

# Cardiff Council

## Annual Complaints Report

### 2016-17



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# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## Foreword

I am pleased to be able to present Cardiff Council's Annual Complaints Report for 2016/17.

In this report you will find details of how we have performed in dealing with complaints. For the fifth year in a row, we have recorded a reduction in the number of complaints received. However, the real headline is the improvements made in terms of attitude towards complaints from managers and staff. Complaints can provide a rich source of learning and it is encouraging to see the number of service changes that have emerged as a result of complaints. Examples of learning from complaints are situated throughout the report and I feel this clearly illustrates how we are listening to the public when they are not happy. We will continue to work at this to ensure that the lessons learned make a difference.

I'm also pleased to note that for the 6th consecutive year the Public Ombudsman for Wales have not issued any Section 16 reports against the Council. Of the 133 complaints that the Ombudsman closed during 2016/17, only 3 were taken forward to investigation.

Our report also contains information on the positive feedback that customers provide us in terms of their satisfaction with aspects of Cardiff Council. Though this is a positive report, we are not complacent about the need to make further improvements, particularly in the area of identifying learning from those complaints that are either upheld or partially upheld.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the hard working and dedicated staff who work in front-line services and those whom manage complaints. Our success is down to their hard work and commitment and I thank them for the service they provide every day to Cardiff.

**Councillor Christopher Weaver** - Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Consultation



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## Reason for this report

To report to the Cabinet on the operation of the corporate complaints procedure between 1st April 2016 and 31st March 2017. The statistics for corporate complaints are set out by service area.

A complaint is defined within the Council as:

*“an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, action or lack of action by the Council, or its staff, affecting an individual customer or group of customers.”*

Complaints recorded under the corporate complaints procedure do not include ‘first time’ representations which are effectively requests for a service and dealt with as such. A new report of a pothole or a missed bin for example, would not be registered as a complaint, but as a request for service. Of course, in the event that we failed to respond to the ‘request’ appropriately, then that may generate a complaint.

### Our complaints procedure

The Council’s complaints procedure reflects guidance given in the Welsh Government Model Policy and Guidance Paper for Handling Complaints. This was further supported by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

**Complaint received.** A complaint can be registered via any Council venue and once received, should be forwarded to the Service Area Complaints Manager. Every Council service area has a lead officer for complaints. The

Complaints Manager will ensure complaints are acknowledged and recorded and facilitate the investigation of the complaint in accordance with the corporate complaints procedure.

**Acknowledgment.** The Complaints Managers will aim to acknowledge complaints within 5 working days. At this stage, we can let the customer know who is dealing with their complaint and our understanding of what the customer’s complaint entails. We can also let the customer know that a full response will follow within 20 working days of our receipt of the complaint.

**Full response.** At the end of an investigation, a response should be produced depending on how a customer has indicated they prefer to be contacted. The response should include the outcome of the investigation as well as any necessary action taken for service improvement. The Ombudsman states that the aim of every formal investigation should be to “investigate once, investigate well”. Advice is also included on what the complainant should do if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome – to contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

**Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.** Complaints that progress to the Ombudsman will have been thoroughly investigated by the service area. If a complainant remains dissatisfied, it is for the Ombudsman to assess whether there is any evidence of service failure or maladministration not identified by the Council.



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# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## Complaints for Cardiff Council in 2016-17

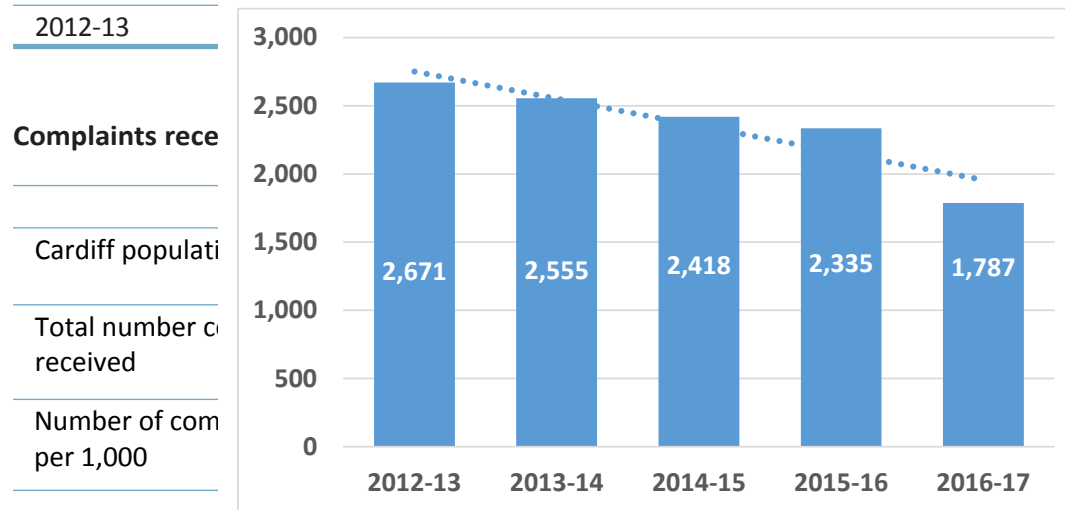
A total of **1,787** complaints were recorded during 2016/17. This is a **23.5%** decrease from the previous year, when 2,335 complaints were recorded.

Year	Number of complaints
2016-17	1,787
2015-16	2,335
2014-15	2,418
2013-14	2,555
2012-13	2,671

COMPLAINTS HAVE DECREASED BY

**23.5%**

WHEN COMPARED TO 2015/16



The population of Cardiff is estimated at 361,468 (Source: <https://statswales.gov.wales>). In 2016/17, Cardiff Council handled 1,787 complaints from customers, meaning that an average of 4.9 complaints were received per 1000 residents.



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

### Complaints breakdown for Cardiff Council

Service Area	Number of complaints 2015/16	Number of complaints 2016/17
Waste Strategy & Enforcement	826	405
Housing & Communities	425	404
Arts & Theatres	296	286
Finance	109	115
Customer Services	115	113
Traffic & Transportation	166	111
Neighbourhood Services	n/a	87
Parks & Sports	55	50
Economic Development	37	46
Highways Maintenance	79	40
Bereavement & Registration Services	42	40
Education & Lifelong Learning	54	34
Leisure & Play	108	21
Planning (including Building Control)	15	18
Central Transport Services / Facilities Management / BA	1	7
Governance & Legal Services	3	5
Harbour Authority	4	4
Communications & Media	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2335</b>	<b>1787</b>

NB Complaints for Children's Services and Health & Social Care are recorded under their statutory complaints procedure (please see page 17).



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## Compliments for Cardiff Council

As an organisation, we receive many positive comments about our staff and the services we provide. Knowing where things are working well and are appreciated is as important to capture as knowing where things are perhaps not working. We therefore keep a record of the compliments we receive as well as the complaints. Good practice and learning can then be circulated across the Council.

