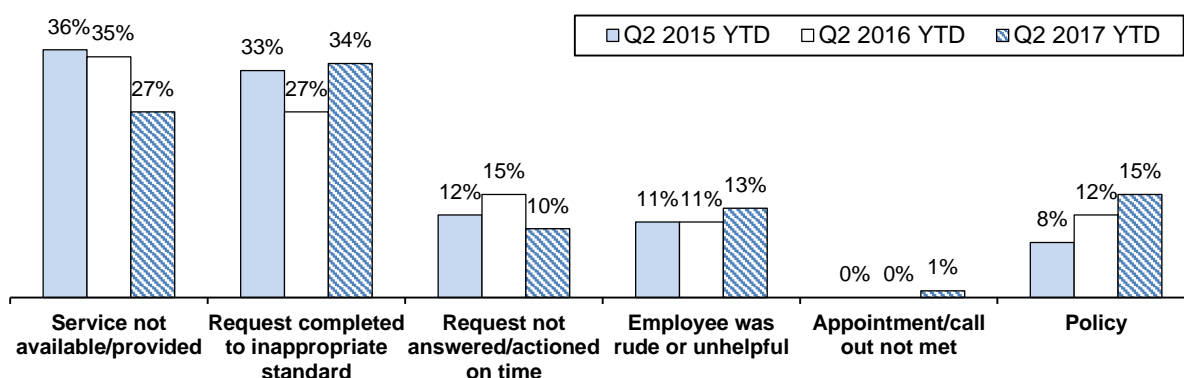
* includes Contact Centre, telephone and complaint line

1(e) – Analysis by complaint category and topic

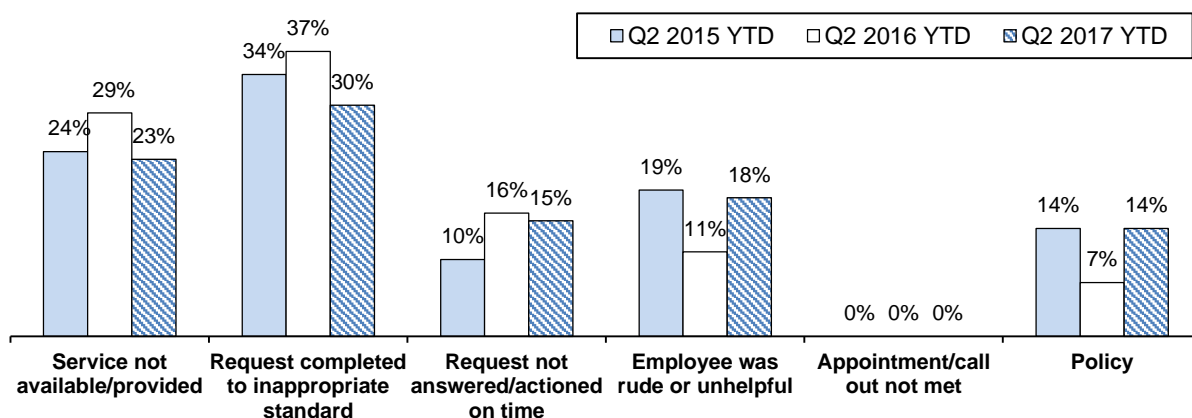
All complaints received by the Council are recorded in a customer record management system called Lagan and each complaint is categorised.

There are 6 complaint categories and the following graphs illustrate the percentage of complaints handled under each for Stage One and Stage Two:

Stage One



Stage Two



- Complaints the Council receive typically fall into two main categories – services that are not available/provided and service requests that were done but not to an appropriate standard.
- The increase in Stage One policy complaints related mainly to our flag flying protocol, a free school bus service being removed and the removal of some public conveniences on Arran.

Any key complaint topics identified for Services in each Directorate are listed below. Services where no key topics were identified (or too few complaints were received to undertake meaningful analysis) will not be listed:

Education & Youth Employment

Service	Key complaint topics
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service provision/delivery Employee behaviour

Economy and Communities

Economic Growth

Service	Key complaint topic(s)
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning permissions

Place

Commercial Services

Service	Key complaint topic(s)
Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street lighting
Streetscene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grounds maintenance (including parks, play areas and open spaces) Grass-cutting/grass cutting scheme Weed killing
Bereavement Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cemetery/Church management
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of free bus travel to Greenwood Academy pupils
Waste Services (Operations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missed bins/pull outs Employee behaviour
Waste Services (Awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication issues

Physical Environment

Service	Key complaint topic(s)
Building Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality issues - work incomplete or poor workmanship Follow Ups not done
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Care Employee behaviour Estate Management
PMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure of public conveniences on Arran Capital works programme (planned works for tenants) Council stock Gas Central Heating issues Inspector issues

Finance & Corporate Support

Customer & Digital Services

Service	Key complaint topic(s)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard of service
Customer Services (comprising Contact Centre and the Customer Service Centres)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorrect information provided• Introduction of self-help payment machines in CSCs
Revenues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication• Recovery of monies

HSCP (Social Work complaints)

Service	Key complaint topic(s)
Children, Families & Criminal Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employee behaviour
Health & Community Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service provision/delivery• Employee behaviour

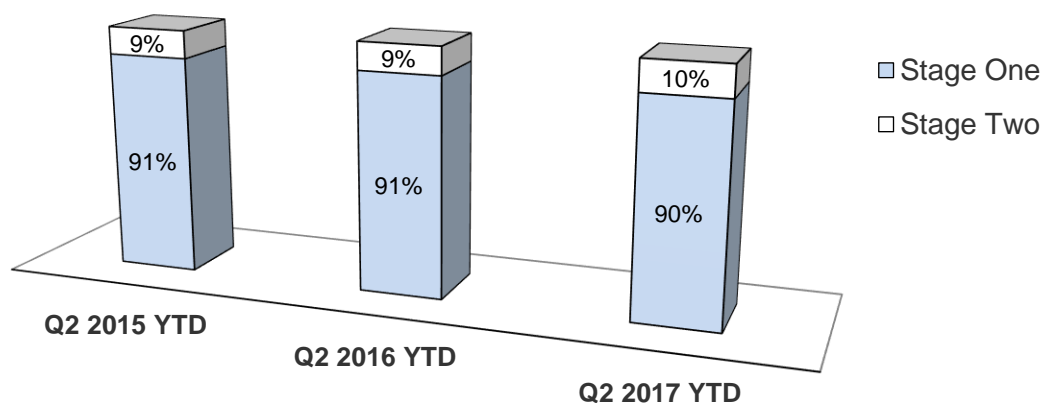
Complaints concerning an Elected Member decision

At a full Council meeting in Q1 2017, Elected Members agreed to changes to the flag flying protocol which affects the way flags are flown outside Cunninghame House. Several complaints were received from members of the public as a result of the changes.

