

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Adult Social Care and Independent Living and Children’s Services operate their own separate complaints recording system

During the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 the Council recorded 258 Step 2 complaints (compared to 307 during 2016/17). An analysis of these complaints reveals the following:

Category of complaints

The subject matter of complaints varies considerably. However, the resolved complaints have been broadly summarised into the following six categories:-

Category of Complaint	Number of Complaints 2017/18	Percentage of all Complaints
Access to services	14	5.4%
Injury/ damage to person or possession	16	6.2%
Quality of service	169	65.5%
Employee	49	19.0%
Policy	18	7.0%
Other	43	16.7%

(It must be noted, however, that a complaint can fall into more than one category)

Closed Complaints

The total number of closed complaints is 18. These are complaints recorded on the system and subsequently identified and dealt with as issues other than complaints.

Resolution of complaints within target timescales

The Council’s target timescale to resolve step 2 complaints is within 20 working days of receipt. The Council aims to resolve the majority of complaints at step 1 - sorting problems out quickly. The procedure and recording system allows service managers to review actual performance at any time and identifies those areas where improvements in response times are necessary. 235 complaints were resolved within the target timescale of 20 working days. This represents 75.2% of recorded complaints less the closed

and open complaints. Of the 165 received by the Gateshead Housing Company, 3 were closed and 121 were resolved within the target timescale. This represents 74.7% resolved within the target timescale compared with 89.3% in 2016/17. Of the 93 complaints recorded by the Council, 15 were closed and 60 were resolved within the target timescale. This represents 76.9% resolved within the target timescale compared with 71.3% in 2016/17.

Number of Complaints that were justified

Of the 235 complaints resolved, 86 (36.6%) were fully justified and 58 (24.7%) were partly justified and appropriate remedies were offered to the complainants. This compares with the position in 2016/17 when of the 282 complaints resolved, 104 (36.9%) were fully justified and 44 (15.6%) were partly justified.

Service Group Analysis

An analysis of the complaints received and resolved by each service group reveals the following:

Communities and Environment

- Recorded 37 complaints, 14.3% of all complaints recorded
- Development and Public Protection received 29.7%, Transport and Highways received 29.7%, Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance received 24.4%, Housing Services received 10.8% and Construction Services received 5.4% of complaints in this service group
- 43.2% of complaints concerned quality of service.
- 6 complaints were closed and 3 were unresolved.
- 75% of the remaining complaints were resolved in target timescales
- None of the resolved complaints were fully justified
- 25% of resolved complaints were partly justified.

Corporate Services and Governance

- Recorded 1 complaint, 0.4 % of all complaints recorded
- The complaint, received by Property Services, concerned access to service.
- The complaint was closed.

Corporate Resources

- Recorded 55 complaints, 21.3% of all complaints recorded.
- Culture, Leisure and Sport received 65.5% and Customer and Financial Services received 34.5% of complaints in this service group.
- 36.4% of complaints concerned quality of service.
- 9 complaints were closed and none unresolved.
- 82.6% of the remaining complaints were resolved within target timescales
- 17.4% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 52.2% of resolved complaints were partly justified.

Gateshead Housing Company

- Recorded 165 complaints, 64% of all recorded complaints
- 80.6% of complaints concerned quality of service.
- 3 complaints were closed and two were unresolved.
- 75.6% of the remaining complaints were resolved within the Council's target timescales
- 48.8% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 16.9% of resolved complaints were partly justified

Reviewed Complaints

Complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their Step 2 complaints can request an independent review by the Chief Executive (or the Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company). The Chief Executive undertook 27 reviews of complaints in 2017/18 compared to 18 in 2016/17. The Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company undertook 14 reviews in 2017/18 compared with 20 during 2016/17.

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.

Compliments received by the Council

The total number of compliments received in 2017/18, as outlined below, is 466, compared to 754 received in 2016/17.

Communities and Environment	184
Corporate Services and Governance	26
Corporate Resources	66
The Gateshead Housing Company	190