Across the year 2016-17, Cardiff Council received a total of **2,122** recorded compliments, which is a **43.1%** increase from the previous year when 1,483 compliments were recorded. There was a concern following last year's report that the good service provided every day by some Council departments was not being represented. We have updated our recording procedure to ensure our compliments are captured and this may account for the increase during 2016/17.

Service Area	Number of compliments 2015/16	Number of compliments 2016/17
Customer Services	176	570
Housing & Communities	222	362
Bereavement & Registration Services	164	251
Economic Development	129	210
Arts & Theatres	204	194
Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transportation	129	159
Waste Strategy & Enforcement	265	137
Parks & Sports	116	110
Neighbourhood Services	n/a	91
Harbour Authority	37	17
Leisure & Play	21	11
Finance	13	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>1483</b>	<b>2122</b>



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A few examples are provided below of the types of compliments we have received:

## **Arts & Theatres**

“Excellent show this afternoon. In my opinion, the New Theatre never fails.”

“We attended a showcase last night and, as we are a special school, getting our pupils out to events with wheelchairs, specialised equipment and medication - as well as all their difficulties - is no mean feat! I have to say that without the fantastic staff at St Davids Hall this would have been a very stressful event! Please thank all the staff who helped us at the stage door, with the goods lift, access to the auditorium and getting us home again, the lovely staff who showed us to our seats and helped us with the change of dressing room! Nothing was too much effort. Thank you all very much!”

## **Bereavement & Registration Services**

“The whole process from registration to cremation was carried out in a friendly, helpful and professional manner. The family is very grateful for everything at this difficult time.”

## **Central Transport Services**

“I want to send a thank you email to Central Transport Service – I had an mot today and received a quick, friendly service and wanted to say a big thank you.”

## **Citizen Hub**

“The customer was very pleased to report that she was successful in finding employment after the service she received from the Into Work Advice Team at Ely Hub. She commented, “I had so much help from the Hub at Caerau. The people there were so helpful and polite. It had been many years since I needed a CV and they made it so easy for me. I am more than pleased to say that I was accepted on the first job I handed my CV to.”



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## Connect to Cardiff

“Fab service from @cardiffcouncil call centre. Friendly, helpful and efficient. Great to get through to someone local.”

## Economic Development

“I just wanted to write and say it was a lovely surprise to see the new Christmas lights in town. I didn’t object to the previous decorations, but it is always nice to have something different. My favourite of all, has to be the deer, they are wonderful. Having several makes quite an impact and I love them. Thank you for adding to the shopping experience, and keeping things interesting. It is appreciated.”

## Events

“Just wanted to say a huge thank you to you and your team who delivered an amazing banquet for our wedding on Saturday! The team were simply wonderful - so polite and helpful! And the food was delicious! Better than we could have hoped! Thank you to your chefs for producing our bespoke vegan lasagne dish - the feedback on that from our vegan guests was really great. The whole planning process with you guys was so smooth and hassle free which was so reassuring. Our initial meeting last year went so well and from that moment we knew we were in good hands!”

## Finance

“Please can you pass onto your entire (Recovery) team what a great and polite job they are doing. I say this as I have had a few dealings with a few members of staff who have all been wonderful and very helpful. All who have looked into my case have all been very helpful and polite at every point. So I can honestly say you have a wonderful department that can only make the correct decisions when they have all the correct information in front of them. A credit to Cardiff City Council.”





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## Harbour Authority

“A quick email to thank the Harbour Master and his team for all your support leading up to and during the regatta this weekend. I was particularly appreciative of your time and ... I'd also like to send our thanks to Barrage control who were friendly and flexible accommodating our needs. Everything came together, and early signs from athletes and social media suggest the event was a success.”

## Highways

“A compliment has been received in respect of a drop kerb installed. The lady is over the moon and asked for her appreciation to be passed on to the team. The lady uses a wheelchair and the improvement is very much appreciated by her and her husband.”

## Housing

“A tenant called to compliment Clean & Clear Operatives within the Caretaking Services Team, commenting that the Council has "two fantastic men working for them". She explained that the Operatives had cleared her neighbour's overgrown garden. The tenant was impressed that the two men knocked on her door beforehand to advise her that there would be a bit of noise, adding that they were extremely polite and cleared up "very nicely after themselves". She wished to express her gratitude and thanks to the Council for getting this problem sorted out.”

## Leisure

“My surgeon advised me to take up swimming as I can't run anymore. If it hadn't been for the truly amazing helpful staff at Pentwyn Leisure Centre I would 100% not be as well as I am now. I have swam pretty much every day for over an hour there. From front of house staff, managers to cafe personnel, they are nothing but polite, smiling and professional all the time. They make going there a pleasure. The lifeguards...encouraged me with kind words and smiles. They inspired me and have time for everyone that goes there and don't hold back the smiles. If one of them was having a bad day, you'd never know it. I would be very grateful that you could acknowledge what marvellous work they do.”

## Libraries

“What would we do without this library service, a lifeline for me and a great place to bring my children. A haven!”



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## **Parks**

“Just wanted to say a massive thank you to you and your team who were absolutely brilliant on the weekend (Great Taff Tidy)! Can you please pass on our thanks to everyone! Everything was collected so efficiently and contributed to an amazing weekend!”

“A huge thank you to you and all your team for helping us create another wonderful (RHS Flower) show in a very sunny Cardiff this year. This year we welcomed over 25,600 visitors to the show. We have had an overwhelming number of positive comments regarding the impressive high standard of your displays and exhibits. I have really enjoyed working with you all and look forward to developing the Cardiff show with you in the future.”

## **Planning**

“(Planning are) like a breath of fresh air compared to other local authorities. Mind you we have found Cardiff to be the most outstanding authority in the whole of Wales where we have experience of. The processing of planning applications and team working is apparent so many thanks for your directive.”

## **Responsive Repairs**

“It is always a pleasure to give credit for a job well done. We recently had two of our bedroom ceilings re-plastered by two council workmen. From start to finish they were superb....they were a credit to the council. Taking care and consideration for our home... keeping it spotless throughout the job and leaving it as they found it. They went beyond what was expected of them by moving furniture as we could not. Their workmanship was beyond fault. True tradesmen these were. One would hope you can pass on our commendations as they deserve a pat on the back as good ambassadors for council.”

## **Waste Strategy & Enforcement**

“Please pass on our thanks to the waste management team who dealt with (the removal of rubbish) so quickly and efficiently. I am only sorry that there is such a need to clean up after those who have no care for the environment that we all share. I think the City does an excellent job in dealing with and removing all our refuse each week.”

“The Street Cleansing Team have just been, they did an unpleasant job with plenty of enthusiasm and absolute professionalism, the guys in the team are a credit to you. They've cleared everything up and it's really put myself and my neighbours at ease. Really impressed with the service and very grateful.”



