

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 27 JUNE 2018
REPORT ON: ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS
REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
REPORT NO: 160-2018

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To analyse complaints statistics for 2017/2018, with comparisons to previous periods, and to report on the action which continues to be taken to ensure that complaints are handled well and to learn from complaints.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee notes:-

- (a) the key performance indicators on complaints closed between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018, with trends from previous periods;
- (b) the latest update from the Complaints Review Group which meets quarterly to check the quality of complaints handling and to promote learning and process improvement from complaints;
- (c) the results of the satisfaction surveys sent to everyone who made a complaint closed during each quarter of 2017/2018, with trends from previous surveys;
- (d) the information on compliments received through the website.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Since 1 October 2012, the Council has been operating the model Complaints Handling Procedure for Local Authorities as required by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Part of that procedure is that regular reports are produced for the Council's management team and elected members.
- 4.2 This latest report covers complaints closed during the year from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, and includes performance on key indicators as well as the results of the satisfaction surveys sent to all those who made complaints closed during each quarter, with charts showing the trends compared to previous periods.
- 4.3 The report also updates Committee on the work of the Complaints Review Group which meets quarterly to check that the complaints handling procedure is being followed correctly and to promote learning from complaints and ensure that the intelligence and insight gathered from complaints is translated into process improvements.

- 4.4 The aim of this report is to analyse performance where people have used the Council's complaints process. There has been discussion previously at Committee about issues raised with Councillors, rather than through the complaints system, and paragraph 6.9 of this report provides information on the latest 'snapshot' survey of members aimed at ensuring that useful information from such contacts is captured.
- 4.5 This report now also provides information on compliments received from service users who have used the form on the Council's website.

5. COMPLAINTS STATISTICS: 1 APRIL 2017 - 31 MARCH 2018

5.1 In 2017/2018:

- 585 complaints were closed. By service, the number of complaints recorded were:
 - Corporate Services (90)
 - Children & Families
 - Education (124)
 - Children's Services (16)
 - Criminal Justice (4)
 - Neighbourhood Services
 - Housing (108)
 - Environment (145)
 - City Development (59)
 - Chief Executive's (1)
 - Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership (Social Work only) (38)

A breakdown of each service's figures is given in Appendix One.

- 63.9% of complaints at the frontline stage were closed within the target of 5 working days and a further 8.3% within an extended target time.
- the aim of the Complaints Handling Procedure is for as many complaints as possible to be resolved at the frontline stage (stage 1) with as few as possible going for further investigation (stage 2). During 2017/2018, our ratio of complaints dealt with at stage 1 compared to stage 2 was 84.8% to 15.2% - very close to the Ombudsman's 'good practice' ratio of 85/15.
- 58.4% of complaints at the investigation stage were closed within the 20 working days target and a further 21.3% within an extended target time.
- the average number of working days taken to close complaints was 8.0 days at the frontline stage and 24.5 days at the investigation stage (combining 'opened at' and 'escalated to' figures). The Ombudsman has emphasised that the 5 and 20 day targets are designed to drive improvement rather than absolute standards which must be complied with. It is acknowledged that some complaints take longer to resolve and that missing the targets is not regarded as a 'fail'. In particular, complaints relating to schools tend to take longer to resolve as they often involve arranging meetings with parents or investigations according to agreed procedures for teachers.
- at the frontline stage, 25.8% of complaints were upheld and a further 14.5% were partially upheld.
- at the investigation stage, 23.6% were upheld and 16.9% were partially upheld.
- the percentage of complaints recorded in each category is shown below (with the figure for 2016/2017 in brackets):

- delay in responding to enquiries and requests	-	10.9%	(14.2%)
- failure to meet our service standards	-	19.7%	(15.5%)
- treatment by, or attitude of, a member of staff	-	29.4%	(25.8%)

- failure to provide a service	-	25.3%	(24.5%)
- dissatisfaction with our policy	-	8.3%	(13.0%)
- failure to follow the proper administrative process	-	5.2%	(6.2%)
- refusal to give advice or answer questions	-	1.1%	(0.8%)

Complaints categorised as relating to treatment by or attitude of staff continue to be the highest group. In order to examine this issue in more detail, the Complaints Review Group (which normally reviews a random sample of complaints) has looked specifically at 'staff attitude' complaints. The group found that a high proportion of the complaints had not been upheld, this decision sometimes being assisted by the investigating officer being able to listen to a recording of a telephone conversation to confirm that the member of staff had behaved appropriately. This is borne out by analysis of the % of complaints upheld, which is lower in the case of 'staff' complaints than the average. While action has been and will continue to be taken where members of staff do not give a good standard of customer service, this review (along with the very positive scores in the annual consumer survey for the courtesy, friendliness and helpfulness of staff) does not suggest any widespread concern about the attitude or behaviour of employees.

The other category of complaints with a high % of cases is 'failure to provide a service'. Detailed analysis suggests that the root cause of these is generally a service not being satisfactorily implemented as quickly as the customer expected, rather than the service not being provided at all.

The types of complaint with the highest percentages 'upheld' are failure to follow proper process' and 'failure to meet service standards'. These categories will be the focus of quality control reviews in the coming period.

- 40 people made more than one complaint during 2017/2018 - 32 made two complaints, 6 made three complaints and 2 made four complaints.

5.2 To put the number of complaints received into context, the Council manages a huge volume of transactions with customers. For example, in a typical year we:

- manage around 12,500 Council houses and relet around 1,200 of these.
- carry out around 55,000 repairs and deal with over 1,500 reports of anti-social behaviour.
- put out over 210,000 Council Tax bills and reminders - adding benefit notifications and other letters takes the total of Revenue transactions to over 350,000.
- educate over 18,000 pupils (over 3.2 million 'pupil days') and process around 1,700 placing requests.
- process around 2,500 applications for various education benefits.
- carry out around 800 food inspection visits, 600 occupational health and safety visits and 7,000 pest control visits.
- service over 6 million different types of recycling and residual waste containers.
- provide home care to over 1,800 people and residential care to 1,200 service users.
- receive almost 1,600 requests under Freedom of Information Legislation and Environmental Information Regulations.
- register around 4,000 births and deaths and conduct around 600 weddings.
- receive over 120,000 service requests on our website (job applications, requests for wheelie bins, book renewals etc).
- process over 200,000 online payments through our website valued at around £150 million.

