

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 20 JUNE 2012

PORTFOLIO: SERVICE DEVELOPMENT, IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

REPORT FROM HEAD OF INFORMATION AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UPDATE AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATISTICS 2011/12

1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 To note the customer feedback and freedom of information statistics for 2011/12.

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 2011/12. Comparative information is also provided on the figures for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- 2.3 It is pleasing to note that the Council continues to receive a number of compliments across most service areas.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 This report also contains in Appendix B information about the volume of freedom of information 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 level of complexity of some means that they are taking an increasing amount of officer time to process.
- 2.6 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. In the last year one request was refused on these grounds and the request was withdrawn.

- 2.7 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

- 2.8 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. The Group is promoted in a number of ways such as at community events, on the Council website, through local partners and on social media.
- 2.9 As of April 2012 the Group has 365 members, of which about half are signed up with an email address. 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.
- 2.10 The Group has been involved in many consultation exercises in 2011/12 such as the budget consultation, communicating with residents' survey, customer contact survey, testing the new Council Tax web pages and a Community Safety focus group.
- 2.11 A Have Your Say webpage has been developed to act as a one stop shop for all non-planning consultation that the Council undertakes. Feedback on consultations is fed back through the Have Your Say newsletters which also feature on the web page.
- 2.12 We have also developed in-house a new system for collecting customer feedback following the decision not to extend the contract with Govmetric.
- 2.13 The new system, which will be fully launched in July 2012, will consist of:-
- Face to face surveys on a quarterly basis
 - Post cards 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 will be 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:-