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## Ombudsman Complaints 2016-17

The Ombudsman closed **133** cases involving Cardiff Council compared to 143 cases in 2015-16. 4 of these cases were accepted for further investigation of which 3 led to an Ombudsman report. The Ombudsman received 43 premature complaints (defined as when the Council has not had a reasonable opportunity to deal with the complaint itself). It is felt this is due to public perception that the Ombudsman can intervene and make decisions without the Council initially considering the complaint. A further 16 cases were declined because the Ombudsman was satisfied with action proposed or taken by the Council. The Ombudsman closed the cases for the following reasons:

### Reason for closing the case

	2015-16	2016-17
Complainants had not exhausted the Council's complaints process - they were referred back to the Council	46	<b>43</b>
Cases closed by the Ombudsman after initial consideration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e.g. no evidence of maladministration or service failure</li> <li>• no evidence of hardship or injustice suffered by the complainant</li> <li>• little further would be achieved by the Ombudsman pursuing the matter</li> </ul>	58	<b>38</b>
Cases declined because Ombudsman was satisfied with action proposed or taken by Council (Quick-Fix / Voluntary Settlement)	20	<b>16</b>
Cases out of Ombudsman's jurisdiction	15	<b>31</b>
Cases withdrawn by complainant	1	<b>1</b>
Complaint led to an Ombudsman's report – complaint upheld	2	<b>3</b>
Complaint led to an Ombudsman's report – complaint not upheld	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	143	<b>133</b>



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## Ombudsman Complaints - a yearly comparison

The table below shows the total number of complaints made to the Ombudsman regarding Cardiff Council over the last five years.

Year	
<b>2016-17</b>	<b>133</b>
2015-16	143
2014-15	98
2013-14	100
2012-13	93

## Investigations leading to reports

The Ombudsman issues a report if he finds that a complainant has suffered hardship or injustice through the Council's maladministration or service failure.

Under the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005, the Ombudsman can issue one of two types of report following an investigation into a complaint by a member of the public: Section 16 and Section 21.

### Section 16 Report

The first type of report is known as a Section 16 report. This is issued when the Ombudsman believes that the investigation report contains matters of public interest. The Council is then obliged to publicise the report at its own expense. **For the sixth consecutive year, the Ombudsman issued 0 Section 16 reports against Cardiff Council.**

### Section 21 Report

The Ombudsman can issue a Section 21 report if the Council agrees to implement any recommendations he has made and if he is satisfied that the case does not raise matters of public interest. The Ombudsman issued 3 Section 21 reports during 2016-17.



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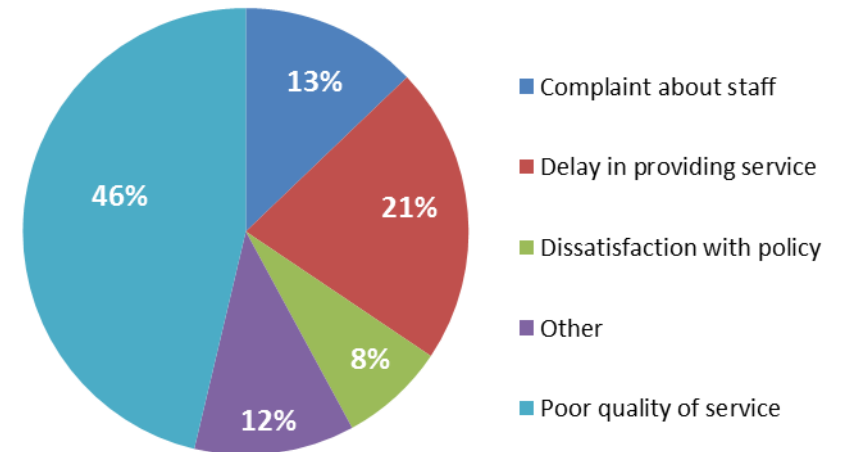
## Communities, Housing & Customer Services

### Housing & Communities

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
Assessment & Support	87	<b>78</b>
Face to Face Services	15	<b>31</b>
Landlord Services	92	<b>114</b>
Preventative Services	n/a	<b>2</b>
Regeneration, Development & Enabling	4	<b>15</b>
Responsive Repairs Unit	227	<b>164</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>404</b>
Number / Percentage of complaints responded to on time	416 (97.9%)	<b>392 (97.0%)</b>
Complaints about staff	69 (16.2%)	<b>52 (12.8%)</b>
Delay in providing service	93 (21.9%)	<b>87 (21.5%)</b>
Dissatisfaction with policy	19 (4.5%)	<b>31 (7.7%)</b>
Other	32 (7.5%)	<b>47 (11.6%)</b>
Poor quality of service	212 (49.9%)	<b>187 (46.3%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>404</b>

**Housing & Communities** continue to adopt a positive, constructive approach to complaints. Each case is investigated thoroughly to establish exactly what (if anything) has gone wrong; the primary aim being to resolve the matter for the individual. All complaints are also considered from the viewpoint of making any necessary changes which could improve services to customers and minimise potential future complaints

Categories of Complaints for Housing & Communities



The causes for justified complaints are monitored and considered regularly, with recommendations being made to Senior Managers. Any patterns in complaints causes can then be addressed and the appropriate action taken to ensure best practice; for example, changes made to procedures or standard letters being amended.

There were previously two specialised Housing Complaint Officers and the scope of their roles has expanded greatly since their introduction in 2015.



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Consequently, there are now four officers who deal with complaints relating to a number of teams including Independent Living Services, Housing repairs and Planned Maintenance, Caretaking, Social Lettings, Anti-Social Behaviour and Tenancy Management. This allows for a consistent and thorough approach to all complaint investigations.

The complaints received are diverse and although it is acknowledged that there is an increase in the number of complaints about **Landlord Services**, there is no identifiable cause or pattern and this therefore appears to be a natural fluctuation in the number of complaints received.

It is pleasing however to see the continuing fall in complaints about the Responsive Repairs Unit. This follows a restructure which improved the way that the work was managed. Additionally, these complaints are now dealt with by Housing Complaints Officers on a specialist Complaints and Enquiries Team.

### Learning from complaints – Responsive Repairs Unit

One of the Council's main success stories with regards to complaints is the repeated annual decrease in complaints received by the Responsive Repairs Unit (RRU). Housing repairs is one of the most visible services the Council provides to its residents and accordingly, is the main service through which many residents judge the Council overall. It is therefore of great importance that the Council attempts to get repairs 'right first time' and the department has conducted regular reviews on the number and type of complaints received. The improvements implemented speak for themselves as the department have received a consecutive decrease in the number of complaints received for four years in a row (440 in 2013/14, 333 in 2014/15, 227 in 2015/16 and 164 in 2016/17).

A common theme amongst complaints received has been about delays to the work taking place. The RRU are now able to keep our customers informed about potential delays as customers will now receive a text message notifying them of their appointment and a reminder text 24 hours before the appointment and a further reminder when the Operative is on his way. All RRU operatives have also been issued with smart phones to enable mobile working and scheduling. This change has allowed the RRU to start offering morning or afternoon appointments to customers, or a slot to avoid the school run.

The RRU have also arranged for more repairs to be undertaken by in-house operatives as opposed to external contractors. This means the department are able to retain sufficient oversight of the jobs reported and take ownership of reported issues. These changes have reduced costs and improved the service to our tenants, which is clearly demonstrated by a significantly reduced number of complaints.