- process 1,100 Building Warrant applications and 900 planning applications, and investigate around 120 planning enforcement complaints.
- maintain over 500 Km of roads and almost a million Km of footpaths, and travel about 30,000 Km treating priority roads in the winter.
- provide free school transport to over 1,000 pupils, making 400,000 trips per school year.
- process over 12,000 recruitment applications via the Talentlink portal.
- deliver 3,700 adult learning opportunities and deliver a youth work programme to almost 3,500 young people.
- have over 29,000 attendances at community centre activities by children aged 5-10.
- have 8,000 attendances at community events.

5.3 Key quarterly trends from the analysis of performance indicators are shown in the charts in Appendix Two. Note that the figures for each quarter will not necessarily add up to the annual totals reported - complaints are only counted once although their status may change during the year eg a complaint may be counted as a stage 1 in one quarter but be counted as a stage 2 in a subsequent quarter, and in the annual statistics, if it has been escalated. This avoids double counting.

6. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

6.1 A Complaints Review Group, made up of complaints administrators from a number of services and officers with a remit for performance and improvement from the Chief Executive's service, meets every quarter to review a sample of complaints and check if these were well recorded, investigated and responded to. The group also looks at all 'open' complaints which are beyond the target date for response, and at the planned service improvements identified by officers when they close complaints as upheld or partially upheld. A key aim is to identify any lessons learned from complaints which can be used as intelligence, translating the insight gained from complaints into practical action which can help to prevent the same issues recurring.

6.2 The group continues to find evidence that complaints are generally being recorded, investigated and responded to well, along with evidence that complainants are being contacted to keep them informed of progress if complaints are taking longer than the target number of days to investigate. The group does still see some cases where targets have been missed, complainants have not been advised about escalating complaints if still dissatisfied and clearer explanations and apologies could have been given where complaints were upheld but these are discussed with complaints administrators and good practice is encouraged. The importance of dealing with complaints quickly, keeping complainants informed and advising complainants what to do if still dissatisfied continues to be emphasised to staff through guidance on the intranet, reminder messages on the complaints system, emails and a programme of training sessions.

6.3 The Complaints Review Group has assessed the effectiveness of the Council's complaints handling arrangements using a Performance Assessment Tool developed by the Complaints Standards Authority within the Ombudsman's service. This tool allows organisations to assess their performance in relation to six themes of good practice and to identify any areas requiring improvement action. As a result of the initial assessment, the following priorities have been identified:

- repeat the training programme implemented when the model Complaints Handling Procedure was introduced, and ensure that training continues to be refreshed on a 3-year cycle.
- ensure that dealing with complaints is among the competencies considered in Employee Performance and Development Reviews for relevant staff.

- make further efforts to establish the 'root cause' of complaints and ensure that any improvements made in response to individual complaints are communicated across the service and the Council. In particular, the Performance Assessment Tool highlights the importance of identifying key themes from complaints and being able to demonstrate improvement actions as a result.
 - make sure that independent advice agencies are aware of the Council's procedures so can advise and assist complainants where required.
 - ensure that reports such as this are cascaded to staff involved in dealing with complaints.
- 6.4 A programme of refresher training on complaints handling is well underway, with 55 officers who investigate complaints having recently attended sessions on our procedures, targets and good practice in investigating and responding to complaints. Further sessions are being planned.
- 6.5 Most of the 'planned service improvements' identified as a result of complaints during 2017/2018 involved speaking to individuals about errors or arranging training for teams to remind them of procedures and customer care standards. However, over the year there were also a number of service improvements identified, for example:

The complaint was	We listened, we acted
Letters to the Council about person's transfer from DLA to PIP had not been passed on to their support worker, resulting in benefits being stopped.	Procedures have been tightened where letters are received requiring action on behalf of Corporate Appointeeship clients and an early warning system put in place where care managers are informed where clients' income reduces suddenly or unexpectedly.
Tenant's garden and gate had been damaged in the course of work to install external wall insulation.	Improved monitoring now takes place of damage to surrounding areas after completion of work.
A Eurobin had been located directly below resident's window, causing noise and loss of privacy.	Positioning of street bins is being more thoroughly assessed.
Customer had difficulty getting through to report problems with waste collection.	Senior Officers responsible for Neighbourhood Services, Customer Services and Business Support discussed the issues arising from the number of phone calls during the recycling roll-out and action was taken to address these. Call handling was transferred to the contact centre.
It took too long to resolve problems with the hot water pressure.	Further training to be organised for trades on district heating system.
Resident was inconvenienced by road closures for an event which led to buses being re-routed.	Road closures and effect on buses discussed at event de-brief. Bus companies to be asked to undertake greater communication with customers.
Tenant was not given a time slot when a repair would be done.	Software which will allow appointment slots has been procured and implementation is being planned.

Council Tax payer understood that deductions had been implemented from benefits to reduce arrears but this had not been done.	Review of procedures to take place to ensure all requests for deductions are followed up.
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6.6 The electronic complaints recording system also has a feature which sends an automatic 'follow-up' email to those who record planned service improvements when closing complaints. The aim is to ensure that these improvements are implemented. Officers are prompted to give further updates a month after the complaint was closed, and until the improvement action is complete, and these are also reviewed by the Complaints Review Group.

6.7 Analysis of complaints will be used systematically to inform decisions on topics for STEP reviews. STEP (Systems Thinking Empowers People) is the Council's approach to service improvement based on the principles of lean service and customer insight, and it is felt that this approach lends itself well to learning from complaints and improving processes to prevent recurrence. As part of the BOLD programme, plans are being developed for a regular improvement group that would help people set up STEP/Service Design projects to address the root causes of complaints.

6.8 We also learn from complaints about other authorities. Each month the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman issues a newsletter highlighting complaints and, where these concern local government, we draw these reports to the attention of relevant services to ensure they are aware of any criticisms of other Councils or examples of good practice.

6.9 Analysing complaints is just one of a wide range of methods the Council uses to gather feedback from the people who use its services, in order to drive continuous improvement. Because councillors have so much interaction with customers and service users, we are keen to ensure that feedback from these contacts, which would help to identify improvements, is not missed. Last year we piloted a short survey giving members the opportunity to identify the most common subjects raised by constituents and any suggestions for Council processes or policies which, if improved, would reduce the number of issues raised with them. This survey has now been carried out a further twice. The most common themes highlighted by members in the most recent survey were housing, parking, bins, roads and pavements, environmental issues and anti-social behaviour. Suggestions for improvements which might reduce the number of complaints from constituents included:

- Communications eg make it known that people can report potholes direct; have FAQs about bins; clearer communication with people who complain about anti-social behaviour and with people over housing waiting lists.
- Introduce a parking scheme.
- Review the way roads are maintained.
- More consultation with people likely to be impacted by changes.