- When reviewing the above tables key topics are based on complaints received by the service whether upheld or not.
- Although employee behaviour appears as a key topic in some tables, this does not necessarily mean employees have been rude, unhelpful or unprofessional. The topic is broad in its definition and can be used based on what customers perceive to be unacceptable. This could include instances where:
 - The content or tone of Council letters were considered inappropriate
 - Certain employee actions were considered inappropriate
 - Employees made ill-informed comments or offered ill-judged advice
 - Employees were considered 'officious' when quoting Council policies or regulations

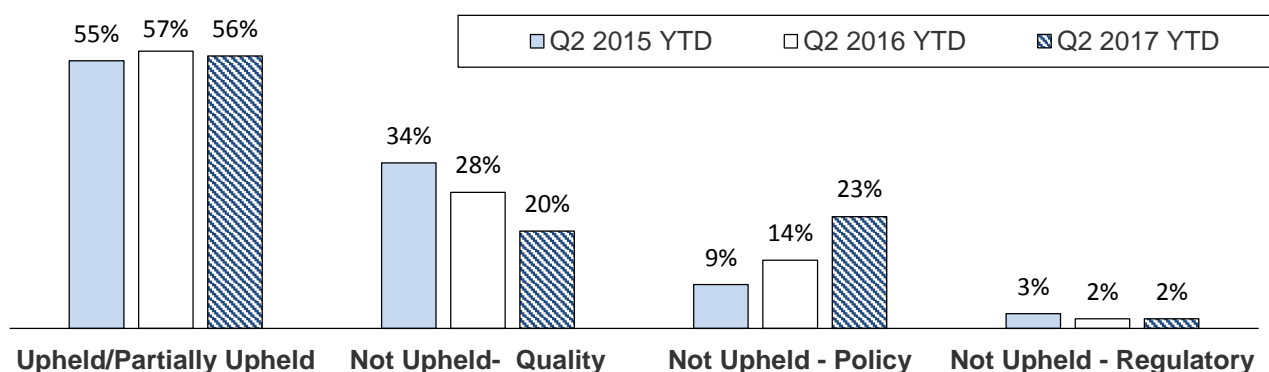
Of the 13% of complaints logged under this topic, only half were upheld/partially upheld and actions will have been taken by Services where inappropriate behaviour was identified.

2 – Complaints closed at each Stage



- The Council cannot predict how many complaints will be closed under each stage, however, most should be straightforward in nature or easy to resolve and will be handled as Stage Ones. There is no target set for the volume handled under each Stage.

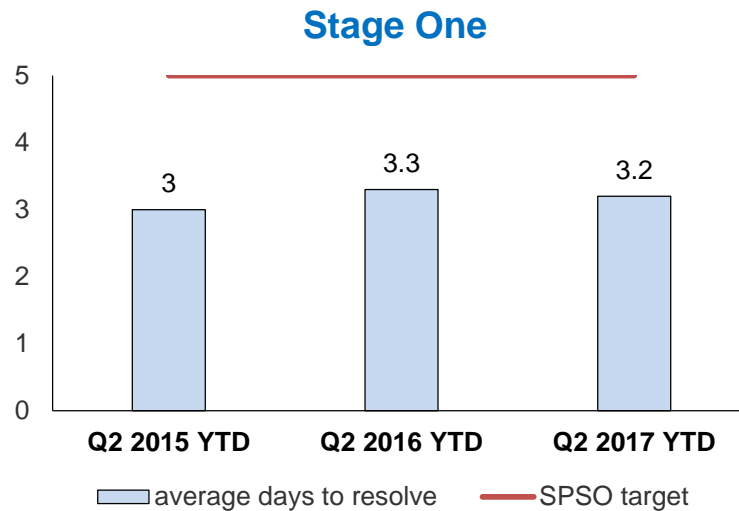
3 (a) – Complaint outcomes



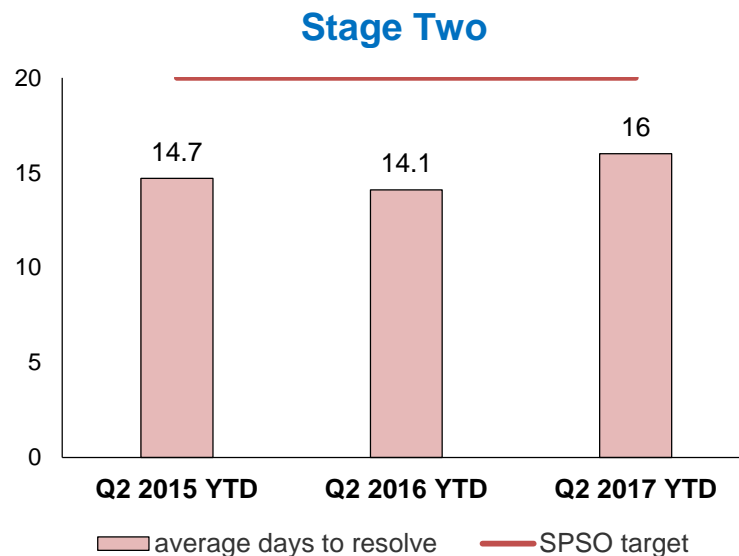
- Just over half of all complaints investigated were upheld or partially upheld. This tells us customers were often right to raise complaints about the service, or lack of service, they received.
- The volume of complaints closed as poor quality has reduced when comparing Q2 2016 with Q2 2017. This is due in part to an improvement in the quality of complaint submissions, which has allowed better complaint outcomes to be determined.
- Policy complaints increased in Q2 2017 YTD due to three issues – the changing of the flag flying protocol outside Cunninghame House; the removal of a free bus facility for pupils travelling between the Lawthorn/Perceton areas to Greenwood Academy and the removal of public conveniences on Arran.
- There is no target for the number of complaints the Council should uphold as complaint outcomes are unique to each complaint and cannot be predicted.

3 (b) - Average time in working days for a full response at each Stage

The graphs below show the average time in working days for complaints closed under Stage One and Stage Two.



- The average time in working days for a response under Stage One has consistently met the SPSO target response time of 5 working days over the last three years.

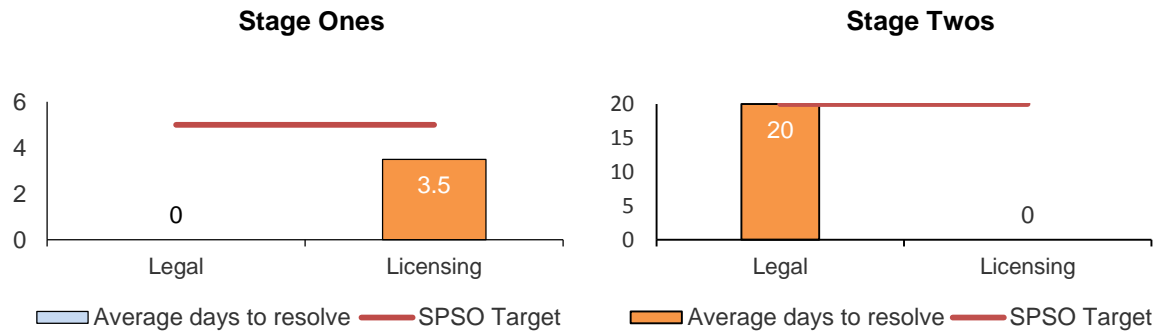


- The average time in working days for a response under Stage Two comfortably met the SPSO target response time of 20 working days in each of the three periods.
- There has been a slight increase in average days when comparing Stage Two complaints last year to the same period this year. This is because a handful of complaints were resolved out with the 20 working day timescale which pushed the average value up to 16 working days.

