
COMPLAINTS PROCESS AT THE COUNCIL

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides Members with details of the Council's complaint process and the number of complaints received.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Council like any customer focused organisation seeks feedback from its residents to help it understand what it is doing well and what areas it needs to improve on.
- 2.2 This feedback takes the form of comments, compliments and complaints whether in writing or via contact with staff either by phone or face to face. There is a link on the front of the Council's web site to an online form and also a customer guide, a copy of which is attached at appendix A. Also, emails from all front line staff have a link at the bottom where our customers can give feedback on their service.
- 2.3 All staff are made aware of the need to record this information and since the redesign and the resignation of the Information Co-ordinator they have been encouraged to relay this information to the Leadership Support Team who have taken on the logging and monitoring role and ensuring that the feedback is being responded to. The leadership support team are currently updating out of date information on our website.
- 2.4 A project team has recently been set up to review the Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Customer Feedback function.
- 2.5 The following definitions are used to determine what type of feedback is being recorded:-

Comment

- Situation which needs attention from the Council or a contractor, such as broken playground equipment or suggestions about how to improve a service.

Compliment

- A positive experience with Council Services, staff or work.

Complaint

- A negative experience caused directly by Council policy, staff or work.
 - Occasions where the Council fails to deal with issues effectively and/or within a reasonable timescale.
- 2.6 Details of the number of comments, compliments and complaints are reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis with the last report being on the 10 June

2015. At that time the Executive noted the report subject to the next report including:-

- Detail on the sources of complaints and freedom of information requests.
- Some case studies in relation to compliments
- How Rochford District Council's statistics compare with those of other authorities.

2.7 The information attached in Appendix B shows the total number of complaints, comments and compliments received by service area and by type of complaint for 2014/15. Comparative information is also provided on the figures for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14.

2.8 Customer Feedback information is available to all staff who are encouraged to discuss them within their individual departments to ensure that action is taken where necessary and that lessons are learnt and improvements are made as a result. Complaints are nearly 44% lower than in 2013/14.

3 RISK IMPLICATIONS

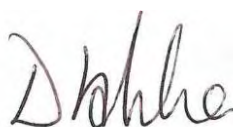
3.1 The Council needs to learn from customer feedback in order to make improvements to services wherever possible.

4 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Comments, compliments and complaints are monitored so that we are able to assess any equality implications from them.

5 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to note the report.



Dawn Tribe

Assistant Director – Customer, Revenues & Benefits Services

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Dawn Tribe (Assistant Director – Customer, Revenues & Benefits Services) on:-

Phone: 01702 318098

Email: dawn.tribe@rochford.gov.uk

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Customer Guide



A Guide to the Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure

Rochford District Council aims to deliver a first class service to all its customers. We see all feedback, whether good or bad, as a valuable way for us to learn and improve. Therefore we welcome all comments, compliments and complaints.

What type of feedback do you have?

Comment

... situations which need attention from the Council or a contractor, such as broken playground equipment

...suggestions about how to improve a service

If you make a comment to the Council, this will be logged and passed to the relevant Council department to take action as necessary.

Compliment

...a positive experience with Council services, staff or work

Acknowledgment of good service is a very positive way for the Council to learn from customers. Details of all compliments received will be shared with the staff members and teams concerned, as well as at management level.

Complaint

... a negative experience caused directly by Council policy, staff or work

... occasions where the Council fails to deal with issues effectively and/or within a reasonable timescale

Our Complaints Policy is set out on the next page. This gives full details of what to expect once we have received your complaint.

How to give your feedback to Rochford District Council

You can give us your feedback in the following ways:

Online: go to www.rochford.gov.uk and you can provide us with your feedback instantly by completing the online form.

By email: you can email customerservices@rochford.gov.uk.

By post: send us a letter, or complete the Customer Feedback Form enclosed – our address details are at the back of this leaflet.

By phone: you can phone our offices on **01702 546366**.

Your feedback is very important to us, so if you have any questions or need assistance with completing our Customer Feedback Form please do not hesitate to contact us – our full contact details are on the back of this leaflet

Complaints Policy

- The Council recognises that on occasion the standards of service offered might slip below those to which you are entitled. You may also feel that a decision or action that the Council has taken has adversely affected you.
- If you are dissatisfied in any way with the Council, we would welcome the opportunity to look into the matter and either provide you with an explanation of our actions or, where appropriate, take steps to put things right.
- If you would prefer a friend or relative to contact the Council on your behalf, or perhaps another organisation such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, we would be more than happy to deal with them. Alternatively you may wish to seek the advice or support of your local District Councillor.
- When we receive a complaint...
We aim to respond to all complaints within 5 working days of receipt. However, sometimes complaints need more detailed investigation and this may mean we need a little more time before we respond. If there is likely to be any delay in dealing with your complaint, we will always let you know.