These issues will be raised with the Council Management Team, along with other comments made by members on policy issues.

One member again suggested the development of a case management system which allows members to track cases from mobile devices. We will investigate the availability of user-friendly systems which would help members manage their caseloads.

Members generally felt that a fairly small percentage of issues raised with them matched the definition of 'complaints'. Of these, the most common mentions were for:

- delay in responding to enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- standard of service

It is reassuring, in the light of the discussion at section 5.1 above, that staff attitude or behaviour was among the least common reasons for complaints.

All who replied were, in general, satisfied with the speed and quality of response to issues raised on behalf of constituents although one member suggested a need for some services to respond more timeously, in accordance with the protocol in response to members' enquiries, without the need for reminders.

It is proposed to continue to give all members the opportunity to give similar feedback around April and October each year, with a view to including the results in the bi-annual and annual report to Scrutiny Committee.

7. SATISFACTION WITH THE COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

7.1 The model Complaints Handling Procedure requires that the Council reports on a measure of customer satisfaction with its complaints process. To achieve this, we issue surveys to people who have made a complaint in the previous three months.

7.2 Trends in satisfaction are highlighted in the charts in Appendix Three. Since the survey sample always consists entirely of people who have made complaints about the Council, the majority of which are not upheld, it is not surprising that satisfaction levels are not always high. Samples each quarter are also small, so caution needs to be exercised in drawing conclusions from one quarter's results.

7.3 Points to note from the survey trends include the need to continue to reinforce the importance of:

- responding quickly to complaints, and keeping complainants informed when that is not possible.
- giving complainants information and explanations that are clear and easy to understand, and assuring them that their complaint has been taken seriously even if they didn't get the outcome they wanted.

7.4 It is recognised to be very difficult to get complainants to comment objectively on the complaints process, as distinct from the outcome, where their complaint was not upheld or did not result in the action they wanted. Nevertheless, our aim is to increase the % of complainants who acknowledge that the process of dealing with their complaint was satisfactory, even if they did not get the outcome they desired.

7.5 Performance will continue to be monitored and messages about good complaints handling will continue to be reinforced. Overall trends since the Council adopted the model Complaints Handling Procedure are positive, but those responding to the survey still indicate high levels of dissatisfaction with certain aspects of how we have dealt with their complaints so efforts to improve will continue. It should be noted, however, that overall levels of customer satisfaction with contact with the Council remain high, as evidenced by the results of the annual citizen survey. In particular, the survey continues to show high satisfaction with the friendliness, courtesy and helpfulness of employees.

8. COMPLIMENTS

8.1 During discussion on last year's report, members suggested it would be useful to include information on compliments received.

8.2 There is now a facility to record compliments on the Council's new website but this has only been in operation since late 2017 so there is limited information available to do any meaningful statistical analysis.

8.3 However, below are examples of some of the comments recorded:

- I would like to compliment and thank the young men who carried out the repair in my kitchen. The carpenters did an exceptional job of replacing the cupboard under my kitchen sink and the plumber likewise. They all had a very polite and pleasing attitude, would have them in my home again anytime. Their standard of work was excellent and very much appreciated.

- Thank all concerned for the very swift response to this tree. Very efficient response.
- Many thanks to all concerned for the prompt repair to the street light outside my house. The light was repaired at 11pm last night.
- Just to thank you for a speedy response about my bins - less than 24 hours. Cheers.
- I just wanted to write this little note of gratitude to my children's school. I have had some struggles with one of my children and his behaviour. Over the last couple of years the school has really gone above and beyond anything I would have ever expected. We have seen an amazing improvement in his behaviour both at school and at home. I felt it important to acknowledge what a positive change can happen when a school and good teachers and head teachers all are trying to help the individual child to improve themselves. I for one am a very grateful parent. I appreciate the amazing work that is being done by some very patient and understanding staff!
- Spoken to x in pension office today - could not wish for a nicer person. I would like to say she was excellent at helping me through this mine field. Please say thanks very much for help.
- When I spoke to a member of staff regarding getting a bus pass for a gentleman I support I didn't have the correct paperwork. Instead of saying come back another day with the correct paperwork she took the time to start an application and go through his housing benefit forms etc as we didn't have ID. She then helped us again by taken his photo so we didn't have to do this when we went back with the correct paperwork.
- Thanks for the prompt removal of graffiti reported a few days ago.
- Brilliant response, many thanks for your prompt clear up. A great job.
- Phoned about a repair to my back window this am. Your man was down and fixed it the same am.
- Many thanks for your prompt response when I reported that the bottle bank needed emptied and tidied up. Very good service.
- Please thank x at your Lochee Housing Office who I have spoken to on a number of occasions regarding a tree removal and chased up a "Ticket" while I was still on the phone. Also please thank your employees who removed the tree over 2 days. It has made a huge difference to me.
- People are often quick to complain but I wish to compliment the 1st class service provided today ... I phoned today and the operator treated it as an emergency. The DCS operative attended very quickly, confirmed the socket was live and replaced it to ensure my son was safeguarded.

9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality and Risk Management. There are no major issues.
- 9.2 The complaints recording system includes a feature that asks complaint handlers to highlight any complaint relating to an equalities issue - age, disability, gender, LGBT, race or religion. In 2017/2018, two such complaints were recorded, both relating to housing and disabilities, one on the timing of improvement works and one on medical priority for rehousing. Both of these cases have been drawn to the attention of the Council's Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, and he had no concerns about how they were dealt with.

