

# NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**3 MARCH 2008**

### COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS QUARTERLY REPORT

#### QUARTER 3 – 1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2007

1. This report summarises the compliments and complaints received during quarter 3 of 2007/08.

#### Summary of Compliments Received

Compliments Received	Adult & Community	Business & Environment	Chief Executive	Children & Young People	Finance & Central	Total for year/quarter
<b>2006/07 Total</b>	193	149	3	20	0	<b>365 (year)</b>
<b>Quarter1 2007/08</b>	276	88	6	21	4	<b>395</b>
<b>Quarter 2 2007/08</b>	277	224	15	14	2	<b>532</b>
<b>Quarter3 2007/08</b>	216	130	16	43	2	<b>407</b>
<b>Total 2007/08</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1334</b>

#### Analysis and Further Information

2. The new procedure and improved recording leads to the increase in figures between 2006/07 and 2007/08.
3. The majority of compliments were, as expected due to the amount of front line services, received by ACS (61%), with 100 (28%) for social care and 116 (33%) for Library and Community Services.
4. The number of compliments for BES rose in quarter 2 and fell again in quarter 3. This is because compliments for Trading Standards and Regulatory services had not been recorded for April to September and it was decided to record the figures in quarter 2.
5. No seasonal trends have yet been identified.

#### Complaints Received

Complaints Received	Adult & Community	Business & Environment	Chief Executive	Children & Young People	Finance & Central	Total for year/quarter
<b>2006/07 Total</b>	276	112	7	125	10	<b>630</b>
<b>Quarter1 2007/08</b>	89	12	9	38	1	<b>149</b>
<b>Quarter 2 2007/08</b>	161	23	7	30	1	<b>222</b>
<b>Quarter3 2007/08</b>	222	8	3	50	3	<b>286</b>
<b>Total 2007/08</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>657</b>

## Analysis and Further Information

6. ACS continues to receive the majority of complaints (78% in quarter 3). It is accepted that this is because of the amount of front line services it provides. Of the 222 complaints received 41 related to Social Care and 181 to Library and Community Services.
7. There has been an increase in the number of complaints received by CYPS in quarter 3 which accounts for the recently improved compliments and complaints monitoring systems within County Catering.

## Timescales

8. During the last quarter 92% of complaints were dealt with within the target timescale (a full response within 20 working days of receipt). This is an improvement on the previous quarter, when 87% of complaints were dealt with on time.
9. 23 complaints took longer than 20 working days to resolve. Of these 18 were handled through the statutory procedure for Social Care complaints and it is acknowledged that these are generally of a more complex nature requiring specialist input and the involvement of other agencies and occasionally legal advice. Additional reasons this quarter included complainant availability, staff capacity/availability and difficult communication caused by the involvement of may officers. Steps have been taken in CYPS to overcome this last factor by appointing a lead officer for each complaint.
10. When complaints do go over timescale complainants are kept fully informed in accordance with procedures.

## Outcomes of Complaints by Directorate

Outcomes	Adult & Community		Business & Environment		Chief Executive		Children & Young People		Finance & Central		Total for year/quarter	
	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU
<b>2006/07 Total</b>	109	136	54	67	1	5	43	62	5	8	<b>212</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Quarter1 2007/08</b>	17	61	7	3	3	1	7	11	0	0	<b>34</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Quarter 2 2007/08</b>	27	127	11	8	7	1	25	15	2	0	<b>72</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Quarter3 2007/08</b>	33	192	1	7	3	0	34	8	3	0	<b>74</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>Total 2007/08</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>434</b>

U = Upheld NU – Not Upheld

11. 26% of complaints in quarter 3 were upheld or partly upheld, the majority falling in ACS and CYPS (with approximately 12% each). This is a 3% fall from the previous quarter.
12. It is accepted that some complaints will be upheld, but we seek to learn from these and improve our services as a result. Some of the changes that have been made as a result of complaints are detailed in the section 'Learning from Complaints'.