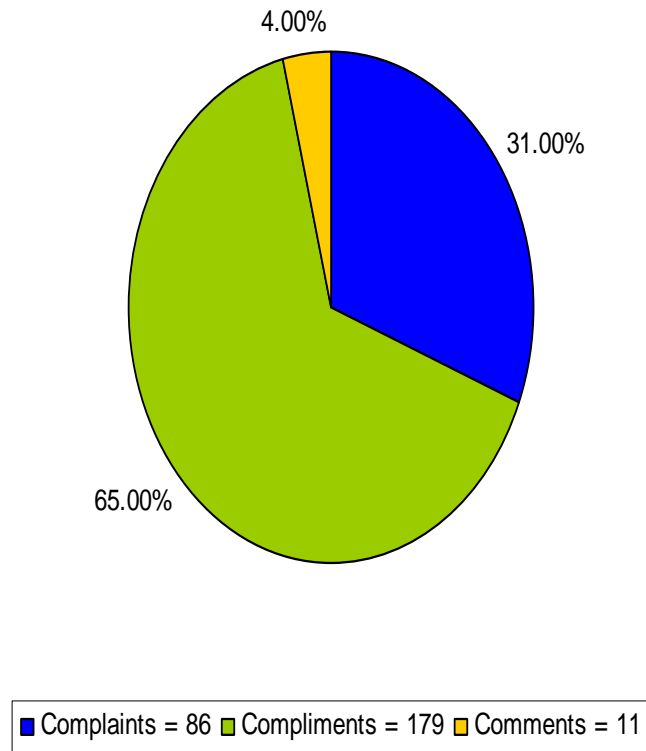
Phone: 01702 546366

Email: sarah.fowler@rochford.gov.uk

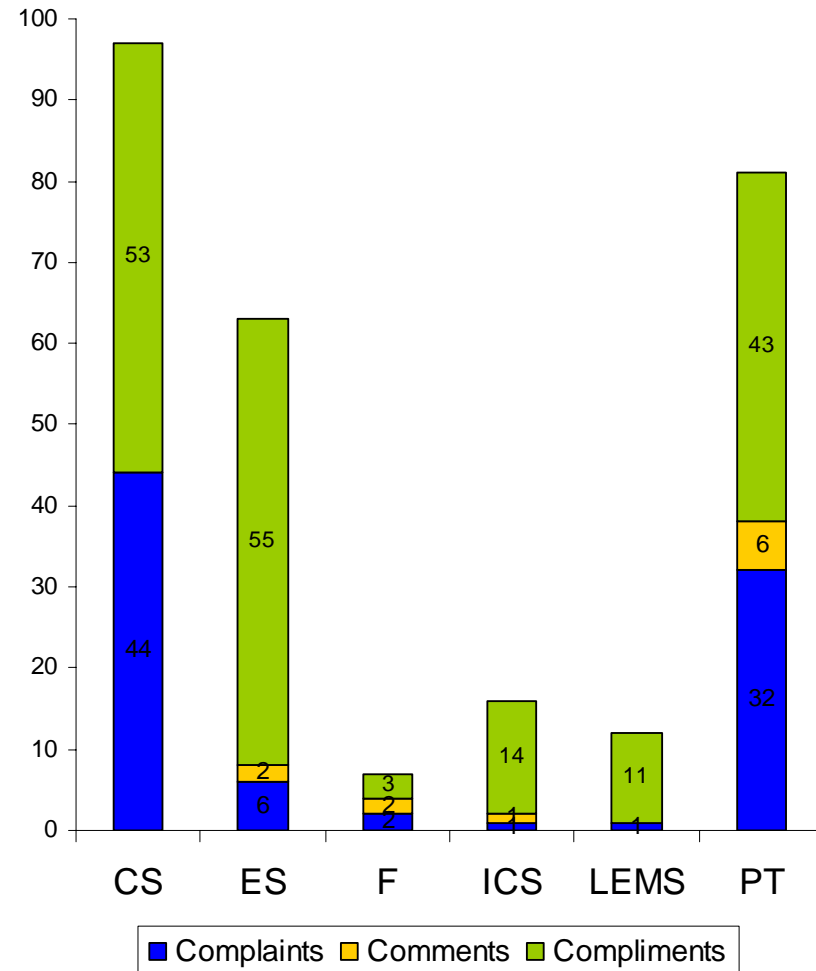
If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT 01.04.2011 to 31-03-2012