10. CONSULTATIONS

The Council Management Team has been consulted in the preparation of this report and agrees with its contents.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

David R Martin
Chief Executive

29 May 2018

BREAKDOWN OF DATA ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 1/4/2017 TO 31/3/2018

Corporate Services													
Stage	Total		Within Target		With Extension		Upheld		Not upheld		Partially upheld		Average days to resolve
	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	
Frontline	85	94.5	63	74.1	5	5.9	38	44.7	35	41.2	12	14.1	6.2
Opened at Investigation	1	1.1			1	100.0			1	100.0			21.3
Escalated to Investigation	4	4.4	3	75.0			1	25.0	3	75.0			17.4

Children and Families - Education/Schools													
Stage	Total		Within Target		With Extension		Upheld		Not upheld		Partially upheld		Average days to resolve
	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	
Frontline	85	68.3	34	40.5	9	10.7	23	27.1	33	38.8	29	34.1	19.5
Opened at Investigation	37	30.1	18	48.6	7	18.9	7	18.9	25	67.6	5	13.5	26.5
Escalated to Investigation	2	1.6	1	50.0							2	100.0	14.2

Neighbourhood Services - Housing													
Stage	Total		Within Target		With Extension		Upheld		Not upheld		Partially upheld		Average days to resolve
	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	
Frontline	91	84.3	60	65.9	6	6.6	20	22.0	61	67.0	10	11.0	5.3
Opened at Investigation	4	3.7	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	25.0	3	75.0			34.1
Escalated to Investigation	13	12.0	12	92.3			4	30.8	7	53.8	2	15.4	18.8

Neighbourhood Services - Environment													
Stage	Total		Within Target		With Extension		Upheld		Not upheld		Partially upheld		Average days to resolve
	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	
Frontline	143	98.6	101	70.6	13	9.1	39	27.3	91	63.6	13	9.1	5.0
Opened at Investigation	1	0.7			1	100.0	1	100.0					6.0
Escalated to Investigation	1	0.7	1	100					1	100.0			8.7

Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership (Social Work Complaints only)													
Stage	Total		Within Target		With Extension		Upheld		Not upheld		Partially upheld		Average days to resolve
	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	
Frontline	22	57.9	10	45.5	3	13.6	3	13.6	17	77.3	2	9.1	9.8
Opened at Investigation	11	28.9	7	63.6	4	36.4	6	54.5	3	27.3	2	18.2	27.1
Escalated to Investigation	5	13.2	3	60.0			1	20.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	29.3

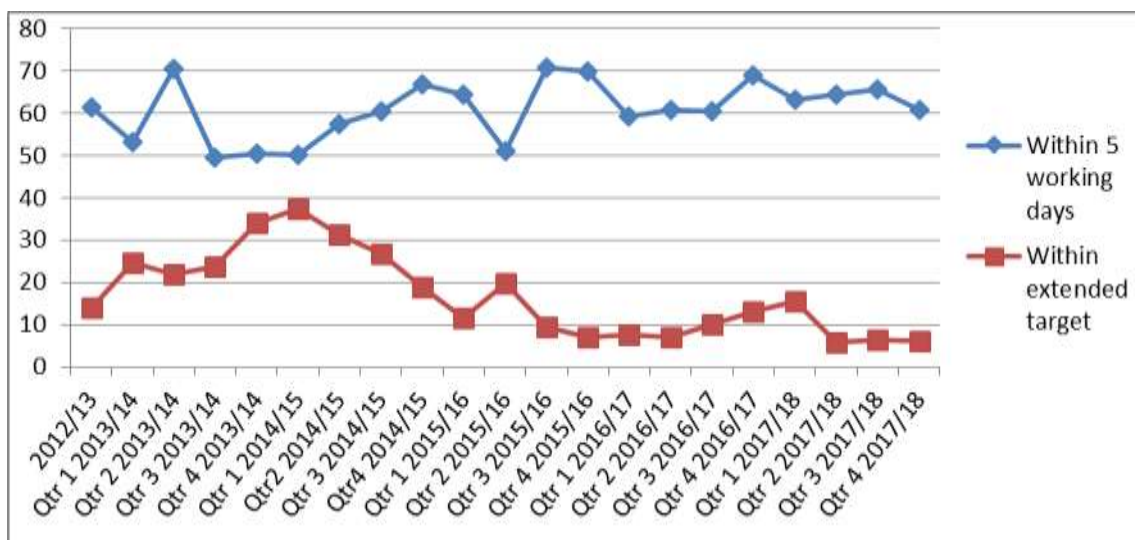
Totals													
Stage	Total		Within Target		With Extension		Upheld		Not upheld		Partially upheld		Average days to resolve
	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	Count	% age	
Frontline	496	84.8	317	63.9	41	8.3	128	25.8	296	59.7	72	14.5	8.0
Opened at Investigation	62	10.6	30	48.4	19	30.6	15	24.2	38	61.3	9	14.5	26.8
Escalated to Investigation	27	4.6	22	81.5			6	22.2	15	55.6	6	22.2	19.2

COMPLAINTS STATISTICS



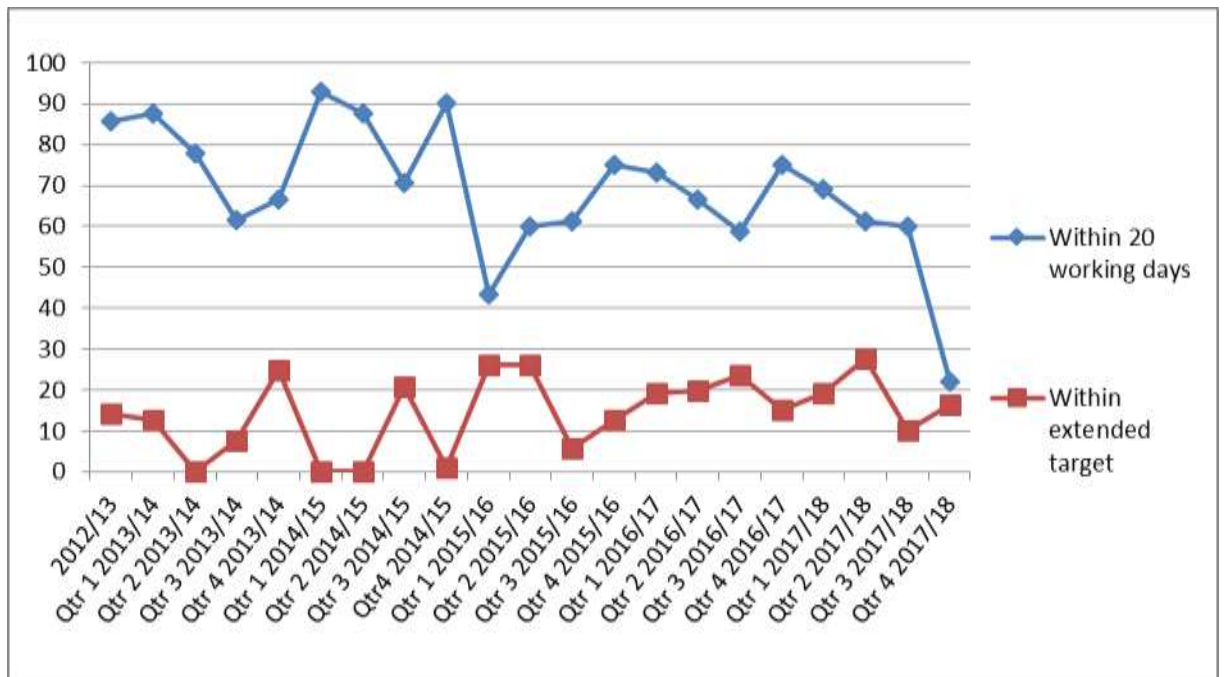
While the overall trend has risen since 2012, we believe this reflects greater use of the electronic complaints recording system rather than any increase in actual dissatisfaction. The Council should continue to emphasise that it welcomes complaints as a valuable source of customer feedback and an opportunity to identify improvements, rather than something negative.

