

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 12 JUNE 2013

PORTFOLIO: SERVICE DEVELOPMENT, IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

REPORT FROM HEAD OF INFORMATION AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UPDATE AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATISTICS 2012/13

1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 To note the customer feedback and Freedom of Information statistics for 2012/13.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Executive has previously received information on the number of comments, compliments and complaints as part of broader reports on the Access to Services Strategy.
- 2.2 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 2012/13. Comparative information is also provided on the figures for 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12.
- 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. Complaints are higher than in 2011/12 and this can be accounted for by the major issues experienced with the verge cutting in 2012. However, despite this, complaints are lower than in 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- 2.4 This report also contains in Appendix B information about the volume of Freedom of Information Act enquiries that we are receiving. The number of enquiries has risen markedly from 213 in 2009/10 to 403 in 2010/11 to 530 in 2011/12. The number in 2012/13 is 514 which is slightly down on the previous year's figure. The complexity of some of these 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.

- 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 The Have Your Say Group was re-launched in September 2010, replacing the dormant Citizens Panel. The group is managed in-house by the Community Planning Officer. Any resident over the age of 16 can join the group.
- 2.8 Membership of the Have Your Say Group has grown steadily over the last six months, and as of May 2013, the group had 426 members. The group is promoted on a continuous basis at community events and community venues as well as on the Council's website and in Rochford District Matters. New members are encouraged to sign up with an email address as the majority of consultations are communicated electronically but a quarterly newsletter keeps members of the group up to date with current activity and also feedback on closed consultation.
- 2.9 The group has been involved in five main consultation exercises over the last six months, these being:
- Budget priorities survey
 - Feeding views into the Council's LGA Peer Review exercise
 - Arts and theatre provision for families survey
 - Rochford District Matters circulation survey
 - On going affordable housing survey
- 2.10 Response rates to consultations can vary between 20-30 to 80-100 depending on the topic being discussed. The most responses were received for the budget priorities survey.
- 2.11 The group was also asked to provide a mystery shopping resource for the Council in the annual exercise. 24 members of the group volunteered to take part.
- 2.12 Consultations continue to be posted on the Have Your Say web page and feedback included in the quarterly Have Your Say newsletters.
- 2.13 The new in-house system for collecting customer feedback is now fully operational and consists of:
- Face to face surveys on a quarterly basis
 - Postcards in the reception areas to obtain feedback
 - The 'Have Your Say' logo placed on web pages and emails, linked to feedback forms

- 2.14 All feedback received is considered within the relevant Division and considered corporately by the Customer Access & Consultation Group.

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: _____

Head of Information and Customer Services

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Sarah Fowler (Head of Information and Customer Services) on:-

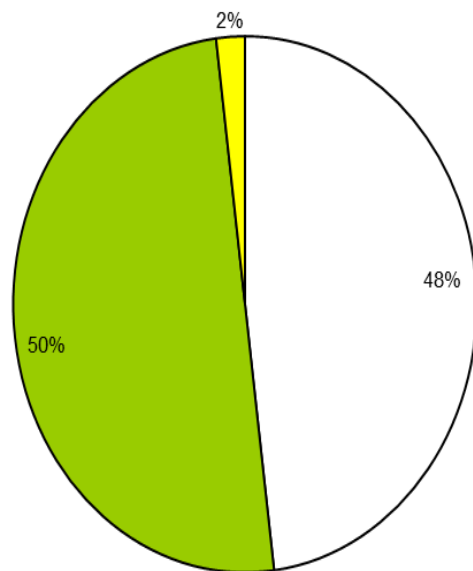
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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

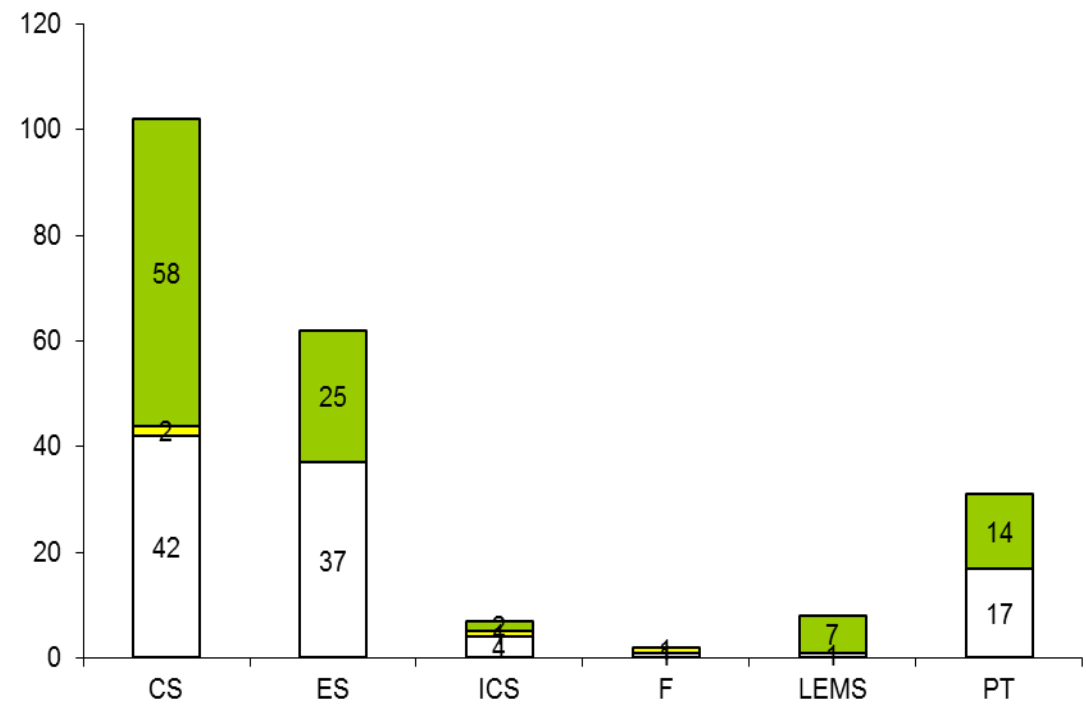
CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT 01.04.2012 to 31.03.2013