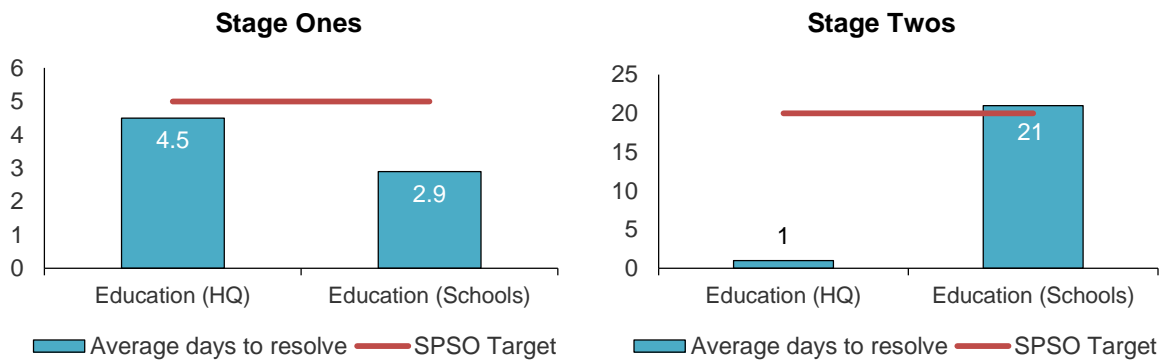
3 (c) – Average time in working days for a full response per Service

Below is a Directorate breakdown in Q2 2017 YTD showing the average time in working days for a response under both stages (if applicable):

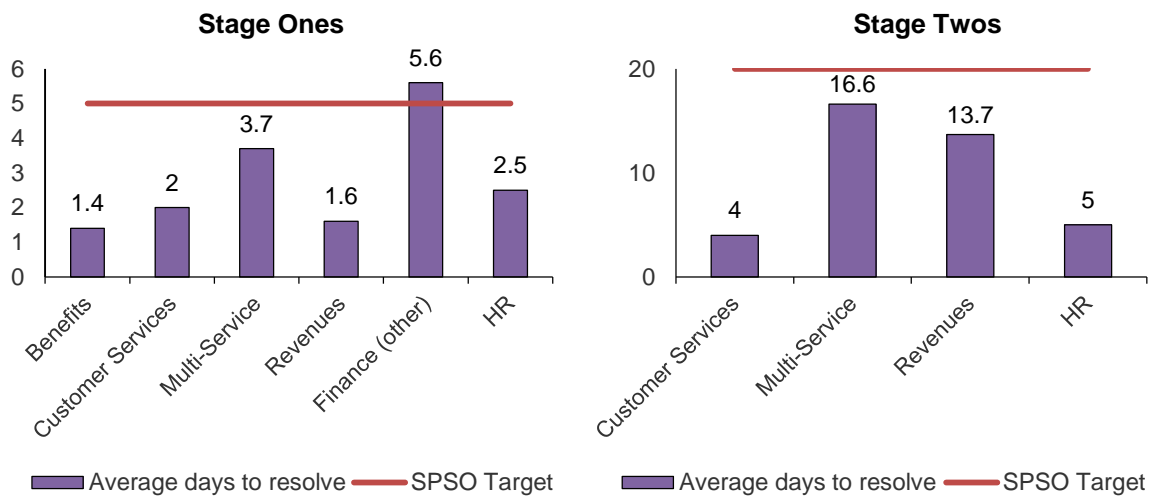
Democratic Services



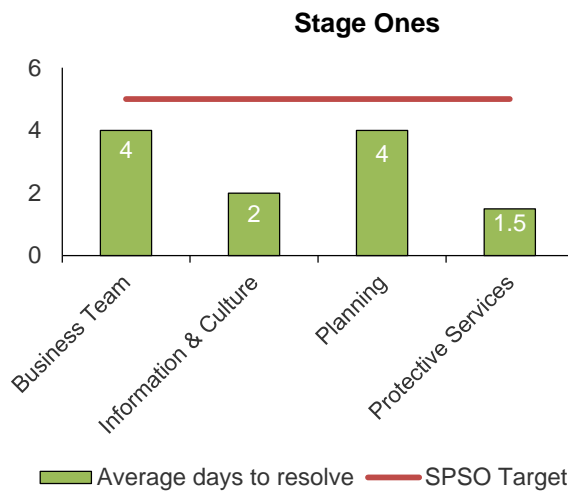
Education & Youth Employment



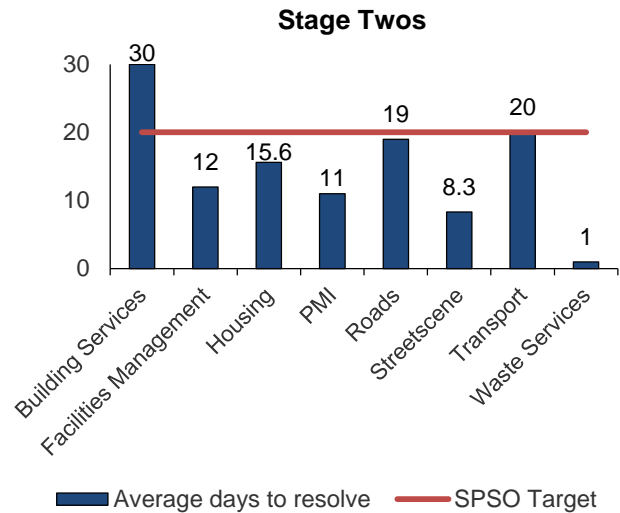
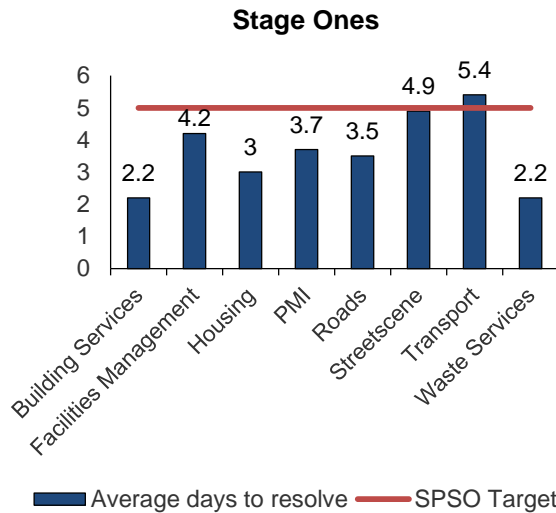
Finance & Corporate Support