% of stage 1 complaints closed within target



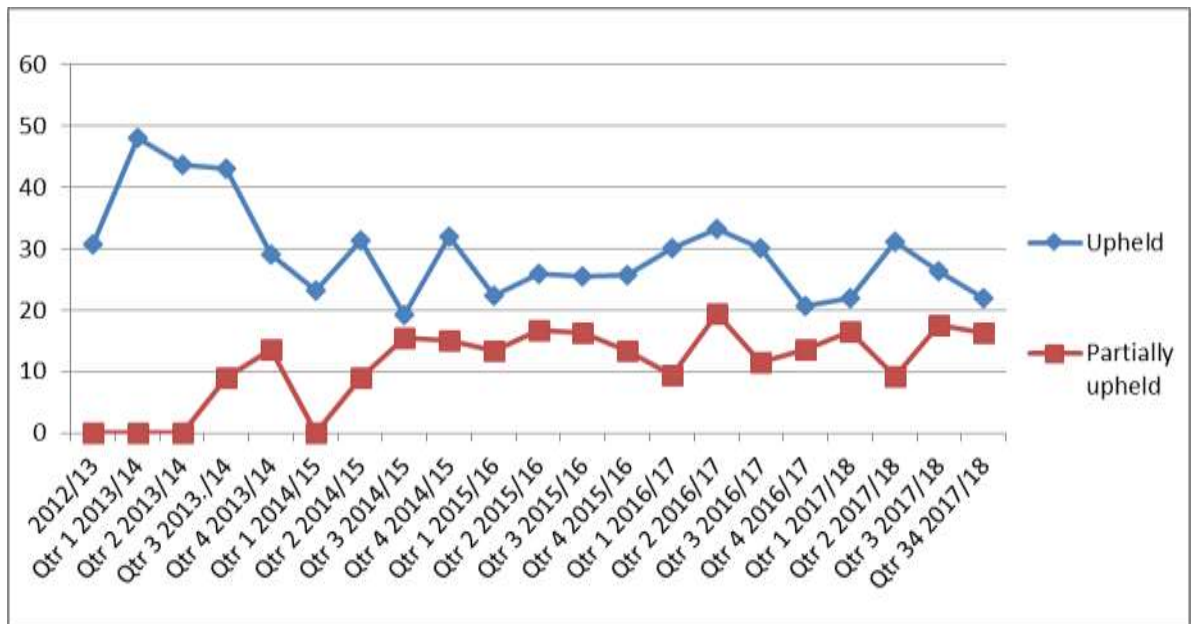
We continue to emphasise to staff the importance of responding to complaints within target (or contacting customers to agree extended targets if a quick response is not possible).

% of stage 2 complaints closed within target



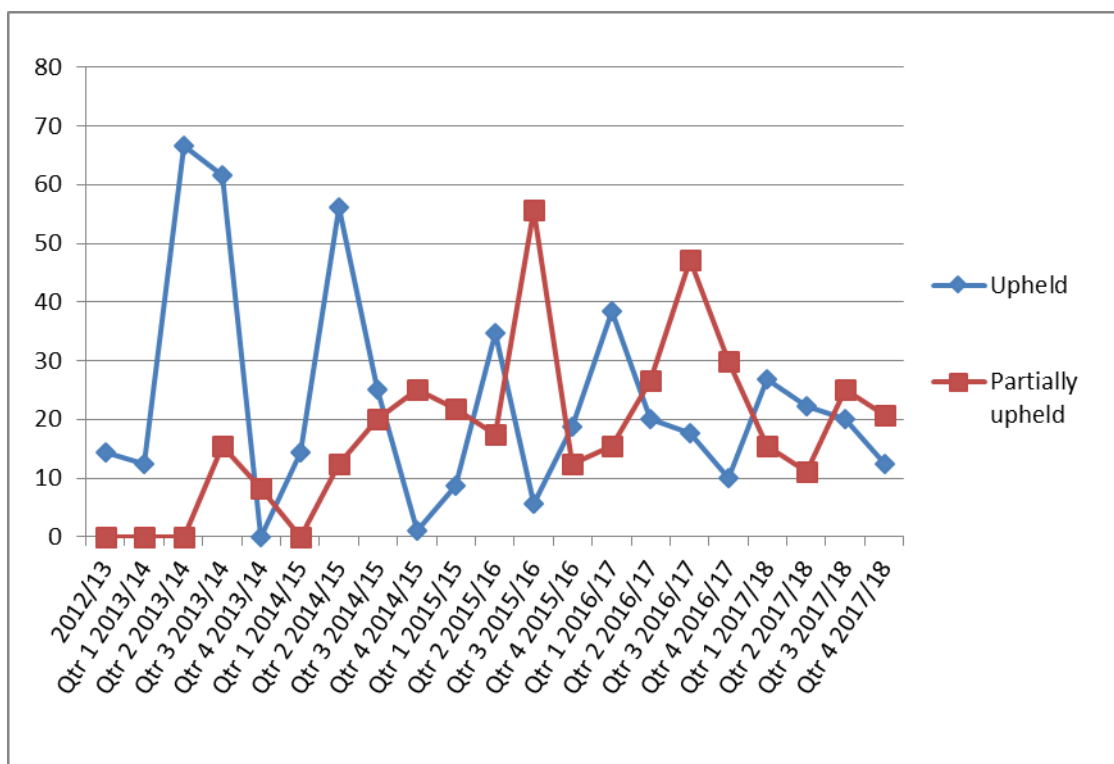
A very small number of complaints go to stage 2, so % figures will fluctuate considerably from one quarter to the next due to individual cases. Chief officers and managers receiving stage 2 complaints have been reminded that these should be acknowledged within 3 days as well as responded to within 20 days or an agreed extended target timescale.