Our promise is that if we are at fault we will apologise and try to put things right wherever we can. If we do not consider we are at fault, we will always provide an explanation why.

- If you remain dissatisfied...
The Council recognises that you may remain dissatisfied after we have dealt with your complaint.

You may therefore ask for a further review to be undertaken. The Chief Executive or a Head of Service who has not previously been involved will then carry out the review. When the review is complete they will advise you of the outcome.

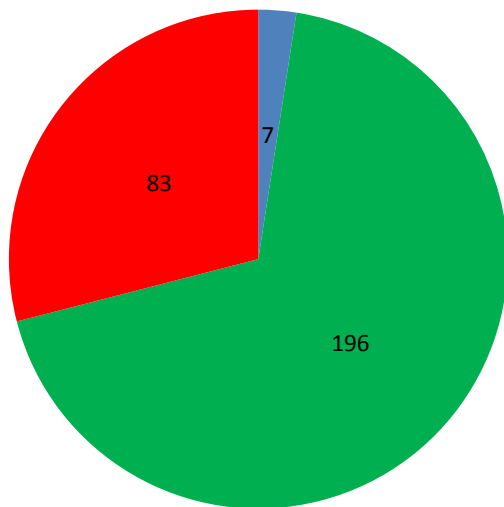
- Where do you go next...
If we have been unable to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction you may be able to pursue it with the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is an independent person who investigates complaints against local councils. We will provide you with a leaflet explaining how to make a complaint to the Ombudsman when we let you know the outcome of our investigation. Alternatively this information is available at the reception for the Council Offices in Rochford and at the Civic Suite in Rayleigh, or on our website **www.rochford.gov.uk**.

If you would like this information in large print, Braille or another language, please contact 01702 318111.

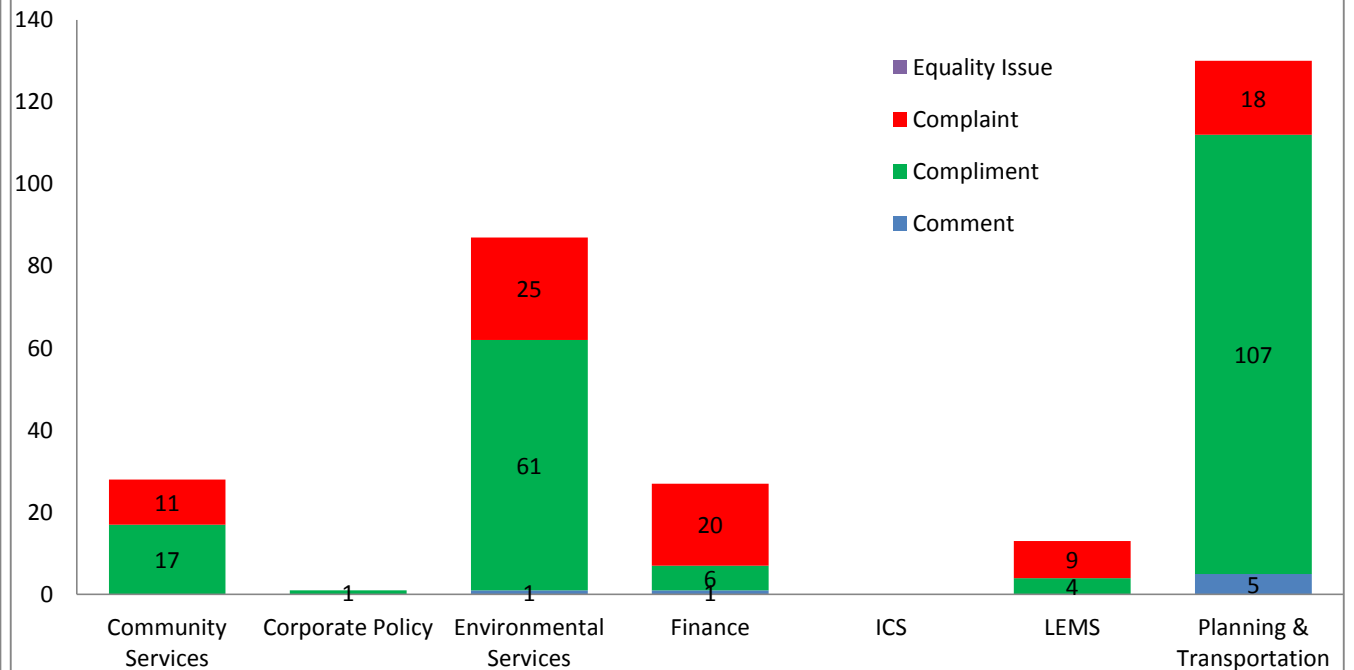


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Council Offices South Street
Rochford Essex SS4 1BW
Phone: 01702 546366
customerservices@rochford.gov.uk
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**Total Feedback Received
Corporately 1st April 2014 -
31st March 2015**