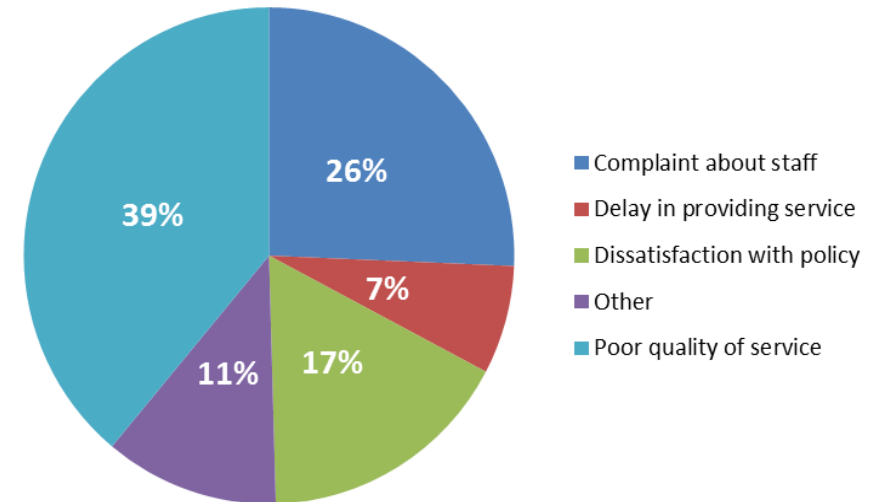
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## Customer Services & Communities

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
Adult Community Learning	5	4
Connect to Cardiff	22	33
Libraries	76	12
Rent Smart Wales	n/a	56
24/7 Services	12	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>113</b>
Number / Percentage of complaints responded to on time	112 (97.4%)	107 (94.7%)
Complaints about staff	30 (26.1%)	29 (25.7%)
Delay in providing service	0 (0%)	8 (7.0%)
Dissatisfaction with policy	1 (0.9%)	19 (16.8%)
Other	58 (50.4%)	13 (11.5%)
Poor quality of service	26 (22.6%)	44 (38.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>113</b>

The **Adult Community Learning (ACL) Service** received **4** complaints for 2016/17, a reduction from **5** in 2015/16. This is a positive reflection on the service which continues to thrive supporting vulnerable people to maximise their employment opportunities or help them progress into further education, offering bespoke courses to create employment and skills for life opportunities to those most in need. We also offer a large number of recreation based courses to the community which assist with health and wellbeing.

Categories of Complaints for Customer Services & Communities



### Learning from Complaints

An ACL complaint that was partially upheld related to a learner who was deaf and required a BSL interpreter to attend a Learning for Life recreation based programme. A challenge has been that these courses are based on a cost neutral model as they are not funded by Welsh Government. The fees that learners pay are kept as minimal as possible to cover tutor and venue costs. A BSL interpreter comes with a fee attached and this was in danger with the class financially making a loss. However, once highlighted we recognised the need to make courses accessible to all and made the provision available to the learner and will continue to do so.



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**Connect to Cardiff (C2C)** has received **33** complaints, compared to 22 in 2015/16. However, of the 33 complaints received, 9 (27%) of these were not upheld. Furthermore, 4 (12%) complaints were only part upheld.

The ability to confidently form decisions of this nature can mostly be attributed to C2C's ability to comprehensively investigate complaints received via our call-recording software which provides us with the ability to listen to conversations with customers from start to end and therefore fully understand the events that have led to a complaint. Similarly, we have a dedicated Stats and Support team that are able to offer accurate data on wait times, call lengths and the frequency of customer contact. In recent years, up-dates to this software has meant we are also able to capture the conversations taking place between C2C operatives and back-office staff meaning we can offer assistance and support to our colleagues in other service areas in their own complaints investigations.

The Waste Restrictions programme that was rolled out by the Waste Management department between July 2015 and February 2016. Pre-restrictions C2C logged a total of **53,297** Waste Management related cases which is an average of **7,614** cases per month. During Waste Restrictions C2C logged a total of 104,027 cases which is an average of 14,861 cases per month. This is an increase of 95%. This big influx of contact over a concentrated period also contributed to longer wait times and therefore correlates to an increase in the quality of service category. A thorough analysis of the data captured over this time means we are better equipped to predict resourcing requirements for any further projects of this scale led

by our service area partners and should contribute to a decrease in complaints in this year in the years following.

Comments in relation to staff members have been analysed and in the main, are in relation to a large intake of new staff members at C2C due to leavers moving into different areas within the directorate. However, C2C employee a full time coach and trainer and in the cases that have related to human error in advice or process followed, full refresher training has taken place in order to correct the behaviour and avoid a re-occurrence.

During 2016/17, C2C handled 585,969 calls and 74,124 emails and therefore the 33 complaints received equate to just 0.005% of our customers registering dissatisfaction. In counterbalance, the centre also achieved an annual customer satisfaction rate of 96.7% and 128 customer compliments which is therefore a good indication that in the vast majority of cases, C2C are still providing a high quality service for our customers. C2C are also proactive in giving staff the tools they need to avoid complaints being made in the first place and each call handler meets with their line manager each month on a 121 basis and also received call quality monitoring feedback which is big contributor to the low overall complaint percentage as stated above.

**Libraries** received **12** complaints in 2016/17 which is a substantial decrease from the 76 that were received in 2015-16. This is particularly gratifying in light of the increase in visitor figures during the year which rose to 2,411,057 which relates to a 9.5% increase when compared to 2015/16.



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5 of the complaints related to security staff located at the Central Library Hub. Central Library Hub was visited by 651,216 visitors during 2016/17. There are unfortunately a small proportion of customers who present anti-social behaviour and these individuals are on occasion asked to leave the facility in order to protect the health and safety of all visitors and staff. The security team are fully managed and monitored by 24/7 Services who also remotely monitor the building and customer interactions via the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) at Wilcox House.

3 of the complaints relate to ICT including delays with logging on, access to a website and accessibility on the weekends. It is encouraging to note that of the 273,665 hourly public computer sessions that took place in 2016/17, only 0.001% resulted in a complaint being registered.

### Learning from Complaints

1 of the complaints was related to customer service. In this instance procedures were reviewed and new work instructions issued and briefed to relevant staff to ensure improvements were delivered.

1 of the complaints was related to a potential Information breach through an unsolicited email. The matter was referred to the Data Protection Team who assisted with a review of current processes.

1 of the complaints was a combination of customer service, security, staff attitude and general standards largely related to newspaper availability. New processes have been implemented to deliver

improvements in the availability of newspapers within Central Library Hub.

1 of the complaints referred to the temporary location of the Local Studies Service at Dominions Way, Newport Road. Cathays Branch and Heritage Library, which incorporates the Local Studies Service, opened in April 2017 and improvements are being delivered in the services and facilities available to customers.

It is pleasing to note that the Library Service received 378 positive customer feedback notifications during 16/17 and continues to be highly valued by the citizens that it serves. The Library Service continues to generate customer loyalty as well as attracting new audiences.