% of stage 1 complaints upheld and partially upheld



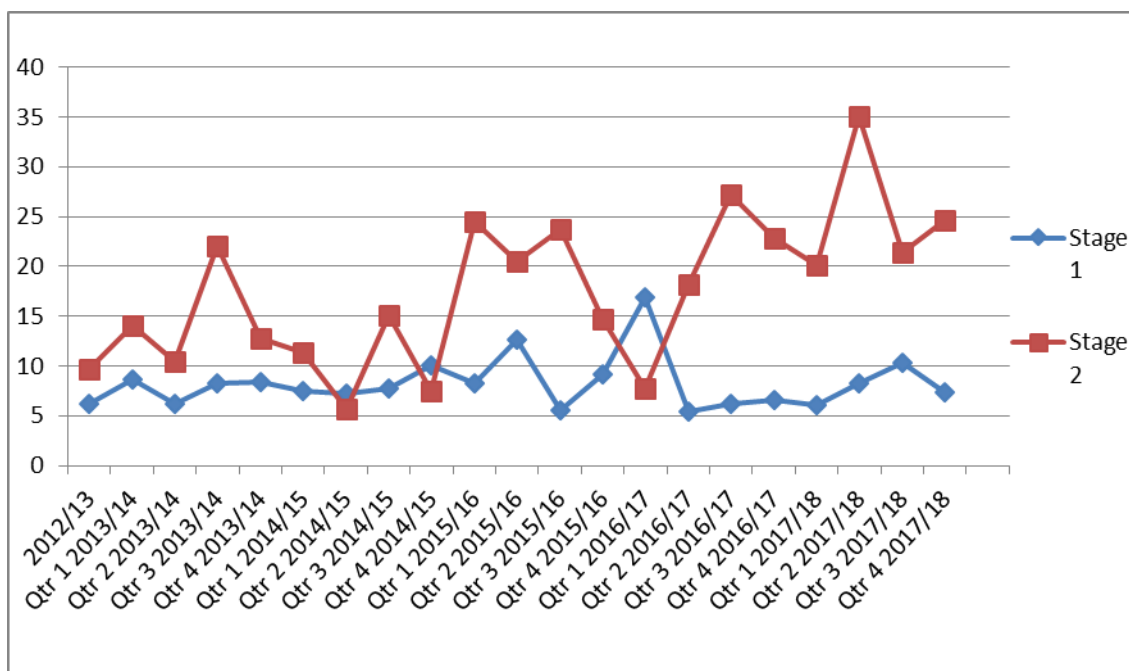
'Partially' upheld was not originally included as an option in the indicators specified by the SPSO, so these figures are only available from 1 October 2013. The % of complaints being upheld or partially upheld appears reasonable.

% of stage 2 complaints upheld and partially upheld



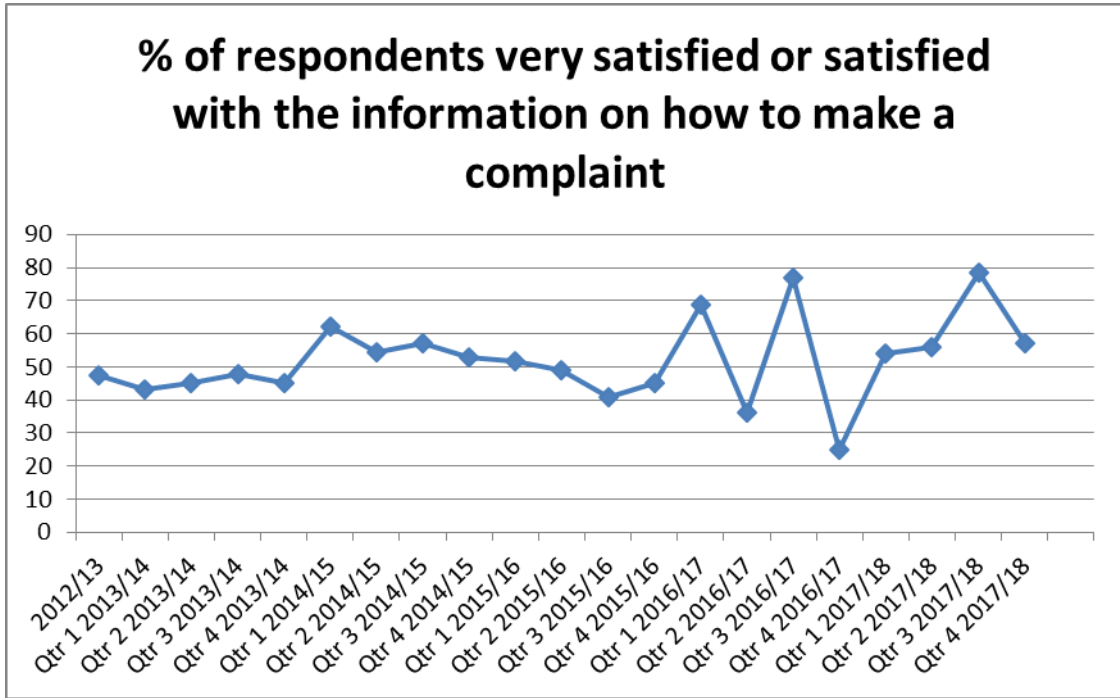
A very small number of complaints go to stage 2, so % figures will fluctuate considerably from one quarter to the next due to individual cases.

