

APPENDIX 5

USING COMPLAINTS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

The information gained through the monitoring of complaints should be used to improve the provision of the services throughout the Council reflecting the Council's overall approach to value for money and continuous improvement. There were several occasions where the resolution of a complaint led to additional instructions being given to employees to reinforce existing procedures. Changes to the provision of services have also been made as a result of complaints received or the opportunity to improve has been identified.

- The Libraries Service when updating its catalogue on the library website will take the opportunity to improve navigation on the system particularly for renewing books online.
- Customer and Financial Services has reviewed procedures and introduced a manual intervention prior to the automated file being sent to the Department of Works and Pensions to pick up on Council Tax payments being made over the weekend or on the Monday of a Court hearing.
- Customer and Financial Services has arranged for incoming e mails to be added to the list of documents that are automatically checked to see if any further documents have been received from claimants following the issue of a benefits review letter. Also, when a document is re-indexed, the process due date must be amended.
- The Street Scene Service has introduced a new ICT package to improve how street lighting enquiries are received and recorded so that faults can be dealt with in accordance with the target repair period.

In Housing a number of improvements were implemented by the Gateshead Housing Company to improve service delivery:

- To ensure that when officers are not available for work, their calendars are reviewed so that customers with appointments are contacted so that these can be re-arranged.
- The Gateshead Housing Company is working with its contractor to improve both the repair process and communication with the customer when there are delays.
- The Gateshead Housing Company is to give further training to Estate Officers dealing with condensation related visits.