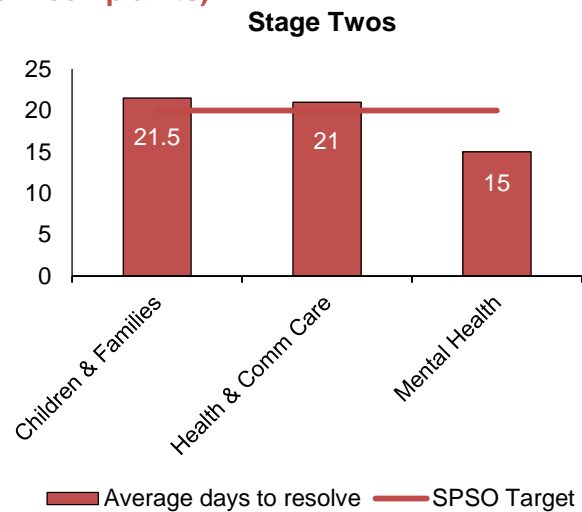
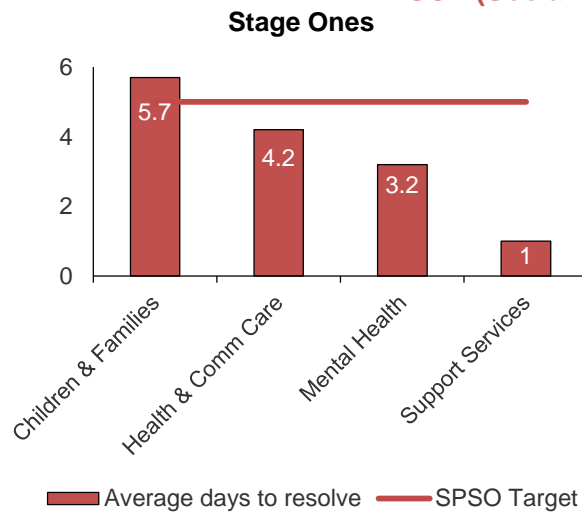
Economy & Communities



Place



HSCP (Social Work complaints)

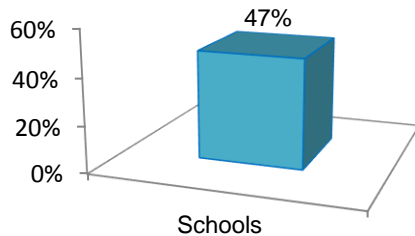


- Section 5 contains more information on complaints that did not meet timescale and section 6 contains details of complaints that had their timescales extended.

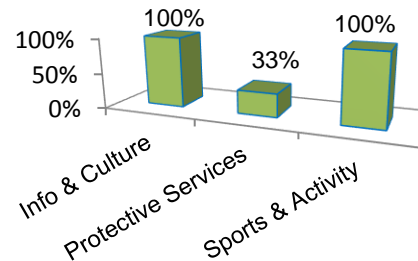
4 – Upheld / Partially Upheld Complaint percentage volumes by Service

56% of all complaints resolved in Q2 2017 YTD were upheld or partially upheld and below is the Directorate breakdown:

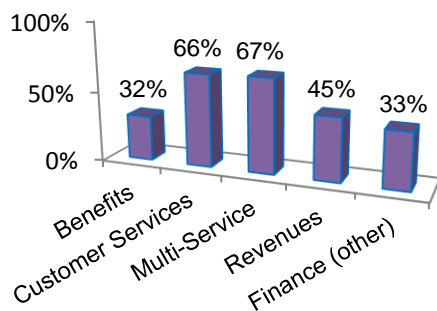
Education & Youth Employment



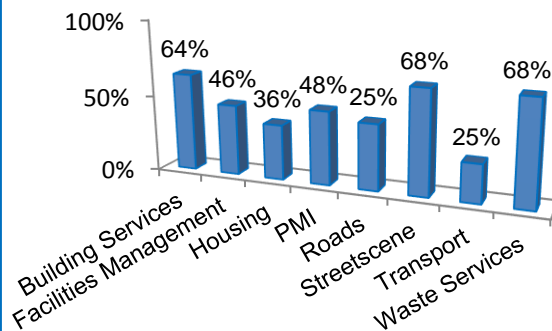
Economy & Communities



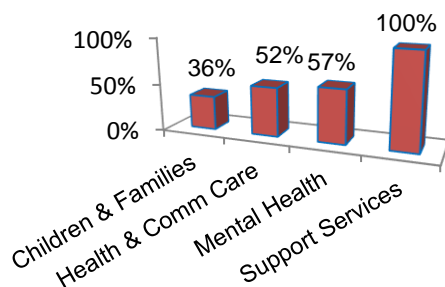
Finance & Corporate Support



Place



HSCP (Social Work complaints)

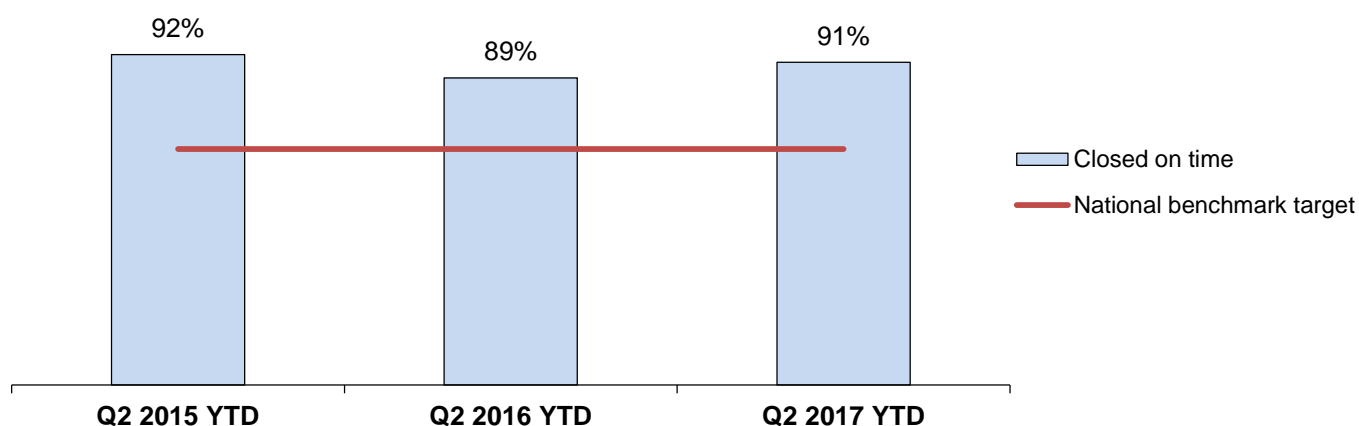


- Whilst some Services appear to have upheld most or all of their complaints, analysis shows some of these Services received very low complaint volumes.