Average number of days to close complaints

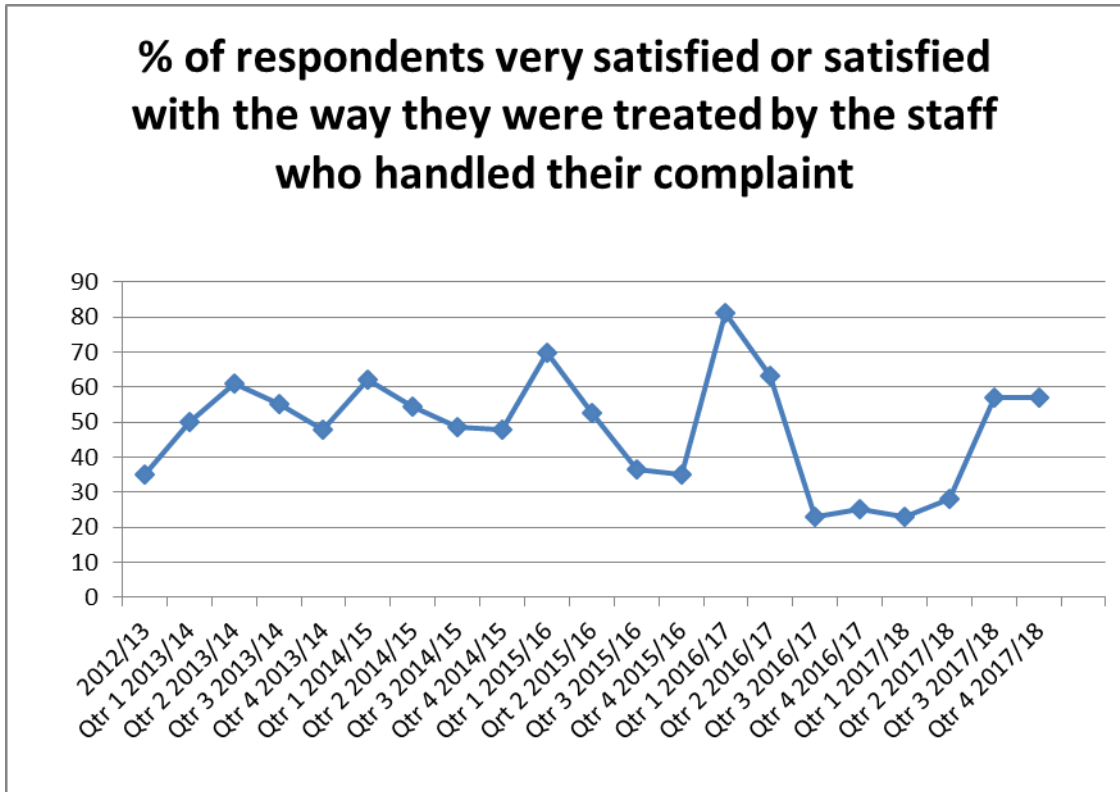


All services should aim to respond quickly to complaints, although it is acknowledged that some are complex and resolving these is likely to drive up the 'average number of days to close' performance.

RESULTS OF SATISFACTION SURVEY OF THOSE WHO MADE COMPLAINTS



The latest figure is unusually low although it is based on a small sample. We will review the availability of complaints leaflets in offices and check that the information on the website about making a complaint remains prominent and clear.

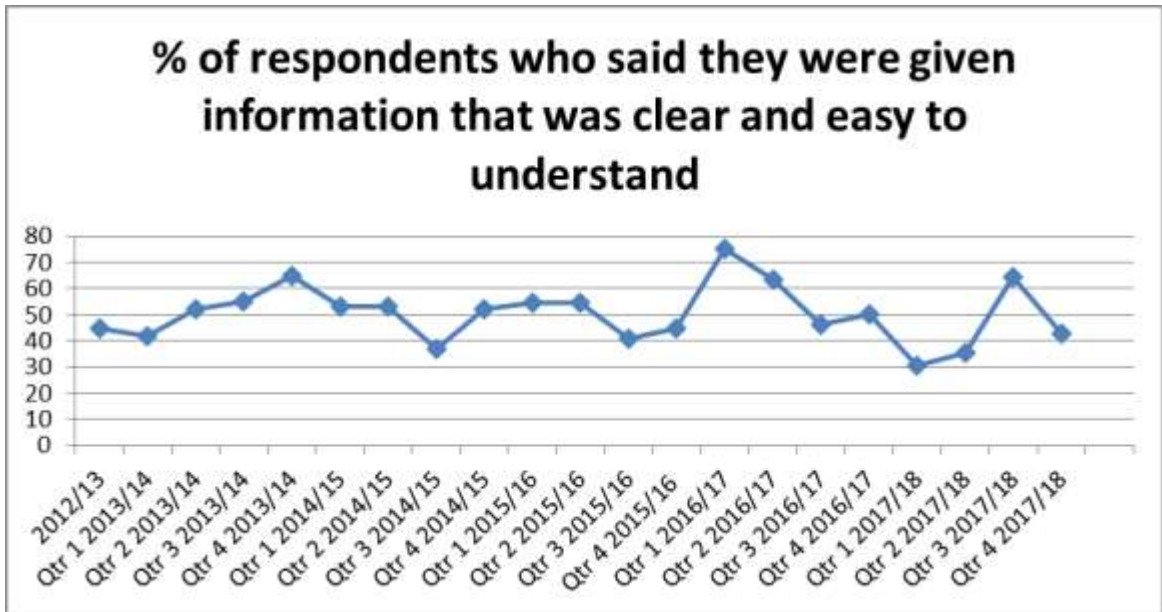




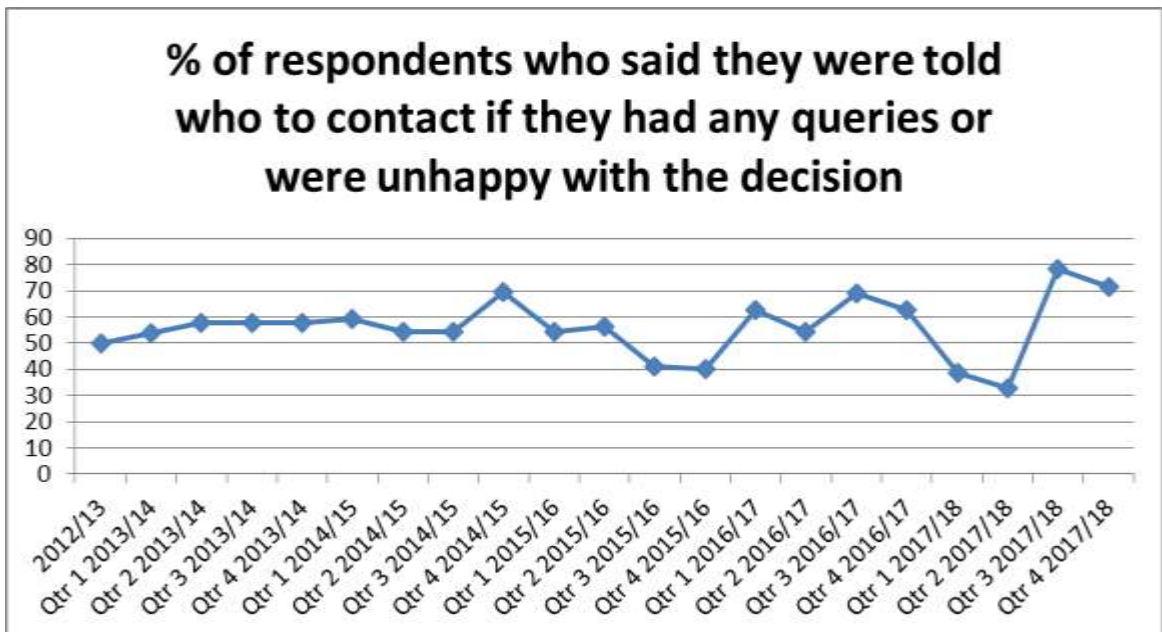
Most of those responding in the latest quarter said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the time taken to deal with their complaint. Chief officers have been asked to continue to reinforce to officers the importance of dealing with complaints as quickly as possible, and explaining to customers where this is not possible.