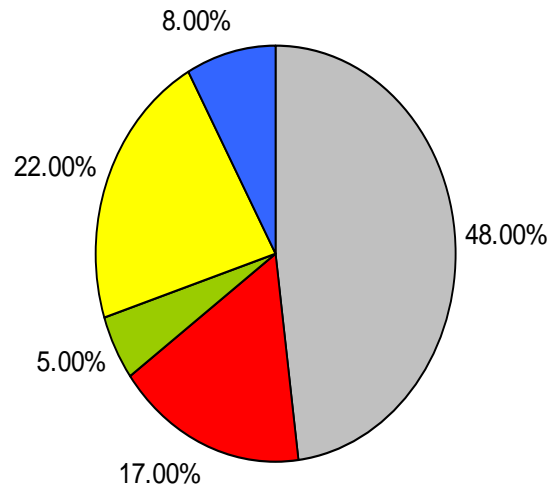
Total Feedback Received Corporately



Total Feedback Received by Service

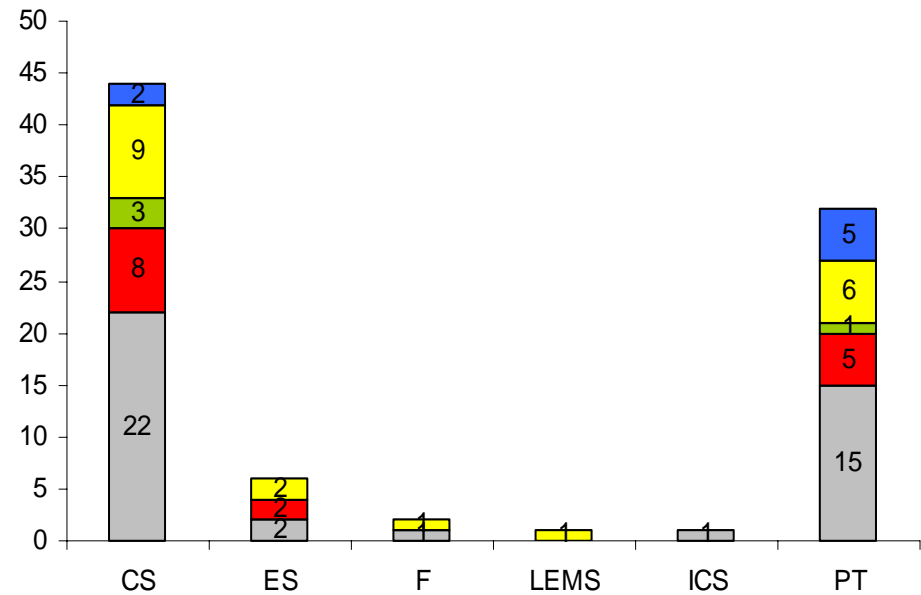


Total Complaint Categories



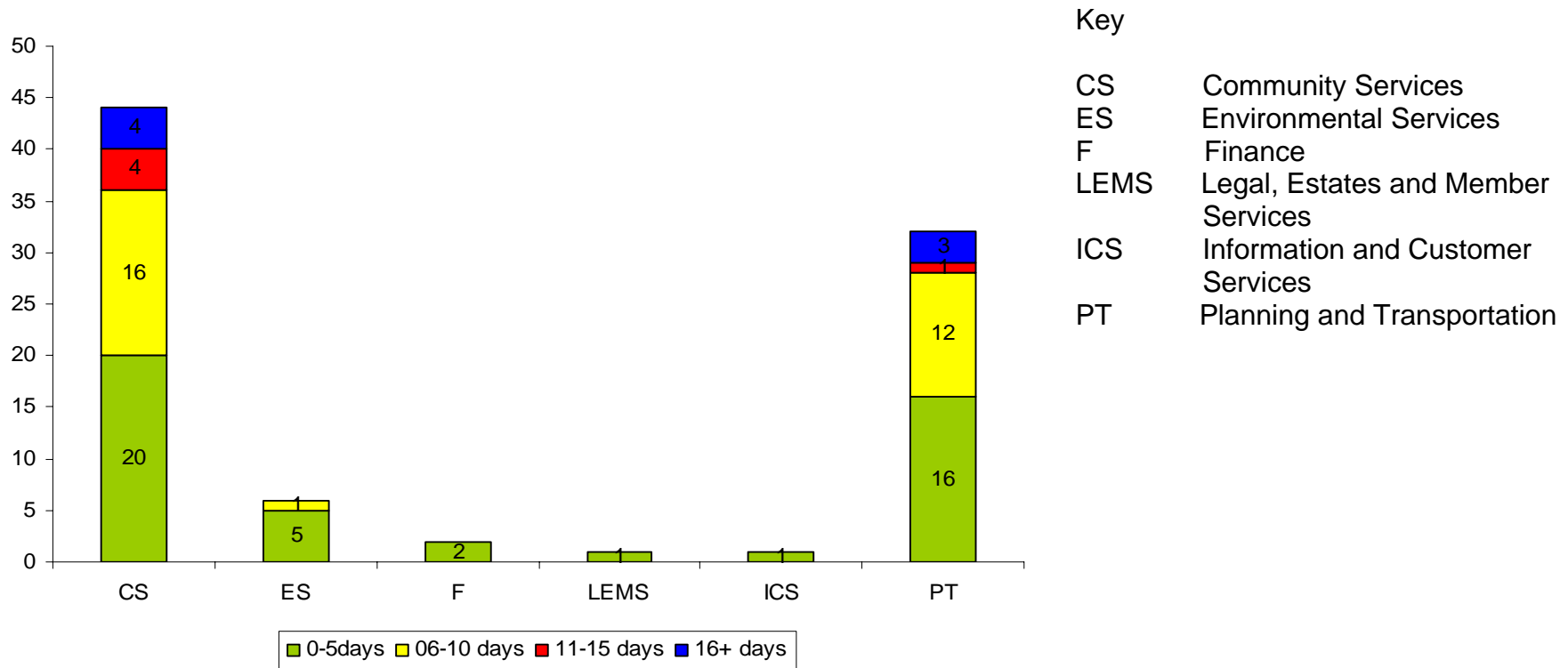
■ Council Process/Policy = 41	■ Dissatisfied with Staff Attitude = 15
■ Other = 4	■ Service Error/Task Not Done = 19
■ Timeliness/Delays = 7	

Complaint Category by Service



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

Time taken to respond to complaints



Total 0-5 = 45 Total 6-10 = 29 Total 11-15 = 5 Total 16+ = 7

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	Timelines/Delays	0-5	6-10	11-15	16+	
2008/ 2009	Q1	59	5	56	0	14	5	12	25	0	32	12	2	10
	Q2	49	9	87	0	17	5	11	50	4	45	15	5	23
	Q3	23	6	29	1	13	3	2	10	1	15	3	0	11
	Q4	14	11	33	0	12	4	10	4	3	16	5	3	9
	Annual	145	31	205	1	56	17	35	89	8	108	35	10	53
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

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMPARISON

April 2008 – 31st March 2012

	April – March 2009	April - March 2010	April - March 2011	April- March 2012
Chief Executive's Office	6	1	0	0
Community Services	34	46	49	72
Corporate Collation	7	18	74	145
Environmental Services	11	35	99	124
Finance	27	42	51	54
People and Policy Unit (previously corporate policy and HR)	11	17	33	23
Information and Customer Services	8	27	43	32
Legal Services	2	0	13	19
Planning / Transportation	13	19	41	61
TOTALS	119	213	403	530

Quarterly comparison on total FOI requests received by RDC

	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Quarter 1	25	45	74	127
Quarter 2	27	55	105	123
Quarter 3	26	51	91	120
Quarter 4	41	62	133	160
TOTALS	119	213	403	530