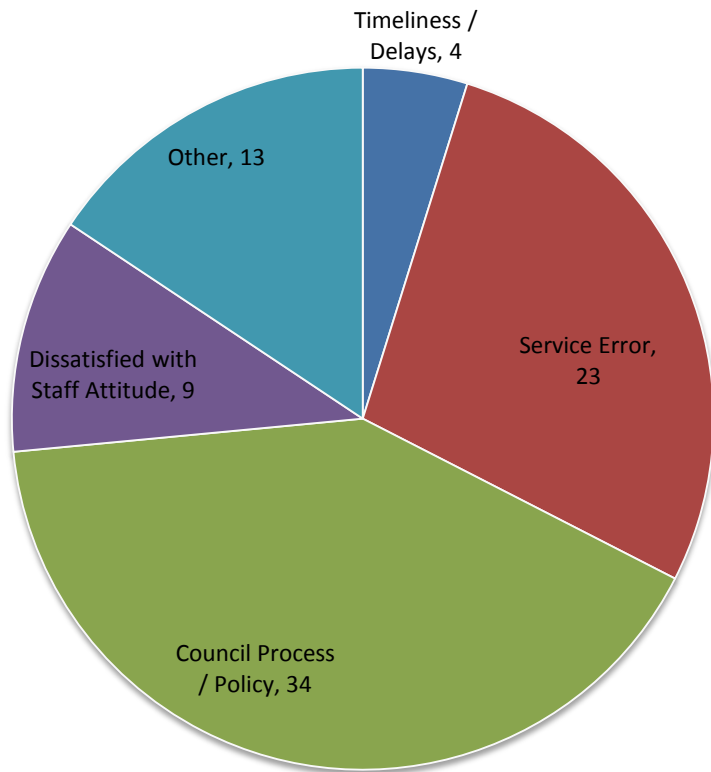


Total Feedback Received by Division



**Corporate
Customer Feedback 2014/15
Annual Report**

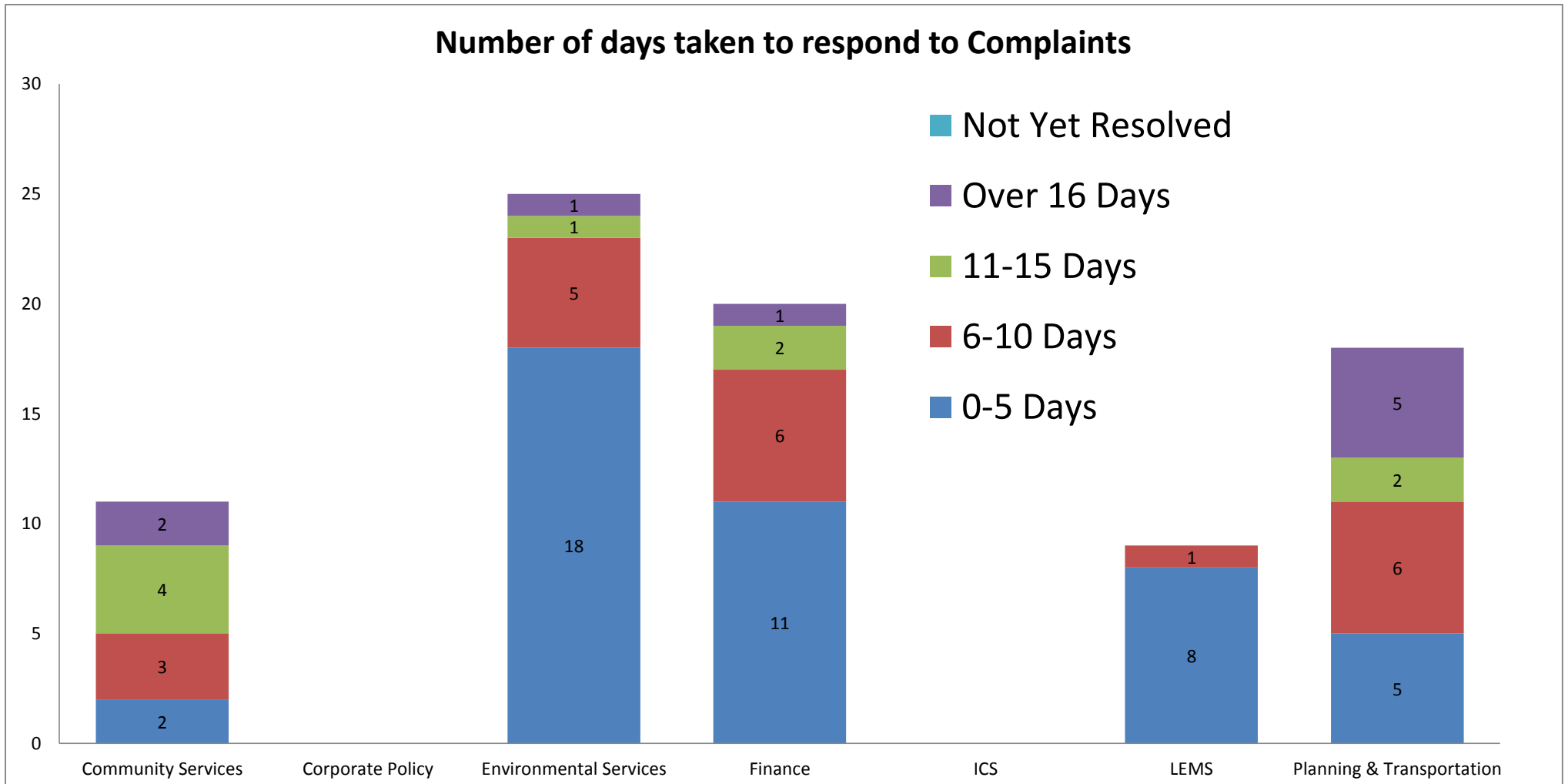
Total Complaints Categories



Complaints Categories Breakdowns

	Timeliness / Delays	Service Error	Council Process / Policy	Dissatisfied with Staff Attitude	Other
Community Services	0	1	10	0	0
Corporate Policy	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental Services	2	10	8	3	2
Financial Services	1	6	5	4	4
ICS	0	0	0	0	0
LEMS	0	1	2	0	6
Planning & Transportation	1	5	9	2	1
TOTALS:	4	23	34	9	13

Corporate
Customer Feedback 2014/15
Annual Report



Customer Feedback; Analysis of Corporate Quarter/Annual Statistics

Period	Total Feedback received				Total Complaint Categories						Number of days taken to send a full reply			