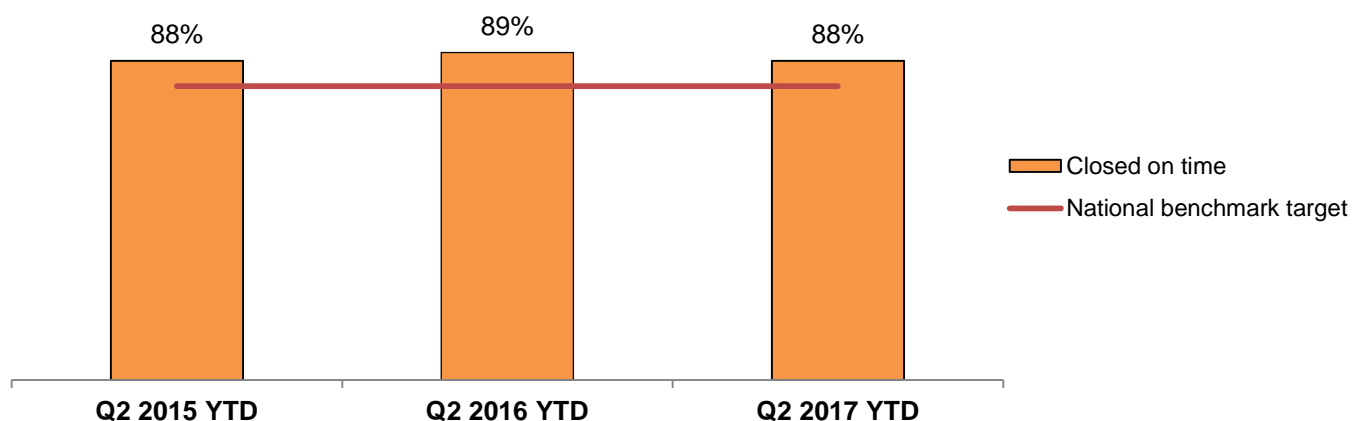
5 – Complaints closed at each Stage within 5 and 20 working days

The Improvement Service conducted a review of complaint data across all 32 Scottish Local Authorities and national averages were calculated for complaints closed on time for Stage One and Stage Two. These averages are **80%** and **85%** respectively and are used by NAC to benchmark complaint performance. NAC have consistently met these benchmarks in the last three years as illustrated below:

Stage One



Stage Two

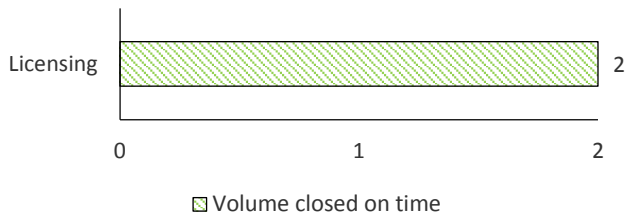


- Some complaints did not meet timescale during Q2 2017 YTD due to several factors, including employees and complainants not being available to assist with investigations and timescales breaching due to the complexity of the issues being investigated. Extensions could have been approved for some of these, resulting in more complaints being closed on time.

Volumes of complaints not closed on time across the Directorates during Q2 2017 YTD are noted in the following pages.

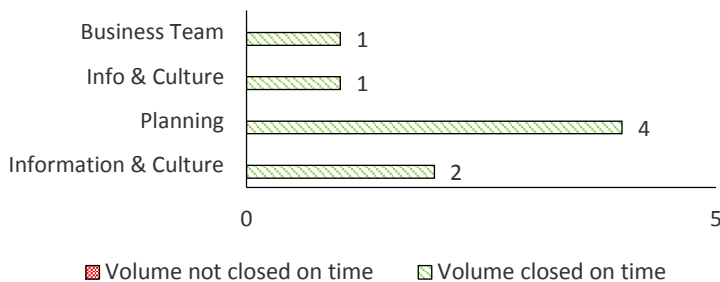
Stage Ones

Democratic Services



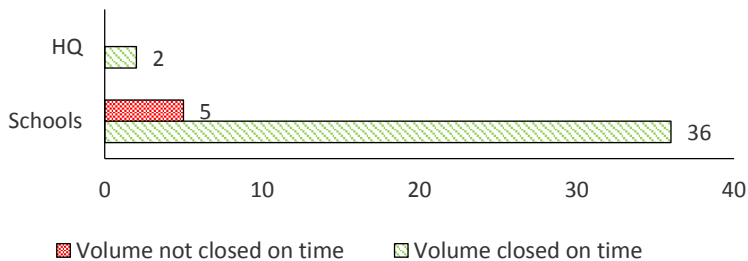
No Stage One complaints in Democratic Services breached timescale during Q2 2017 YTD.

Economy & Communities



No Stage One complaints in Economy & Communities breached timescale during Q2 2017 YTD.

Education



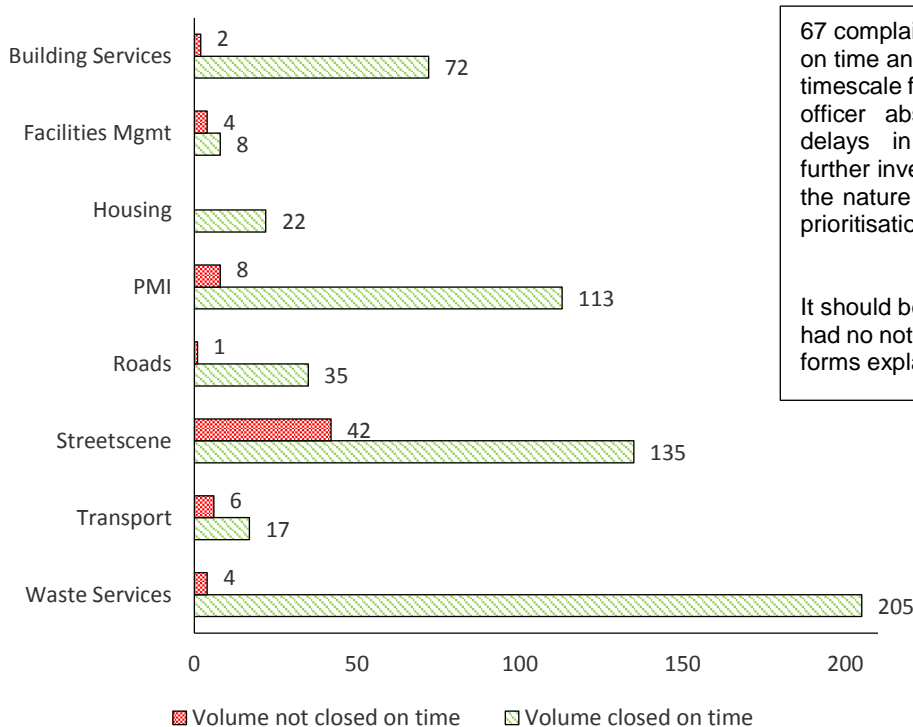
Several school complaints did not meet timescale due to simple misunderstandings. The complaints all related to different schools and there are no underlying reasons for concern.

