
REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 5 NOVEMBER 2014**PORTFOLIO: PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY****REPORT FROM HEAD OF FINANCE****SUBJECT: CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UPDATE AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATISTICS APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2014****1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the the customer feedback and freedom of information statistics for April – September 2014 be noted.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The information attached in Appendix A shows the total number of complaints, comments and compliments received by service area and by type of complaint for the first six months of 2014/15. Comparative information is also provided on the figures for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- 2.2 It is pleasing to note that the Council continues to receive a number of compliments across most service areas.
- 2.3 Complaints are discussed within the individual departments to ensure that action is taken where necessary and that lessons are learnt and improvements are made as a result. The number of complaints is almost half of the number received in the same period last year.
- 2.4 This report also contains, in Appendix B, information about the volume of freedom of information enquiries that we are receiving. The number of enquiries have fallen slightly from 530 in 2011/12 to 514 in 2012/13 but have risen markedly in 2013/14 to 635. In the first six months of 2014/15 there have been 372 enquiries, which is much higher than previous years. The level of complexity of some of the enquiries means that they are taking an increasing amount of officer time to process.
- 2.5 There are statutory requirements covering the ability to charge for assembling information under the Freedom of Information Act. There is an exemption from the obligation to comply with a request where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the 'appropriate limit' of £450. Costs are calculated at £25 per hour per person regardless of the actual rate of pay, which means that the limit will be exceeded if it is estimated to take 18 hours or more. This year two requests have been refused on these grounds and the requests were withdrawn.

- 2.6 We do have an ability to recover reasonable costs incurred. This covers 'communication costs', for example photocopying and postage, but cannot cover the cost of staff time. The rate set is £5 if the request is likely to take more than 50 A4 sheets of paper. In reality this charge is rarely applied as most enquiries are answered by email.

Customer Feedback and Consultation Update

- 2.7 Membership of the Have Your Say Group hovers around the 450 mark. The group is promoted on a continuous basis at community events. For example, flyers were placed in the goody bags at the Community Older Persons Event in Rayleigh in October and at Wild Woods Day in June; libraries and the Council reception areas have flyers about the group. Respondents to online surveys are asked to join the group if they have not already done so. The packs that are sent out to new residents contain the flyer and, facilitated by RRAVS, the national volunteering website Do-It contains information about joining the group.
- 2.8 The group has been involved in the following consultation exercises over the last six months:-
- Local Council Tax Support Scheme
 - Polling Station Review
 - Electoral Review of Rochford (Local Government Boundary Commission for England)
 - Annual Community Safety Survey
 - Car Park Satisfaction Survey

The Group will be consulted on the forthcoming budget survey which will be live from October to January.

- 2.9 Consultations continue to be posted on the Have Your Say webpage and feedback included in the quarterly Have Your Say newsletters.
- 2.10 Customer feedback continues to be monitored through web and email channels by clicking on the 'thumbs up, thumbs down' icon. Residents are given the opportunity to leave contact details for a council officer to follow up on their comments. Overall satisfaction with the service the Council provides remains high. Reports are compiled every quarter and fed back to service areas. The face to face surveys at receptions have been stopped due to the low numbers participating and the limited value that they offered.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 None.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council needs to learn from customer feedback in order to make improvement to services wherever possible.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: Y. Woodward

Head of Finance

Background Papers:

None.

