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Governance & Audit Committee – Corporate Complaints – 23rd January 2024



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Background



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- In addition to the Council's annual complaints report, we produce a mid-year report at the six – month period. This report details the Council's performance when handling complaints over Quarters 1 and 2 and provides us with an opportunity to 'take stock'.
- The number of complaints recorded by Cardiff Council for the first six months of 2023/24 was 1,856.
- Though this is for only six months, we can speculate that we will receive more complaints in 2023-24 than in 2022-23. By comparison, 3,071 complaints were recorded in 2022-23.



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Response Times



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- Cardiff Council's Corporate Complaints Policy states that we will aim to respond to complaints within 20 working days.
- If we are not able to respond to complaints within this time, we need to let complainants know about this and when they can expect to receive a response.
- For the first six months of 2023-24, 73.4% of our complaints received a full response within our corporate timescales (20 working days). This represents a notable increase from 2022-23 when 56% received a response within 20 working days
- A further 26.3% of complainants received a response after 20 working days but within 3 months, leaving just 0.3% who received a response after 3 months but within 6 months.



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Halo - Reminder



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The key aim of the new Complaints, Compliments and Cabinet & Members Enquiries Management system is to create and embed a centralised, streamlined approach to the management of complaints, members, and cabinet enquiries.

The new system will improve the handling process, increase efficiency, and provide corporate oversight of enquiries across the organisation.

Members of the Committee have been actively involved on this journey since our initial presentation in July 2022 and are well-informed about our imminent launch scheduled for the end of January 2024.



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Halo - Benefits



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Key benefits of the new system are to:

- Provide good quality, consistent responses for all complaints & cabinet & member enquiries.
- Record good quality data and the ability to report quickly and easily on performance (note data is currently recorded in different systems in a variety of ways).
- Have a corporate overview of complaints & cabinet & members enquiries in real time.
- Respond to complaints & cabinet & member enquiries within the required SLAs.
- Improve the complaints & cabinet & member enquiries processes to enable a more joined up way of working by eliminating inefficient processes, such as multiple handovers, double keying, duplication etc. consuming valuable staff time.



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Halo - Update



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- The launch of Cabinet and Member Enquiries (Phase 2 of the project) took place in August 2023 and has been very well received with no significant issues reported.
- The Complaints & Compliments instance is in progress. Significant work has been undertaken in advance of our expected 'go live' date by the end of January 2024.
- There has been significant engagement with stakeholders ahead of this launch.



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- Face-to-face training has been made available for service areas to onboard to the new system and the new process for dealing with complaints and enquiries. A user guide has also been created and 11 'how to' videos have been created.
- This will be more sustainable rather than delivering ongoing face-to-face training.



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Corporate Complaints, Compliments and
Enquiries Agents User Guides



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Training

In this section you will find several types of training for dealing with written correspondence, including Cabinet and Member Enquiries, with some courses specifically concentrating on efficient complaint handling. Anyone who is in a role where they are required to process, investigate, or respond to complaints are strongly encouraged to complete them.

Courses are bookable via your DigiGOV training calendar or the e-learning pool at Cardiff Council Academy Online. Links and contact details can be found at the bottom of the page. Classroom training is delivered by the Customer Services Trainer through MS Teams with course content created in partnership with the Public Services for Wales Ombudsman.

For questions on course content or availability, please contact Customer Services Trainer [Jodie Williams](#)

Training Courses

Training Course	Duration	Who	Content	Delivery Method	Booking Method
Written Communication	1 Hour	Council Wide	Training covers best practice and aims to develop consistency for written skills in responding to complaints and enquiries to citizens, including how to deal with Welsh correspondence.	E-learning	Cardiff Academy
Handling Complaints	3.5 Hours	All staff	Training is in collaboration with the Ombudsman and covers what complaints are, why complaints are important and why do people complain. Includes information on the process of dealing with a complaint and the difference between a complaint/service request.	TBC	TBC
Investigation of Complaints	3.5 Hours	Responders, Approvers & Authorisers	Training is in collaboration with the Ombudsman and covers complaint handling in further detail for those who actively deal/responds to complaints. Course also includes investigation skills, evidence gathering, decision making.	TBC	TBC



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- The Project Team have had several run-throughs of the system with end-to-end tickets, all has been reported to work well.
- Review workshops have taken place with teams involved with Phase 2 (enquiries). There has been significant stakeholder involvement with the majority of officers involved with Phase 2 (enquiries) expected to be involved with Phase 3 (complaints) also.
- Regular project updates have taken place with Operational Managers, Senior Managers (the 'approvers') regarding their responsibilities and to encourage 'buy-in'
- Project Manager has also met separately with some Operational Managers to establish certain needs.