Total Feedback Received Corporately



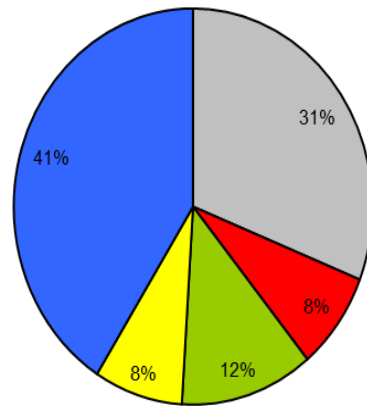
□ Complaints = 102 ■ Compliments = 106 ■ Comments = 4

Total Feedback Received by Service



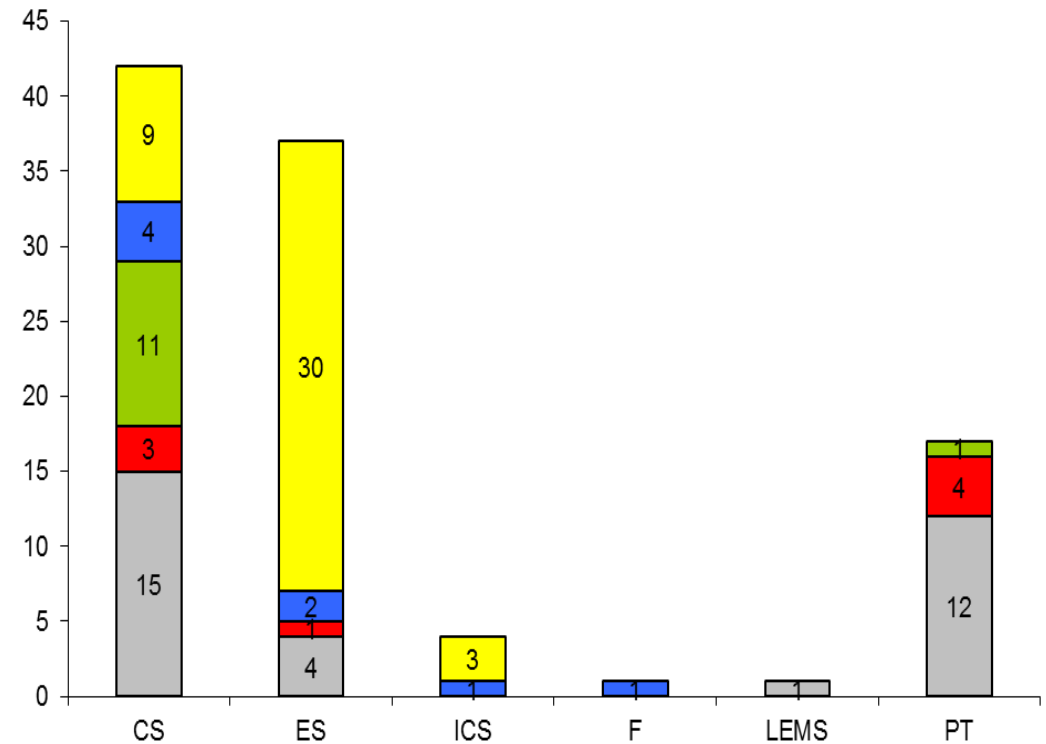
□ Complaints ■ Comments ■ Compliments

Total Complaint Categories



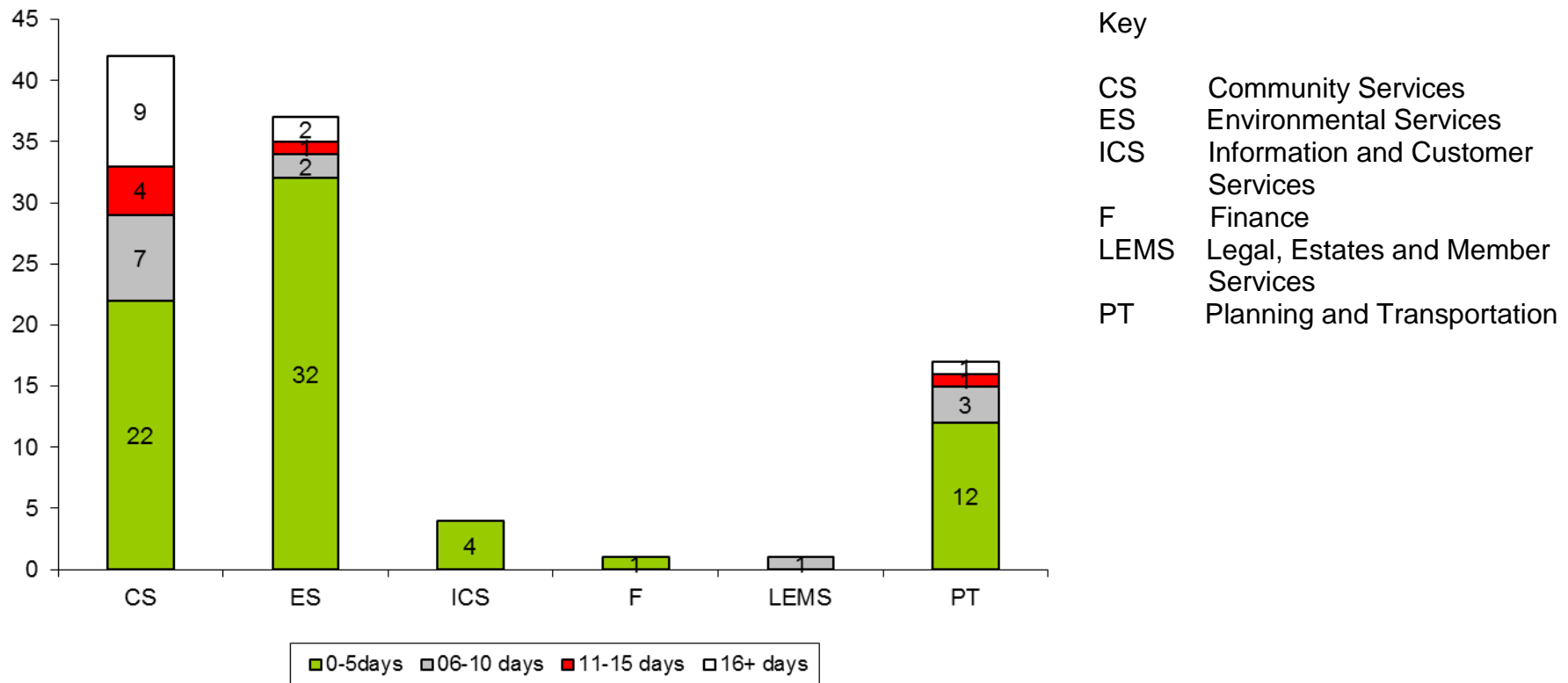
Council Process/Policy = 32
 Timeliness/Delays = 12
 Service Error / Task Not Done = 42
 Dissatisfied with Staff Attitude = 8
 Other = 8

Complaint Category by Service



Council Process/Policy Staff Attitude Timeliness/Delays Other Service Error/Task Not Done

Time taken to respond to complaints



Total 0-5 = 71 Total 6-10 = 13 Total 11-15 = 6 Total 16+ = 12

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 Process/Policy	Dissatisfied with Staff Attitude	Other	Service Error/ Task Not Done	Timeliness/ Delays	0-5	6-10	11-15	16+
2009/2010	Q1	38	3	20	0	6	1	4	6	3	12	2	5	1
	Q2	29	9	43	0	16	4	8	10	5	27	9	4	3
	Q3	38	7	23	0	4	5	1	12	1	15	7	1	0
	Q4	30	6	30	0	12	6	1	8	3	18	10	2	0
	Annual	135	25	116	0	38	16	14	36	12	72	28	12	4
2010/2011	Q1	47	2	30	0	12	3	5	8	2	18	7	2	2
	Q2	30	5	27	0	15	2	2	5	3	9	4	9	5
	Q3	40	2	18	0	6	3	0	6	3	8	6	1	3
	Q4	33	4	53	0	39	3	1	6	4	33	12	7	1
	Annual	150	13	128	0	72	11	8	25	12	68	30	19	11
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

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMPARISON

April 2009 – 31st March 2013

	April - March 2010	April - March 2011	April- March 2012	April – March 2013
Community Services	46	49	72	110
Corporate Collation	18	74	145	128
Environmental Services	35	99	124	118
Finance	42	51	54	23
People and Policy Unit (previously corporate policy and HR)	17	33	23	15
Information & Customer Services	27	43	32	46
Legal Services	10	13	19	14
Planning / Transportation	19	41	61	60
TOTALS	213	403	530	514

Quarterly comparison on total FOI requests received by RDC

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Quarter 1	45	74	127	120
Quarter 2	55	105	123	130
Quarter 3	51	91	120	119
Quarter 4	62	133	160	145
TOTALS	213	403	530	514