For further information please contact Yvonne Woodward (Head of Finance) on:-

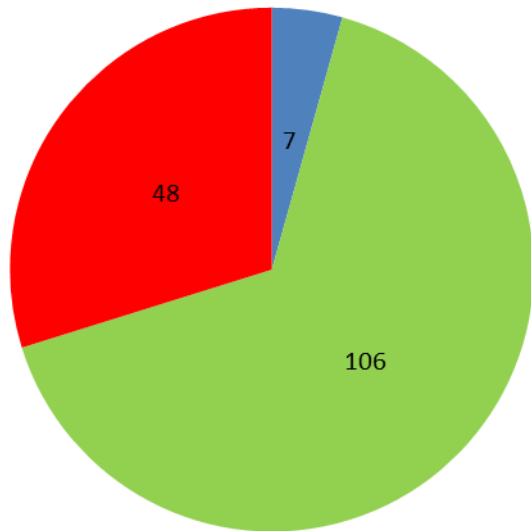
Phone: 01702 318029

Email: yvonne.woodward@rochford.gov.uk

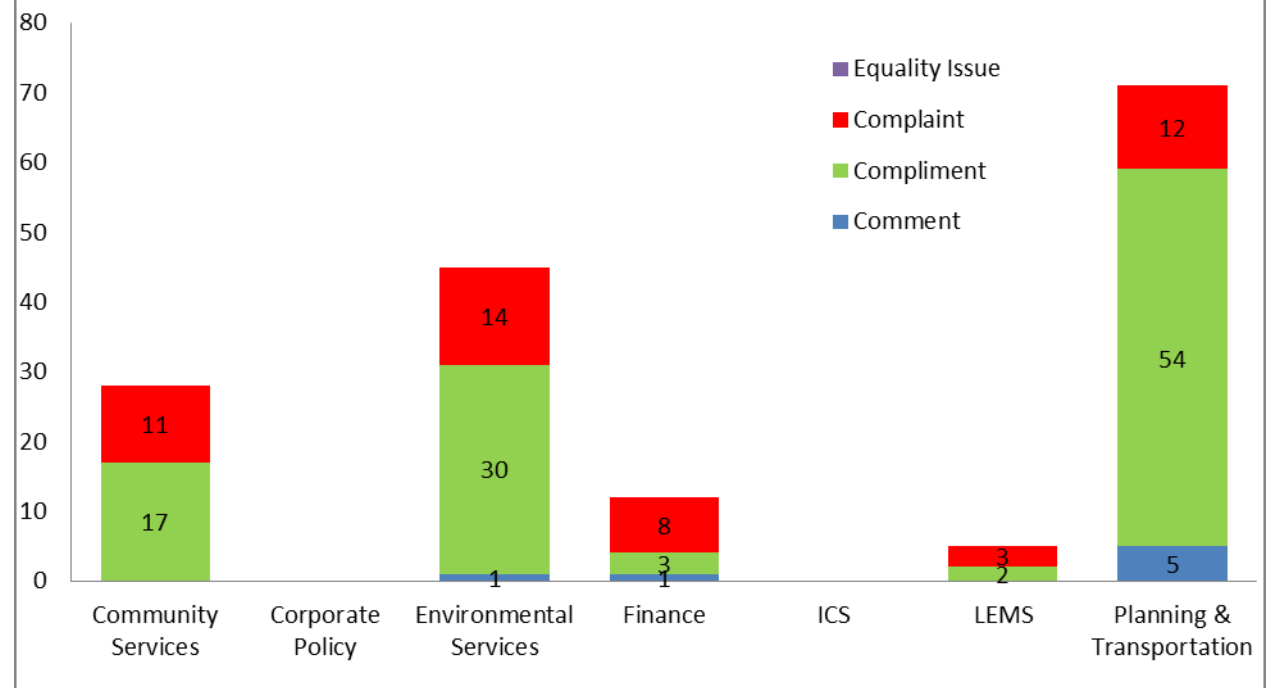
If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT 01.04.2014 to 30.09.2014

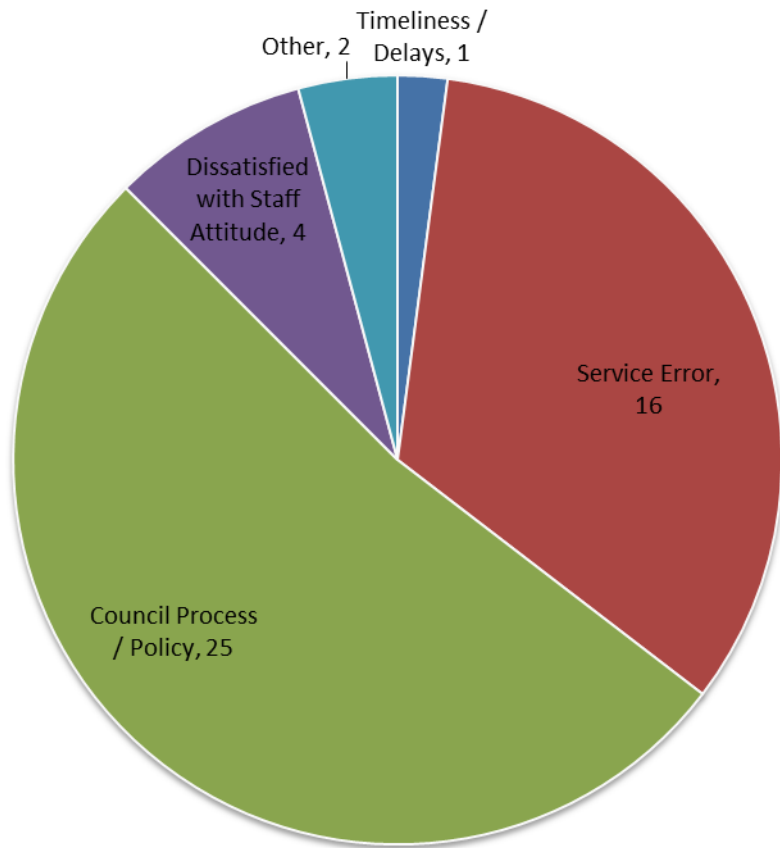
**Total Feedback Received
Corporately 1st April - 30th
September 2014**