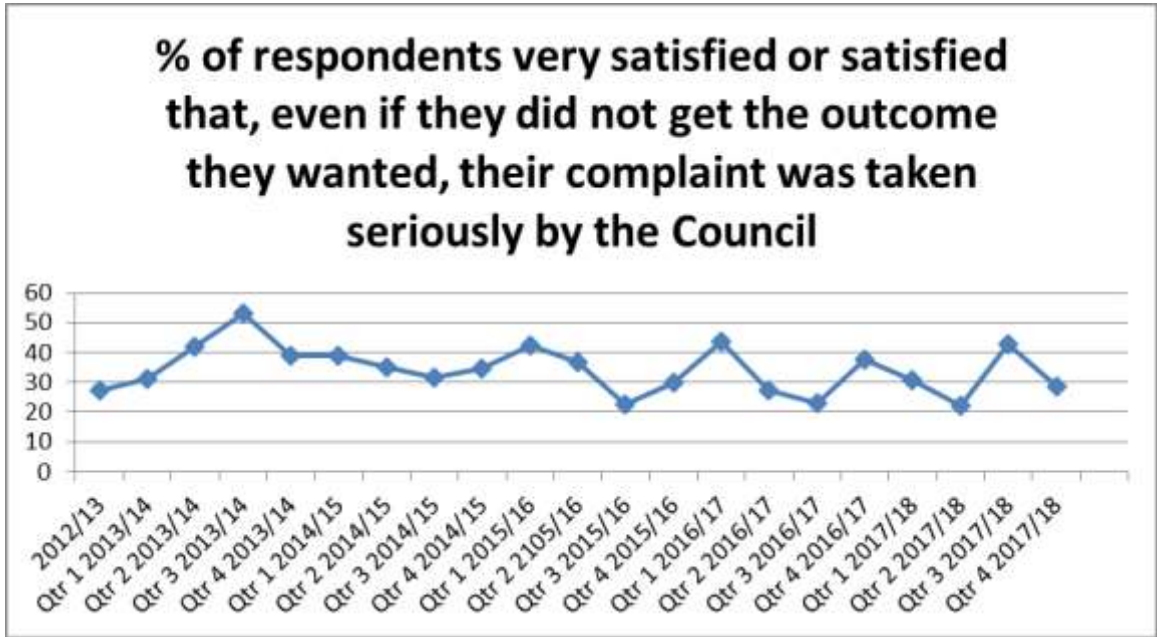
Chief Officers have been asked to reinforce to staff the importance of keeping complainants up-to-date with progress on complaints which take longer than the target number of days to resolve.



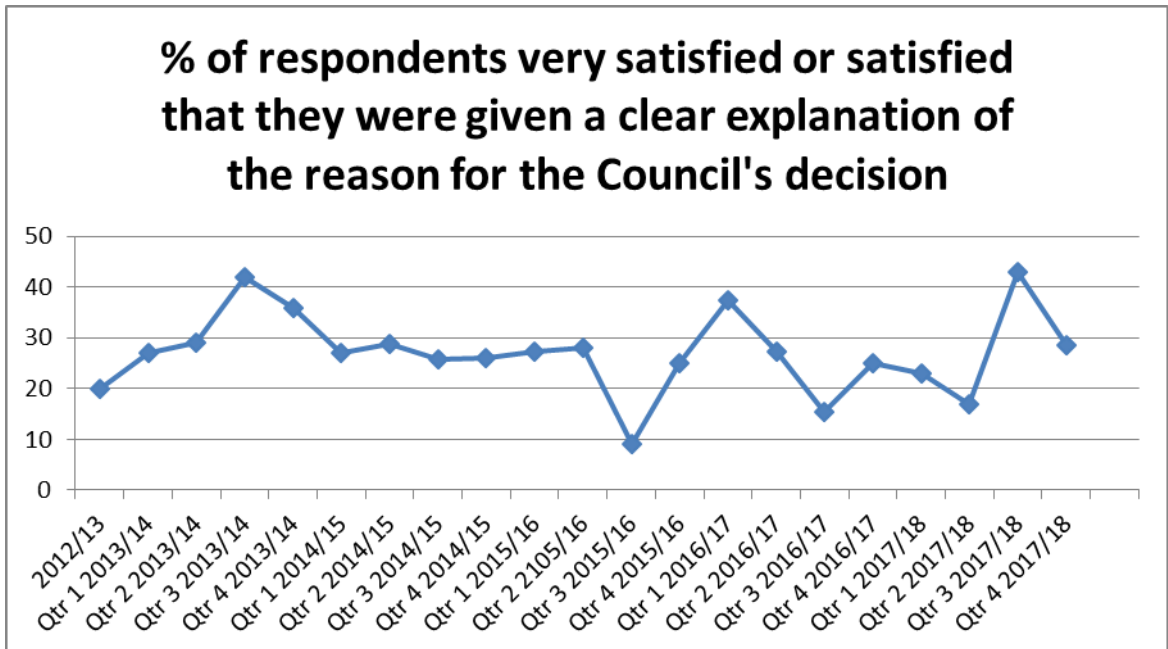
We continually reinforce to staff the importance of using plain English and techniques such as bullet points, headings etc to make complex explanations easier to read and understand.



It should be clear to all complainants who to contact in every case. We continue to reinforce the importance of telling complainants who to contact if dissatisfied with a response, and to monitor a sample of cases to check this is being done.



Over half of respondents in the latest survey said they were ‘very dissatisfied’ that their complaint had been taken seriously. Although based on a small sample, this suggests that we still need to make more effort to assure complainants that their concerns have been taken seriously even where their complaint is not upheld.



As above, over half of respondents in the latest survey said that they were ‘very dissatisfied’ with this aspect of the process. We will continue to emphasise to staff the importance of clearly explaining decisions on complaints, although it is acknowledged that this result will be affected by people's feelings on the outcome of their complaint.