Finance & Corporate Support



2 finance complaints were not closed on time. Investigations show one complaint outcome was delayed as a result of staff illness and the other complaint was not closed on time due to additional information being required.

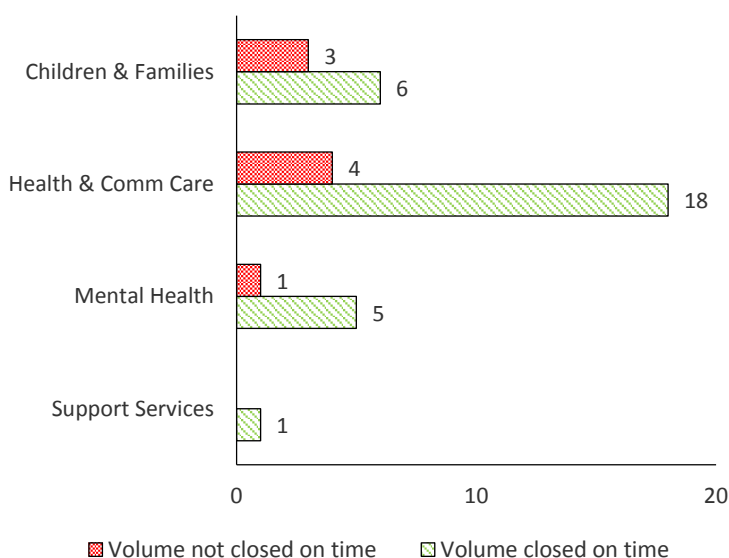
Place



67 complaints across Place were not closed on time and analysis shows these breached timescale for a number of reasons, including officer absence (sick or annual leave), delays in responses being authorised, further investigations being required (due to the nature of the complaints) and workload prioritisations.

It should be noted 31% of the 67 complaints had no notes added to the complaint closure forms explaining why they had breached.

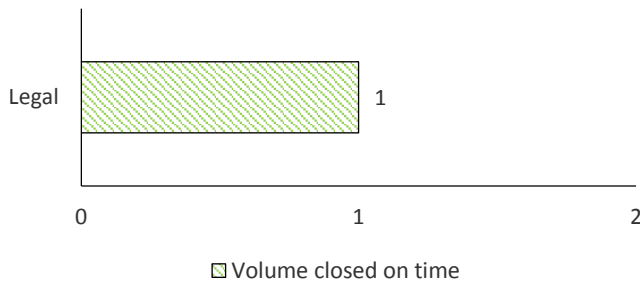
HSCP (Social Work complaints)



Several Stage One complaints did not meet timescale during Q2 2017 YTD, however, the directorate began transitioning to a new Two Stage procedure on 1 April 2017 and it was expected some complaints may breach timescale while employees become familiar with the new processes to follow.

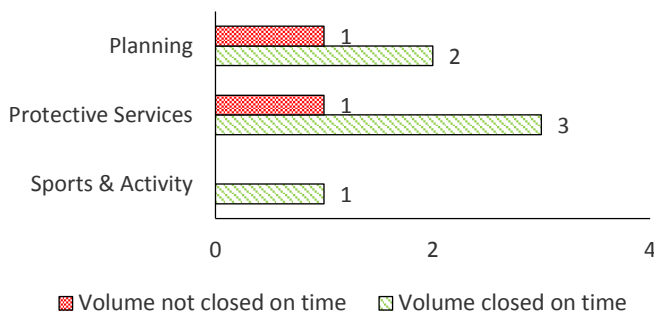
Stage Twos

Democratic Services



No Stage Two complaints in Democratic Services breached timescale during Q2 2017 YTD.

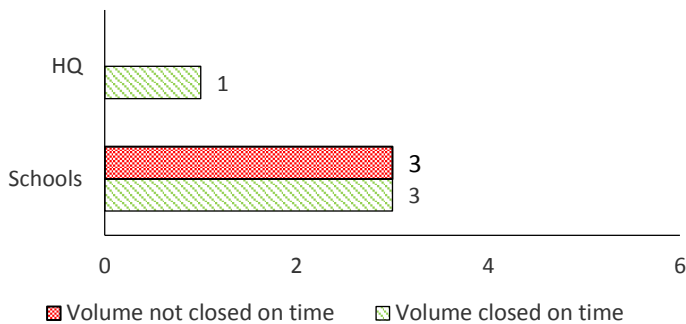
Economy & Communities



The Planning complaint breached timescale because of a delay in receiving the final response from the Manager. It was closed on day 23.

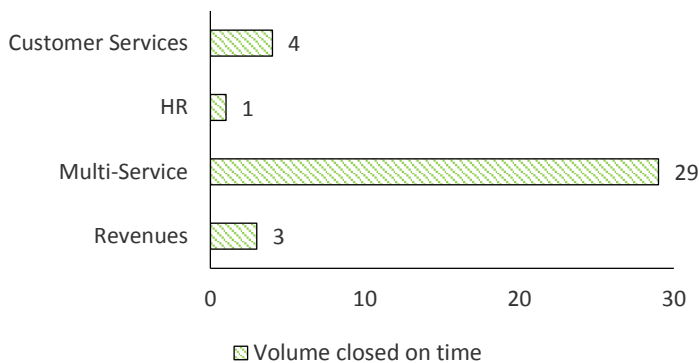
The Protective Services complaint was closed on day 23 and required the response letter to be signed by the Head of Service.

Education



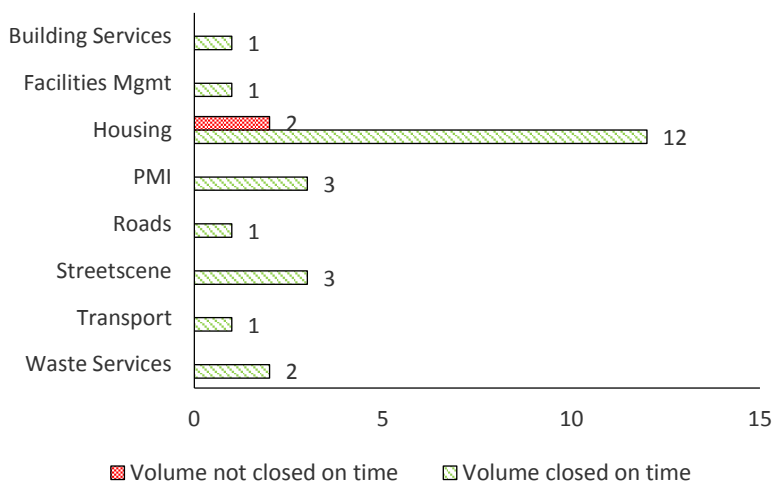
3 Stage Two complaints in Education & Youth Employment breached timescale during Q2 2017 YTD. Investigations show this was due to officer leave and awaiting parent agreements to proposed improvement actions.