Total Feedback Received by Division

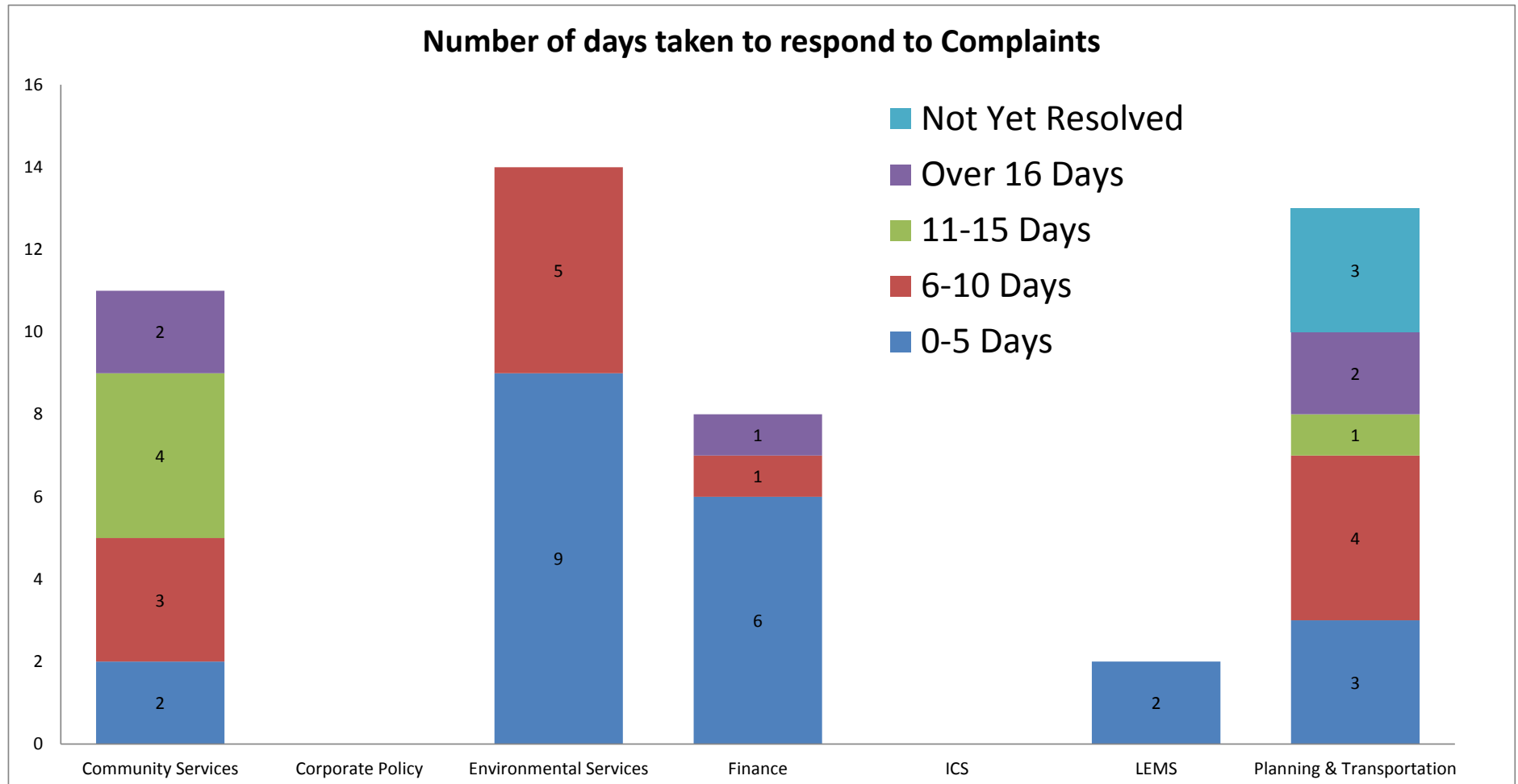


Total Complaints Categories



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	0	7	5	2	0
Financial Services	1	2	3	1	1
ICS	0	0	0	0	0
LEMS	0	1	2	0	0
Planning & Transportation	0	5	5	1	1
TOTALS:	1	16	25	4	2



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
	Annual	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
	Annual	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
	Annual	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													
	Q4													
	Annual													

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMPARISON

April 2011 – 30th September 2014

	April - March 2012	April- March 2013	April – March 2014	April – Sept 2014
Community Services	72	110	172	55
Corporate Collation	145	128	149	74
Environmental Services	124	118	121	76
Finance	54	23	32	61
People and Policy Unit	23	15	20	11
Info & Customer Services	32	46	62	0
Legal Services	19	14	22	21
Planning / Transportation	61	60	57	74
TOTALS	530	514	635	372

Quarterly comparison on total FOI requests received by RDC

	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Quarter 1	127	120	124	226
Quarter 2	123	130	142	146
Quarter 3	120	119	155	
Quarter 4	160	145	214	
TOTALS	530	514	635	372