	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Racial Incident	Council / Government Policy	Dissatisfied with Staff Attitude	Other	Service Error/Task Not Done	Timeliness/Delays	0-5	6-10	11-15	16+	
2011/ 2012	Q1	45	2	15	0	10	2	1	0	2	8	6	0	1
	Q2	45	4	35	0	18	5	1	7	4	24	7	2	2
	Q3	51	2	19	0	6	3	1	8	1	8	8	2	1
	Q4	38	3	17	0	7	5	1	4	0	5	8	1	3
	<i>Annual</i>	179	11	86	0	41	15	4	19	7	45	29	5	7
2012/ 2013	Q1	24	2	42	0	9	2	0	25	6	31	6	2	3
	Q2	28	1	22	0	14	1	3	4	0	12	5	2	3
	Q3	30	0	18	0	4	2	3	7	2	15	0	2	1
	Q4	24	1	20	0	5	3	2	6	4	13	2	1	4
	<i>Annual</i>	106	4	102	0	32	8	8	42	12	71	13	7	11
2013/ 2014	Q1	54	4	53	0	8	3	3	35	3	39	6	5	3
	Q2	54	3	41	0	22	3	1	16	0	30	8	1	2
	Q3	64	2	25	0	17	2	1	5	0	12	5	2	6
	Q4	51	3	29	0	18	1	2	7	1	8	5	2	14
	<i>Annual</i>	223	12	148	0	65	9	7	63	4	89	24	10	25
2014/ 2015	Q1	50	5	26	0	17	2	0	7	0	7	4	2	13
	Q2	56	2	22	0	8	2	2	9	1	12	3	0	7
	Q3	67	0	19	0	7	3	2	5	5	12	5	2	0
	Q4	23	0	16	0	2	2	9	2	1	9	2	2	3
	<i>Annual</i>	196	7	83	0	34	9	13	23	4	40	4	6	23