## Reason for Complaint

Category	Poor Service		No Service		Delay in Service		Disagree decision/policy		Staff Attitude		Poor Communication		Personnel		Other	
	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU	U	NU
<b>2006/07 Jul - Mar*</b>	52	94	11	7	24	4	19	69	6	17	18	7	0	6	4	58
<b>Quarter1 2007/08</b>	13	26	2	9	3	2	6	27	4	5	7	1	0	1	0	10
<b>Quarter 2 2007/08</b>	31	81	5	8	6	3	14	30	6	3	10	7	0	0	0	19
<b>Quarter3 2007/08</b>	40	114	2	7	3	5	7	23	5	3	16	7	1	0	0	48
<b>Total 2007/08</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>77</b>

U = Upheld NU – Not Upheld

\* No statistics available for Apr - Jun 06

13. Of the 281 complaints received this quarter, 153 related to poor service, 9 to no service and 8 to a delay in service, giving a total of 170 (60% of all complaints) relating to the delay or poor level of service provided. Just over a quarter of these (44) were upheld or partly upheld.

#### Complaints Process

14. There are three stages to the complaints procedure: stage - one dealt with locally; stage two - formal investigation; and stage three - review of investigation (not complaint) by Chief Executive. It is our intention that as many complaints as possible are dealt with at stage one.
15. Only after a complaint has been dealt with at stage one can it progress to stage two and then on to stage three.
16. During the last quarter 270 complaints were received at stage one, 15 at stage two and 1 at stage three.

#### Ombudsman's Complaints

17. Ombudsman complaints are usually of a complex nature requiring considerable investigation. The Ombudsman's Office is currently experiencing some pressure of work and therefore there are further delays. As a result Ombudsman complaints are currently taking some time to resolve. However, the majority of our responses are made to the Ombudsman within the timescales set by that office.
18. At the beginning of this quarter 7 complaints were already in progress and a further 4 were received during the quarter. 10 complaints are still in train.
19. Only one decision was received, which was not to uphold the complaint.

#### Learning from Complaints

20. Some of the learning points as a result of complaints dealt with in quarter 3 are:
- CYPS –

- i. Monitor/review procedures
  - ii. Monitor/review service
  - iii. Adult Learning have reviewed the syllabus.
  - iv. Procedural changes have been introduced to reduce the number of stages in a process.
  - v. Further procedure training given
  - vi. Removal of inaccurate data from records
  - vii. Review of needs and services offered
  - viii. Further guidance and instruction from Service Manager to all staff
  - ix. All foster carers to have supervising social worker
  - x. Ongoing action plan
- FCS –
  - i. Guidelines were reviewed with staff so that in future letter of explanation included when there are queries about statements.
  - ii. Procedures reviewed with staff to ensure timely and thorough execution.
- BES –
  - i. Change to way of reporting to ensure that contact is made through the Customer Service Centre or direct to Area email address.
- ACS –
  - i. Ingleton Library is a priority for new IT network.
  - ii. Telephone system at County Records Office is under investigation.
  - iii. Agreement that appointments are confirmed in writing
  - iv. More flexible arrangements for day centre and respite stays offered
  - v. Additional care visit arranged on an interim basis
  - vi. Carers rotas reviewed and times changed to better suit service user
  - vii. Review of admissions process at respite facility
  - viii. Review of day time activities to better meet a service user's need
  - ix. Various issues regarding contact centre/telephone system
  - x. Ongoing consideration of issues raised
  - xi. Staff awareness raising

## Conclusion

21. The team of Directorate Complaints Coordinators (DCCs) continue to meet regularly to share best practice.
22. At the last meeting the DCCs discussed the complaints monitoring/recording system that has been built using Lagan. Many problems had been encountered, not least that accurate and useful reporting is not possible and a solution has not yet been offered. The group decided that the system is unusable, although it was agreed that all who had worked on the system had done all that they could and it was acknowledged that the system did have some good points.
23. The group agreed that a common system was still required and research on systems in place in other authorities and how well they perform is currently being carried out.
24. Although there have been some problems with the Lagan system, monitoring continues to improve and as a result statistics are becoming more reliable and meaningful. This will only improve further with the introduction of an electronic system that works well.

25. We are hoping to arrange a slot at a Members' Seminar during 2008 for the Assistant Ombudsman, Neil Hobbs, to speak to Members.

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**NORTHALLERTON**

1 February 2008