**Rent Smart Wales** was introduced in November 2015 with the enforcement provisions being implemented from November 2016. Call volumes during the autumn of 2016 increased from an average of 3,500 / month to over 20,000 in October and November. During this period landlords and managing agents did express their objection to the scheme being introduced and complained about the inability to access support due to the high call volumes.

Both of these elements feature in the type of formal complaint which were received by the service. 88% of the complaints were in the six months from July – December, representing this deadline period. 18 (32%) of the complaints are recorded as 'dissatisfaction with policy' where customers



## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

were simply unhappy about the introduction of Rent Smart Wales – this does not in itself reflect a failure of the service.

### Learning from Complaints

Because of the huge increase in call volumes after the introduction of enforcement provisions, the service was closely managed with various strategies implemented to manage the considerable customer demand. Immediately following the deadline, call volumes returned to a manageable level as did the complaints we were receiving.

**24/7 Services** received **8** complaints within 2016/17, a decrease from the 12 recorded the previous year. This decrease is particularly pleasing as the service has expanded over the year with an increase of customers and the addition of a new service - Meals on Wheels. Of the complaints received within the unit; 5 related to Telecare, 2 were for the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) and 1 for Sheltered Housing, however this team is no longer part of 24/7 Services.

Telecare Cardiff continues to deliver the service to 4,500 customers, responding to over 223,000 calls in the last year.

### Learning from Complaints

Although there were no complaints in relation to staff members, there were 5 complaints received in relation to poor quality of service. As a result, a review of all processes, procedures, training plans and

supporting documentation has taken place. This combined with the recent recruitment of a dedicated training and coaching role will ensure all new and existing staff are trained effectively enabling them to be competent within their roles.

24/7 services has also achieved accreditation from the British Standards Institute ISO 9001/2015 recognising our Quality Management System early in 2017. An important part of this accreditation is the full investigation into each complaint and continual review and improvement of all services provided. High quality customer service is paramount and as in previous years, 24/7 have continue to receive great customer feedback from surveys completed and many compliments.



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# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## City Operations

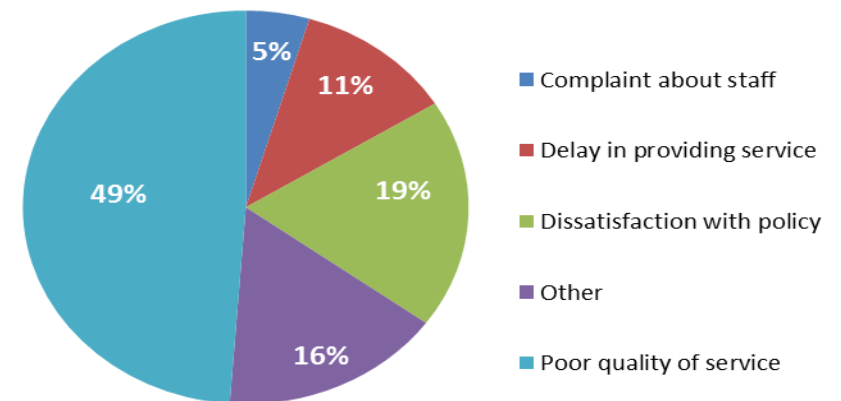
### Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transportation

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
Highway Maintenance	40	79
Planning (including Building Control)	18	15
Traffic & Transportation	111	166
<b>Total</b>	169	260
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	132 (78.1%)	211 (81.2%)
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	119 (70.4%)	201 (77.3%)
Complaints about staff		12 (4.6%)
Delay in providing service	23 (13.6%)	30 (11.4%)
Dissatisfaction with policy	41 (24.2%)	49 (18.8%)
Other	32 (18.9%)	42 (16.1%)
Poor quality of service	60 (35.5%)	127 (48.8%)

**Highway Maintenance** received **40** complaints for 2016/17. This is a decrease of 39 on the previous year where 79 complaints were recorded. The highest number of complaints received was again related to potholes and paving (15), but the number has decreased as the reporting of potholes has been changed. If the customer is reporting a highway/carriageway defect for the 1st time, the matter is logged as a request for service. If the

customer has reported the matter previously then it is regarded as a complaint. The joint second highest category related to drainage and carriageway reconstruction complaints who both received 5 complaints compared to 8 & 7 the previous year. This is a slight decrease, and further highlights the improved response time for drainage issues and the improved communication that is undertaken with residents for the carriageway/footway works programme.

#### Categories of Complaints for Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transportation



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

**Traffic & Transportation** received **111** complaints for 2016/17, which is a decrease of 55 from the total (166) for 2015/16.

The highest number of complaints related to Civil Enforcement which have increased from last year with 28 complaints compared to 20 (which has been due in part to the continued enforcement of moving traffic offences, and an increase in the number of complaints against Civil Enforcement Officers from 5 to 12 ).

The resident parking scheme received the second largest amount of complaints. These complaints have decreased greatly which can be contributed to the streamlining of the resident parking permit policy (pricing structure and application process - a decrease in complaints from 32 to 20). A new parking strategy has also been introduced which will increase resident parking provision.

Road Safety Schemes have also seen a drop in complaints for 2016/17, with 7 complaints received compared to 8 for the year before. As with the improvement in carriageway reconstruction complaints, this can be attributed to improved notification for residents and the general public.

The **Planning Service** (including Building Control) received **18** complaints in total for 2016/17. This is an increase of 3 on the previous year where 15 complaints were recorded. These complaints covered a range of issues relating to planning applications, the planning consultation process, planning decisions and compliance with Building Regulations. This figure is small considering that Development Management determines

approximately 3,000 planning applications per year. Many of these applications will require negotiating with multiple parties to discuss contentious issues and securing decisions using either Delegated Powers or by reporting through the Planning Committee. Planners also investigated approximately 501 Enforcement Cases where planning permission had not been granted, developments had not complied with permissions granted, and unauthorised and alleged unauthorised developments had been undertaken.

For 2016/17, 159 compliments have been received as a whole, which is an increase of 30 on the previous year, and highlights the continued improvement in performance that has been made for 2016/17. Monthly complaints statistics for City Operations are monitored at Departmental Management Team Meetings (DMTs) and this allows managers to identify any trends and take any necessary corrective action.

**Learning from Complaints - MiPermit Portal** - In previous years, a significant amount of complaints had been received concerning the reliability of Pay & Display Parking Meters. Due to a host of reasons, machines on occasion would be out of service or faulty which would cause frustration for the customer and potentially result in a complaint being made against the Council. To combat this issue and to provide greater flexibility, the council has recently introduced a cashless system which will enable users to purchase a "virtual" ticket via their mobile phone. This system will make the need for cash to be provided or a ticket to be displayed obsolete.



