

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

3 MARCH 2015

REPORT OF HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Report prepared by Sam Bailey

**1. QUARTER 3 OF 2014/2015 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK
(COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA) REPORT**

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the Council's customer feedback, received through complaints, compliments and social media, from October-December 2014 (quarter 3).

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Policy and Communications

1.2.1 That the Committee consider the quarter 3 feedback briefing (Appendix A to this report) and make recommendations as appropriate.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 Data relating to complaints, compliments and feedback via social media is monitored across the council. The quarter 3 feedback briefing brings this information together and discusses key themes, trends and other areas of interest from this data.

1.3.2 The data and information gathered through complaints can be used to help make service improvements. It can also be used to identify where services, or areas within a service, are not performing as they should.

1.4 Report Summary

1.4.1 Of particular interest this quarter is:

- The lower volume of complaints (109) received compared to quarter 2 (215);
- The low percentage of complaints closed within target time (85.3%), and the low number of customers who were kept

updated on the progress of their complaint when it was approaching their due date;

- The high proportion of stage 2 complaints received about Development Management- 26.5% of stage 2 complaints received were about Development Management, and 75% of stage 1 complaints received about Development Management were escalated to Stage 2;
- The inconsistent approach of dealing with complaints approaching their due date between different departments; and
- The numerous small improvements Environmental Services have made as a result of complaints.

1.5 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.5.1 The council could choose not to monitor complaints in this way, but this would mean the council would lose a valuable opportunity to make service improvements as a result of complaints. It could also leave the council open to challenge by the ombudsman or the courts if recurring issues are not resolved. Any recurring issues that have resulted in action are detailed in Appendix A.

1.6 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.6.1 The main corporate objective complaints monitoring falls under is corporate and customer excellence. A fair, efficient and effective complaints handling process is critical to ensure customers have an opportunity to register their dissatisfaction, and seek a resolution, if things go wrong.

1.7 Risk Management

1.7.1 The main risk for this report is reputational. If the council is seen to be ignoring its residents' concerns about certain issues this would be bad for the council's reputation and could miss opportunities for service improvements.

1.8 Other Implications

1.8.1

1. Financial
2. Staffing
3. Legal
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development

X
X
X

- 6. Community Safety
- 7. Human Rights Act
- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

1.8.2 Financial- some of the complaints resolved this quarter resulted in payments, refunds or compensation to complainants.

1.8.3 Staffing - some complaints this quarter were about staff.

1.8.4 Legal - some complaints received this quarter may have future legal implications

1.9 Relevant Documents

1.9.1 Appendices

Appendix A: Quarter 3 Feedback Report

1.9.2 Background Documents

None

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>		<u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u>	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, this is a Key Decision because:			
.....			
Wards/Parishes affected:			
.....			