Finance & Corporate Support



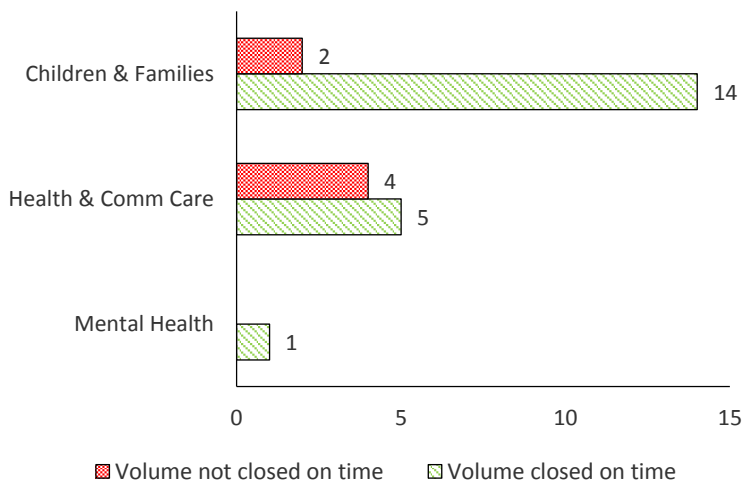
No Stage Two complaints in FACS breached timescale during Q2 2017 YTD.

Place



2 Stage Two complaints in Housing were closed just outside their due dates. One related to a customer who issued a threatening email to an employee which caused their complaint to be suspended whilst Police Scotland became involved. The other complaint did not meet due date because of a staff cross-over during annual leave.

HSCP (Social Work complaints)



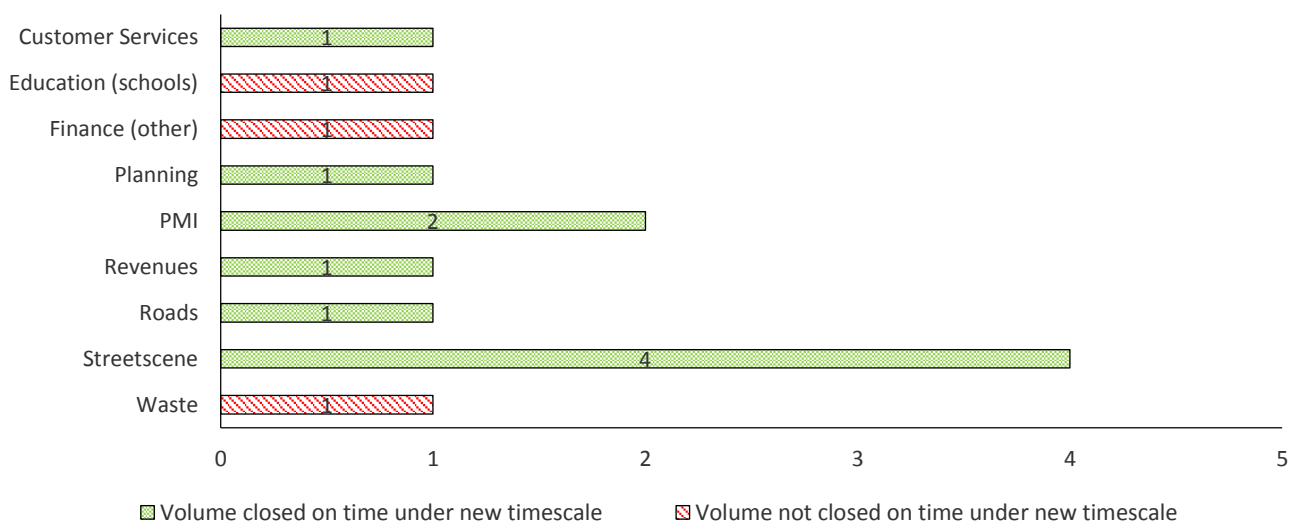
6 Stage Two complaints did not meet timescale, however, the directorate have been transitioning to a new Two Stage procedure and it was expected some complaints may breach timescale whilst employees become familiar with the new processes to follow.

6 – Complaint timescale extensions

Stage One complaints should be responded to within 5 working days but we can extend them an additional 5 working days (10 if the complaint relates to Social Work) under certain circumstances. Stage Two complaints should be responded to within 20 working days but again we can extend the timescale of these to a date in the future if certain circumstances are met.

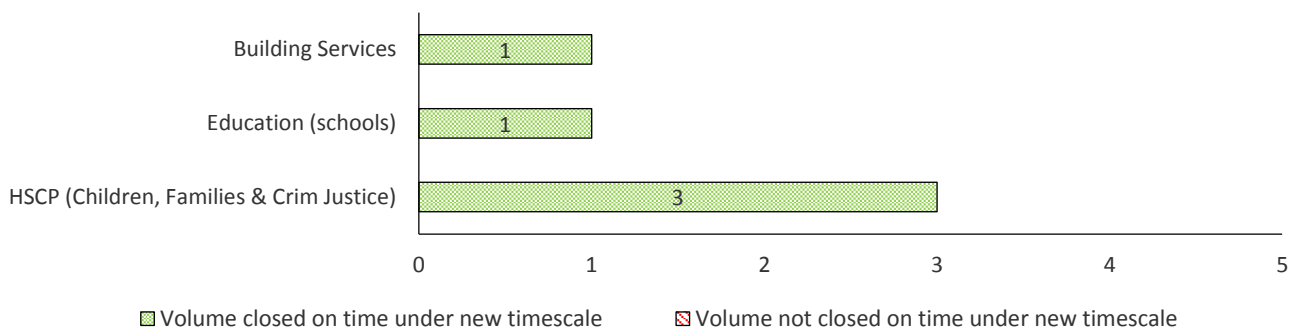
Complaints extended under Stage One and Stage Two during Q2 2017 YTD are detailed below.

Stage Ones



- 13 complaints had their Stage One timescale extended during Q2 2017 YTD and three of these were closed just beyond the new timescale.

Stage Twos



- 5 Stage Two complaints that had their timescales extended and all met the new agreed due dates.

7 – Customer satisfaction with complaints handling

- Complaint Handling satisfaction surveys are issued quarterly to customers who have complained to capture feedback on their complaint experiences. The results of the most recent survey done is contained in Appendix 2.
- Customer satisfaction with the services the Council provide in general is contained in Appendix 4.