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

**Neighbourhood Services** is a new service area introduced during 2016/17. **87** complaints were received for the service complaints were received for the service, which comprises of; street cleansing, education and enforcement.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
Neighbourhood Services	n/a	<b>87</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	n/a	<b>87 (100%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	n/a	<b>75 (86.2%)</b>

Through improved engagement with our citizens, Neighbourhood Services ensures 'the citizen is central to how we work' and recognises that everyone has a role to play in tackling environmental issues such as litter and fly tipping, whilst ensuring our streets are a safe, clean and inspiring place to live. There is great potential for every local authority to enhance this endeavour by working alongside residents and allowing them to take ownership of their own neighbourhoods. We have already seen improvements on our streets and this is reflected in the lower number of complaints received during 2016/17 for comparable services. For example, complaints about dumping / flytipping have reduced (from 23 in 2015/15 to 12 in 2016/17), education / enforcement (from 27 to 17) and most impressively, street cleansing (52 to 15).

### Learning from Complaints - Street Frontages:

As a result of complaints received regarding the over storage of bags in the frontages of one particular street in Cardiff, the Enforcement Team worked with the Property Management Company who were managing these properties. The Property Management Company arranged, at their expense, additional waste collections to prevent future occurrences of this issue.



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

Complaints for **Parks and Sports** have reduced to **50** in 2016/17 from 55 in 2015/16.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Parks and Sports</b>	55	<b>50</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	26 (47.2%)	<b>50 (100%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	48 (87.3%)	<b>44 (88%)</b>
Complaints about staff	0 (0%)	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Delay in service	0 (0%)	<b>1 (2%)</b>
Dissatisfaction with policy	0 (0%)	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Other	55 (100%)	<b>49 (98%)</b>
Poor quality of service	0 (0%)	<b>0 (0%)</b>

Monthly complaint statistics for Parks and Sports continue to be monitored at Business and Operational Improvement Meetings. This allows managers to identify trends and, if necessary, take corrective action. Compliments are also reported at bi-monthly Business and Operational Improvement Meetings, with an impressive 110 compliments received during the year.

### Learning from Complaints

As a result of a complaint received regarding the procedure followed after the termination of an allotment tenancy, we have updated our procedure for plot inspections and tenancy terminations and distributed to all allotment Site Representatives.

Complaints numbers for the **Harbour Authority** have remained static over the last 2 years – 4 in both 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Harbour Authority</b>	4	<b>4</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	3 (75.0%)	<b>4 (100%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	4 (100%)	<b>4 (100%)</b>
Complaints about staff	0 (0%)	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Delay in service	1 (25.0%)	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Dissatisfaction with policy	0 (0%)	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Other	1 (25.0%)	<b>2 (50.0%)</b>
Poor quality of service	2 (50.0%)	<b>2 (50.0%)</b>

All complaints were dealt with satisfactorily and related to litter and rubbish in the rivers and the bay. Given the nature of the bay which is fed by the rivers Taff and Ely, litter and rubbish will always be a part of the environment there until education can have a positive impact not just in Cardiff but across the country.

### Learning from Complaints

Following the benchmarking exercise carried out in 2016 Cardiff Harbour Authority continues to provide the highest standards in litter collection and clearance with a total of 294 tonnes being removed during 16/17



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

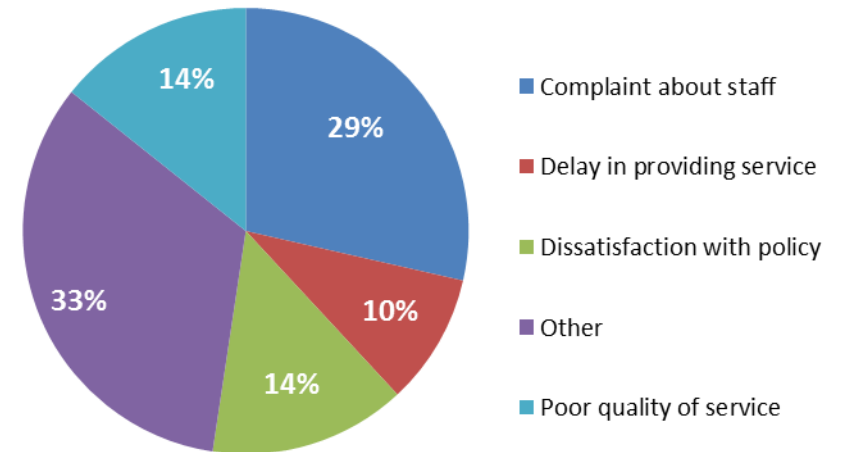
Complaints for **Leisure and Play** have decreased from 108 in 2015/16 to 21 in 2016/17. This figure reflects the complaints recorded by the Council to December 2016, at which point the Leisure Service transferred to GLL.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Leisure and Play</b>	108	<b>21</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	87 (80.6%)	<b>8 (38%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	105 (97.2%)	<b>21 (100%)</b>
Complaints about staff	12 (10.4%)	<b>6 (29%)</b>
Delay in service	0 (0%)	<b>2 (10%)</b>
Dissatisfaction with policy	51 (44.3%)	<b>3 (14%)</b>
Other	50 (46.3%)	<b>7 (33%)</b>
Poor quality of service	2 (1.7%)	<b>3 (14%)</b>

Monthly complaint statistics for Leisure and Play to October 2016 were monitored at Business and Operational Improvement Meetings, which allowed managers to identify trends and take corrective action where necessary.

11 compliments were received up until December 2016 at which point the Leisure serviced transferred to GLL.

Categories of Complaints for Leisure and Play





## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

There were **40** complaints for **Bereavement and Registration** in 2016/17 compared to 42 in 2015/6.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Bereavement and Registration</b>	42	<b>40</b>
Number / Percentage of complaints responded to on time	42 (100%)	<b>40 (100%)</b>

We actively encourage the bereaved to contact them should they experience any issues with a grave or a service at the crematorium. Complaints are received by email, via C2C, in writing and also via Bereavement Services' reception area. Questionnaires are also sent to all those who use our service which provides an additional avenue for people to advise us of any issues with the services they have received.

It is important to note that due to the high number of visitors to the service – with over 4,000 funeral services per annum, approximately 500,000 visitors to our sites, 9,000 registrations for births and deaths, and 1,500 marriages – the complaints are very minimal and would equate to under 0.01% of all visitors to our sites.

Bereavement and Registration Services is a 'right first time' service in which our customers, the bereaved, or those carrying out life changing events are our ultimate priority. Customer comments are scrutinised and service standards have been developed to inform the public. From these standards, monthly performance data is monitored to ensure that we are meeting our commitments to Cardiff's citizens.

Visitors come to us, in the main, in quite a vulnerable state and at differing points in their grieving process. This can mean that small issues may become of increased importance and we actively encourage families to communicate their needs with Bereavement Services. Where an error has occurred we will also proactively apologise in writing to the family concerned to try and stop an issue escalating. Registration Services is also an area where our citizens are undertaking life-changing events and as such we respond to their needs with sensitivity and understanding. Due to the sensitive nature of the service, 100% of complaints received a full response within 5 working days. Furthermore, our level of customer satisfaction averages 99% and 251 compliments were received during 2016/17.

### Learning from Complaints

Requests concerning grounds maintenance works are monitored via a monthly performance indicator to ensure that such requests are dealt with as soon as possible within seven working days. This means that these requests for such works as the turfing of a grave are carried out within a timely manner and do not become complaints. Staff make great effort to ensure that they achieve their target on a monthly basis. It is to be noted that the performance target is often exceeded. Bereavement Services have also introduced an income generating grave maintenance scheme to meet the more individual needs of families and both of these initiatives have seen customer satisfaction levels increase and complaints levels reduce.



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# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## Economic Development

### Waste Strategy & Enforcement

The number of complaints received by Waste Collections has more than halved from 826 in 2015/2016 to **405** in 2016/2017.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Waste Collections</b>	826	<b>405</b>
Number / Percentage of complaints responded to on time	784 (94.9%)	<b>397 (98.0%)</b>

No significant service changes took place in 2016/2017 and therefore it was anticipated that the number of complaints would reduce. The number of complaints related specifically to domestic waste non-collections has halved from 385 in 2015/2016 to 200 in 2016/2017.

The number of complaints is considered to be extremely low when the volume of waste service delivery is taken into account. With approximately 157,000 address points currently serviced citywide, over 470,000 waste collections are carried out weekly - which is equivalent to over 24 million a year. Additionally Waste Management also provides education to residents, bulky waste collection services and delivery/repair services across the City, as well as access to three Household Waste Recycling Centres during the 2016/17 period.

98% of all complaints made were responded to within 20 working days or less. The service area also received 137 compliments during the 2016/17 period which is pleasing to report.

Complaints and trends are robustly monitored by officers through close liaison with Connect to Cardiff and regular updates from the Service Complaints Manager. Complaints and compliments are also discussed with managers and union representatives at monthly meetings and are displayed on display screen monitors at Lamby Way.

A traffic light system is operated by the Business Support team at Lamby Way to ensure that complaints are responded to within the appropriate response timescales.

**Arts and Theatres** contains two of the city's biggest arts venues, St Davids



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

Hall and the New Theatre. Complaints for Arts and Theatres have decreased from 296 in 2015/16 to **286** in 2016/17.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Arts and Theatres</b>	296	<b>286</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	296 (100%)	<b>286 (100%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	296 (100%)	<b>286 (100%)</b>
Complaints about staff	8 (2.7%)	<b>15 (5.2%)</b>
Delay in service	0 (0%)	<b>6 (2.1%)</b>
Dissatisfaction with policy	17 (5.7%)	<b>25 (8.7%)</b>
Other	249 (84.1%)	<b>219 (76.6%)</b>
Poor quality of service	22 (7.4%)	<b>21 (7.3%)</b>

A large variety of shows take place within Arts and Theatres and it is important to note that the majority of complaints for this service area can be classified as 'customer preference' rather than service failure. For example, the department receives complaints about shows not being to the customer's personal taste, the quality of plays and the audience etc.

### Learning from Complaints

Though the majority of complaints do not relate to service failure, there are some complaints that enable us to implement changes as a result of feedback from our customers. Here are some examples of service improvements we made last year:

**Ticket Service Charge** - Following feedback from the audiences of both Saint David's Hall and New Theatre relating to "extra" charges, specifically the Ticket Service Charge the decision was taken to phase it out and the process is now nearing completion. The income stream is restructured and retained. For customers, whose primary concern was the addition of charges on top of the ticket price, all new shows are on a "the price you see is the price you pay" basis.

**Hearing Enhancement Provision** - Both venues received complaints regarding the audibility of some unamplified shows. Responses were sent giving details about the Sennheiser hearing enhancement system fitted in both buildings, its use and how to access it. Some customers, especially those with certain digital hearing aids, were still having difficulty and since other services e.g. the audio description of shows also rely on this equipment a new system has been fitted in addition to the existing. Both venues can now offer a greater range of hearing enhancement and audio description facilities.



# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

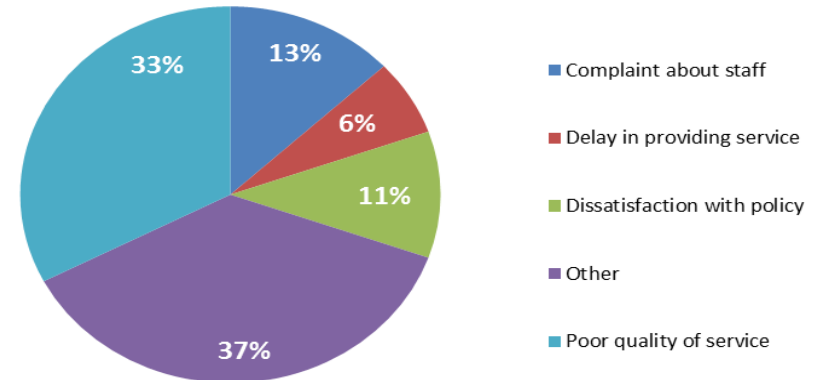
## Economic Development

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Economic Development</b>	37	46
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	37 (100%)	46 (100%)
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	37 (100%)	46 (100%)
Complaints about staff	9 (24.3%)	6 (13.0%)
Delay in service	4 (10.8%)	3 (6.5%)
Dissatisfaction with policy	0 (0%)	5 (10.9%)
Other	7 (18.9%)	17 (37.0%)
Poor quality of service	17 (45.9%)	15 (32.6%)

For the remainder of Economic Development, there were 46 complaints received which is a slight increase on the 37 recorded during 2015/16. The complaints comprised of 11 for City Centre Management, 3 for Strategic Estates, 27 for Venues and Tourism (this includes Cardiff Castle, the Events team, Cardiff Caravan Park and the Norwegian Church) and 5 for Major Projects.

Of the complaints under other, Fanzone in Cardiff Arms Park (3), road closures (4), health and safety (2), Christmas tree outside Cardiff Castle (8).

### Categories of Complaints for Economic Development



### Learning from Complaints

**Staff training** – A complainant was attending a wedding at City Hall and was trying to park in the reserved spaces, the receptionist on the intercom was rude and unhelpful. The Events Manager apologised and informed the complainant that training and coaching had been arranged for staff to ensure that it did not happen again.

**CCTV** – A complaint was made with regards to the security and poor quality of CCTV at Cardiff Caravan Park. The head warden reassured the complainant that improvements were already being implemented with the replacement of a new CCTV camera and that he would investigate upgrading the recording equipment.

## Education & Lifelong Learning



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## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate received **34** formal complaints in 2016/17.

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Education</b>	54	<b>34</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	45 (83.3%)	<b>19 (55.9%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	24 (44.4%)	<b>18 (52.9%)</b>

The **Education and Lifelong Learning** Directorate received **34** complaints in 2016/17, a clear decrease from the number of complaints the Directorate received in 2015/16 (54). From the 34 complaints received, 19 of the complaints were acknowledged within five working days. The Directorate responded to 53% of the complaints received within 20 days of receipt.

Unfortunately, the number of complaints responded to within 20 working days has increased from the previous year. Some complaints have involved the Directorate having to commission an Independent Investigator to undertake and oversee the complaint process. This process has had an impact on the Council meeting its complaint timescales. Where this occurs,

the Directorate will send an interim reply explaining the reasons for delay and when the complainant can expect a response.