8 – Changes or improvements as a result of complaints

- Complaint data is issued to key contacts in each Service on a monthly basis. This data is reviewed for accuracy with remedial action undertaken if incorrect information is identified. The 'cleansed' data is then issued to each Service quarterly, with a report produced and submitted to the NAC Audit & Scrutiny Committee (chaired and attended by Elected Members) every six months.
- Actions and improvements as a result of complaints received are published on the NAC website under the banner "You Said, We Did".
- Not all Services are able to implement improvements from complaints due to a number of factors, including the feasibility of making changes and resource/budget considerations. That said, there were some improvements made to service provision as a result of complaints received during Q2 2017 YTD and a selection are noted in Appendix 3. Improvements will continue to be highlighted in quarterly complaint reports.

9 – Glossary

Term

Explanation

Stage One

Stage One (aka *Frontline Resolution*) aims to resolve straightforward customer complaints that require little or no investigation. Any employee may deal with complaints at this stage and they can be resolved via any channel. The main principle is to seek resolution at the earliest opportunity and as close to the point of service delivery as possible. Stage One complaints must be responded to within 5 working days unless an extension (a maximum of 5 additional working days or 10 if the complaint relates to Social Work) is requested and approved by a senior manager. The Council should, however, always aim to resolve these types of complaints within 5 working days.

Stage Two

Not all complaints are suitable for Frontline Resolution and not all complaints will be satisfactorily resolved at that stage. Complaints therefore handled at Stage Two (aka *Investigation*) typically require a detailed examination before the Council can state its position. These complaints may already have been considered at the Frontline Resolution stage, or they may have been identified from the outset as being complex, serious or high risk and needing immediate investigation. Any Investigation aims to establish all the facts relevant to the points made in the complaint and to give the customer a full, objective and proportionate response that represents our final position. Stage Two complaints must be responded to within 20 working days unless an extension is approved by senior manager in conjunction with the customer. Investigation complaints require a written response, signed by a senior manager.

Complaint criteria

When an expression of dissatisfaction is received the Council determines if the issue falls into one of six complaint categories:

- A service the Council should be providing is not being provided (or is available)
- A request for a service was provided but not to an appropriate standard
- A request for service has not been answered or actioned within the agreed SLA / timescale
- An employee was rude, unhelpful or unprofessional
- An employee did not attend an appointment or call-out on a date/time agreed
- The complaint relates to a policy (internal or external)

If the issue being raised relates to one or more of the above, the matter is considered a corporate complaint and should be recorded and handled as such in Lagan. If not, the matter should be handled as a request for a service, observation or enquiry and actioned accordingly.

Appendix 1 – Compliments

Over 280 compliments were recorded in Lagan across the Directorates during Q2 2017 YTD:

Directorate	Volume
Chief Executive Service	2
Economy & Communities	39
Education & Youth Employment	1
Finance & Corporate Support	59
Health & Social Care Partnership	83
Place	103

From the compliments recorded it is pleasing to note:

- A number were cross-Council, with customers commending or praising more than one service.
- Some compliments were internal with employees complimenting other employees (some of which work in other Services/Directorates).
- Many related to specific individuals.

Whilst it is not practical to list all the compliments in this report, Performance Officers in each Directorate have access to a report that can provide the actual compliment commentaries if required.

Appendix 2 – Complaint Handling Satisfaction Survey results

A complaint handling customer satisfaction survey was issued in Q2 2017 to determine how customers felt about their complaint experience. The survey questions fall under specific headings and key themes identified are listed below.

Whilst over 80 customers responded, it should be noted not all customers answered every question so the percentage results are reflective of this.

“Considering a complaint” (what did the customer consider when making their complaint)

- 66% said they felt raising a complaint would enable the Council to make things better
- 51% of respondents said they felt they should raise a complaint because something had gone wrong
- 45% said they knew they had a right to complain
- 45% of respondents said they knew the Council had a complaint procedure

“Making your complaint” (how did the customer feel when making their complaint)

- 44% said they knew there would be a formal record of their complaint
- 46% of respondents said they felt confident raising their complaint
- 33% said they knew their complaint would be passed to the appropriate person/department to resolve

“Investigating the complaint” (how did the customer feel during the complaint process)

- 29% felt the employee handling their complaints were empowered to resolve them
- 31% said they felt their concerns were understood and employees empathised with their situation
- 29% said they received updates as their complaints progressed
- 12% said they knew what stage their complaint was handled under

“Resolving the complaint” (what happened when the complaint was resolved by the Service)

- 44% of respondents said they were contacted with the outcome to their complaint
- 23% felt their complaint was handled fairly (although this may be subjective based on the outcome the customer wanted)
- 23% said the response received directly addressed their complaint
- 23% said they understood how any actions had been taken or any decisions had been reached

“Reflecting on the complaint experience” (how would the customer feel making a complaint again)

- 66% of respondents said they would complain again and 39% would encourage others to complain
- 41% of respondents said they would complain again as it is important to raise issues
- 39% said they would complain again as complaints help improve service delivery

“Customer Satisfaction” (how did the customer rate their complaint experience)

- 53% of respondents were generally satisfied with how their complaints were handled and 24% thought their experience was excellent.

The surveys highlight some good scores and some feedback that requires action. Low scores will be addressed through the introduction of a new Complaints Improvement Framework that should be introduced in Directorates in Q4 2017.

Appendix 3 – Improvements made

As per Section 8, some of the improvements made by Services during Q2 2017 YTD included the following:

As a result of a complaint to the **Welfare Reform Advice Team** about short notice visits, they have increased the notice given in appointment letters to 5 days.

As a result of some complaints from residents regarding waste being put in incorrect bins, **Waste Services** are developing a recycling leaflet that will be issued across North Ayrshire together with changes to the brown bin collection frequency in late 2017.

In **Customer Services**, a customer complained that their DHP application was delayed after it was handed into a Customer Service Centre. A new scanning process was therefore introduced to reduce delays in applications being actioned.

A complaint was received regarding **Building Services** operatives making loud noise when starting repair work early in the morning. As a result operatives have been advised to ensure noise levels are kept to a minimum if starting early.

Due to a breakdown in communication between two 3rd party contractors, **PMI** reviewed their handover procedures between installation and maintenance contractors in order to provide clarity around areas of responsibility.

Due to some issues a customer had with a contractor, **Roads** will closely monitor this contractor in order to ensure unacceptable performance is addressed.

As a result of a complaint where cardboard had not been removed because it was sitting against a resident's blue bin, **Waste Services** issued a reminder for crews to uplift such waste if placed alongside the bin.

National Entitlement Card application processing involved a manual system where applications were being passed between offices. This resulted in complaints as information was going missing and some applications could not be traced. As a result, **Customer Services** transferred the process to Lagan, with applications now being scanned into the system and reducing the possibility of applications/information going missing.

As a result of a tenant being unable to contact one of our contractors by phone, **PMI** discussed the matter with the contractor who now also provides an email and text option on initial correspondence.

As a customer was not happy with the way they were spoken to by one of our employees, our **Health & Community Care** service (within HSCP) have reiterated the code of conduct (employee behaviour) at their team meetings.

End of Report