Typically the Directorate receives complaints relating to concerns for the statutory functions of; School Re-organisation, School Admissions and Statements of Special Educational Needs.

It is important to note that under Section 29(1) of the Education Act 2002, governing bodies of all maintained schools are required to establish procedures for dealing with complaints relating to the school or to the provision of facilities or services. The Local Authority does not have a role in investigating or resolving complaints about schools. The Welsh Government has issued guidance to support schools in dealing with complaints entitled Complaints Procedures for School Governing Bodies in Wales (Welsh Government circular no 011/2012). Within the guidance, it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to satisfy itself that all schools it maintains have adequate complaints procedures in place and that these are published. A governing body complaints procedure may, with the agreement of the local authority, include a stage for the local authority to consider the complaint. However the statutory responsibility for dealing with a complaint remains with the governing body.



# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## Statutory Complaints – Social Services

It is a statutory requirement under the following items of legislation for Local Authorities to have in place a Representations and Complaints Procedure for Social Services.

- Representation Procedure (Children) (Wales) Regulations 2014
- Social Services Complaint's Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014

This is in line with the Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and Guidance and the NHS Complaints procedure Putting Things Right.

The following provides information about the operation of the Social Services Representation and Complaints Procedure between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. The report contains information about the number and type of complaints received and also provides details of the activities undertaken by the Complaints Unit during that period.

## Children's Services

Children's Services received 128 complaints during 2016/17, a 5% decrease on the 135 complaints received 2015/16. 9 complaints were received direct from children and young people (or an advocate) during the year compared with 20 in 2015/16.

There were 6 Stage 2 investigations initiated in 2016/17 compared with 9 in 2015/16. There were 6 referrals to the Public Services Ombudsman for

Wales, compared with 4 in 2015/16. The activity in relation to these has been as follows:

- Children's Services are finalising their response to recommendations received from the Ombudsman in relation to 1 complaint
- The Ombudsman liaised with Children's Services and determined that they would not be investigated 4 complaints
- The Ombudsman liaised with Children's Services to assess 1 complaint and it was agreed that a Stage 2 investigation would be undertaken

Stage 1 complaints are resolved effectively which means that only a small percentage of complaints – 8% proceeded to Stage 2 or the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Children's Services received 31 compliments during 2016/17, a 30% decrease on the 44 received during 2015/16.

### Learning from Complaints

The Directorate commissioned an independent review of the current arrangements for managing complaints in order to support a coherent approach to the quality assurance across Social Services as a whole and ensure more effective learning from their outcomes. A number of recommendations identified key improvements across the Directorate and these will be implemented in 2017/18



# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## Adult Services

Adult Services received 67 complaints during 2016/17, an 11% decrease on the 75 complaints received during 2015/16.

There were 5 Stage 2 investigations in 2016/17 compared with 3 in 2015/16. There were no investigations by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales compared with 2 in 2015/16. 1 referral to the Ombudsman was resolved via responding to a 'quick fix' request, rather than proceeding to investigation.

Stage 1 complaints are resolved effectively which means that only a small percentage of complaints – 7% (5) proceed to Stage 2 or the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

### Themes

From the complaints received during 2016/17, the following themes were identified in relation to children and adults:

- Staff not returning calls / responding to messages / poor communication

- Complaints are around quality of care, e.g. service delivery / missed calls
- Case management and review e.g. unhappy with service provided by Social Worker, delay in responding to service request and / or assessment outcome
- Other examples from Children's Services include:
- Financial matters, e.g. needing to repay overpayments of Housing Benefit
- Issues relating to contact between looked after children and their families
- Other examples from Adult Services include:
- Self-funding residents not being financially assessed in a timely way
- Unhappy with procurement systems that restrict access to particular providers

Adult Services received 17 compliments during 2016/17, a 240% increase on the 5 received during 2015/16



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# Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

## Corporate Resources

### Finance

Service Area	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Finance</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>115</b>
Number / Percentage of acknowledgments sent within 5 working days	90 (82.6%)	<b>114 (99.1%)</b>
Number / Percentage of responses sent within 20 working days	68 (62.4%)	<b>52 (45.2%)</b>
Complaints about staff	18 (16.5%)	<b>22 (19.1%)</b>
Delay in providing service	7 (6.4%)	<b>3 (2.6%)</b>
Dissatisfaction with policy	10 (9.3%)	<b>11 (9.6%)</b>
Other	6 (5.5%)	<b>4 (3.5%)</b>
Poor quality of service	68 (62.4%)	<b>75 (65.2%)</b>

There has been a small increase in the total number of complaints received by **Finance** from **109** in 2015/16 to **115** in 2016/17. The percentage of complaints considered justified was just 15.6%. Upheld complaints are further considered by the relevant manager to determine any action that can be taken to minimise similar complaints in future. As in previous years, the majority of complaints received related to the collection of unpaid Council Tax charges and queries over liability and exemptions.

The Directorate is continuing to take a robust stance in pursuing Council Tax debtors and takes appropriate legal action to obtain Liability Orders and seek prompt payment. As part of this process, the Council continues to use external bailiffs to complement the work of the in-house team. This does lead to some complaints about the recovery action taken. However, in most instances these complaints were considered unjustified when they were investigated, as the complainants were in arrears and were objecting to being pursued over the unpaid bills.

The collection of as much Council Tax income as possible is particularly important in the current economic climate and it should be noted that the approach outlined has resulted in an increase in the percentage of Council Tax collected to 97.52% in 2016/17. This is the highest percentage collected since Council Tax was introduced.

#### Learning from Complaints

Records are kept of the nature of complaints and the outcomes so that Resources can ensure that any identified gaps in training or procedures are addressed and remedial action taken and documented to prevent further occurrences. As a result of one complaint, a training note was issued to reaffirm to staff when an inspection for an empty property is necessary and when it is not.



## Cardiff Council Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

There were **0** complaints about **HR People Services** in 2016/17 which is a positive result considering the challenges facing HR and the Council.

HR People Services continues to review its processes on a regular basis, which is based on comments from complaints, customer feedback and our own staff. With reduced resources, HR will develop ways for managers to access HR information via updated Intranet pages and FAQs, together with streamlining processes to enable quicker processing and better accuracy. With the challenges facing HR and the Council we will continually monitor any complaints, feedback and compliments to improve service delivery.

**Communications & Media** are responsible for Corporate Communication, including the production and distribution of the Capital Times newspaper. There was just **1** complaint during 2016/17. Considering the level of coverage, this is a positive result.

There were 0 complaints for **Improvement & Information** in 2016/17. Complaints about the Freedom of Information process and Data Protection issues are not subject to our Complaints procedure or the Ombudsman.

There were 5 complaints for **Governance & Legal Services** in 2016/17 compared to 3 the previous year. Three of the complaints related to Electoral Services, 1 to a delayed response to a query and 1 for the overpayment of debt and the delay in receiving a refund from the council. There were no identifiable trends from the complaints.