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Halo Update – Sharepoint site is live



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Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Members Enquiries

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[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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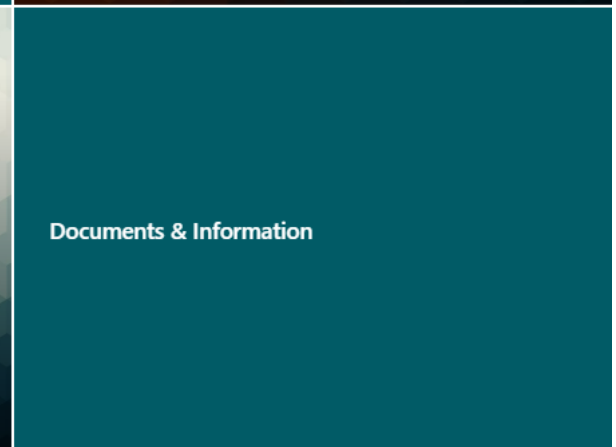
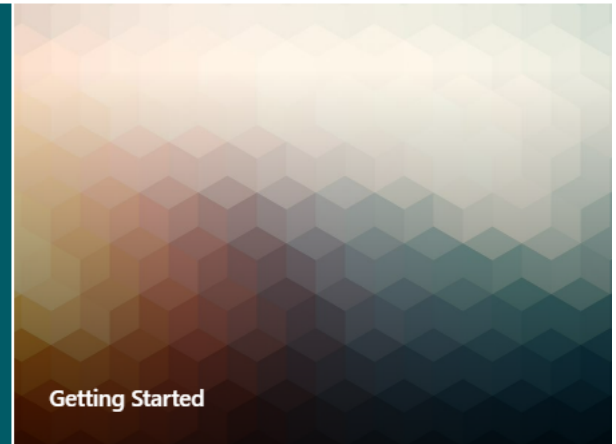
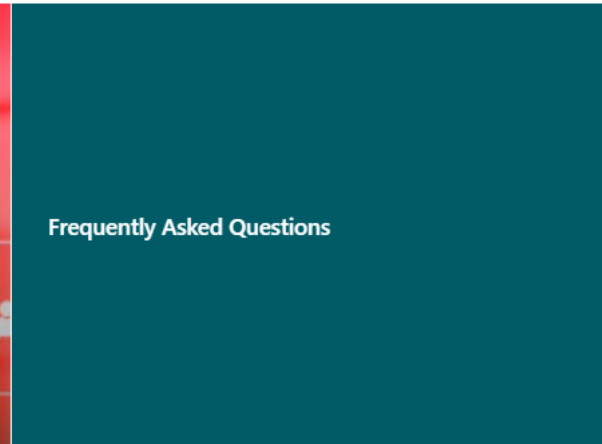
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Published 9/5/2022 ✎ Edit ↗



Welcome to the Corporate Complaints, Compliments, Cabinet and Member Enquiries site where you will find information to assist you and your team with complaints, compliments and enquiries.

Complaints & Compliments Area

A complaint is:

'An expression of concern or dissatisfaction made by one or more members of the public in regard to Cardiff Council's actions, or lack of action, or the standard of service it provided following an initial request for service.'

This can be expressed by any available communication method.

A complaint is not:

- A first-time report of an occurrence that needs Cardiff Council's attention or an initial request for service
- A formal review or appeal against a decision
- A way of asking for a change to legislation or a policy decision
- A means for lobbying groups/organisations to promote a cause
- A general expression of dissatisfaction that does not relate specifically to Cardiff Council's actions, or lack of action, or the standard of service it provided.

For further information about how to deal with complaints please visit the [Standard Operating Procedure](#)

A compliment is:

'An expression of praise to the Council or any member of Council staff. It could include an occasion where assistance given by a staff member was above and beyond the standard expected, or a service provided exceeded expectations.'

When a compliment is received the Council should record it so that it can be shared with the relevant manager and member of staff.

The **Corporate Complaints Team** (Rory Williams and Claire Lowdon) can assist with queries about complaints and compliments. Among the duties and responsibilities of the team are to:

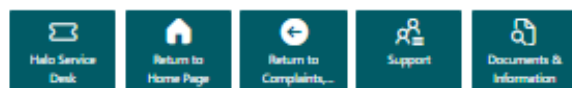
- Liaise with and advise service areas who require support when dealing with customer complaints.
- Collate, monitor and report on complaints received for the Council, and to produce the Council's Annual Complaints Report.
- Act as the point of contact for customers who have displayed 'unacceptable behaviour' as outlined in our 'Unacceptable Actions by Customers' policy (previously known as Persistent & Vexatious).
- Act as the link between the Council and Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Following the introduction of Halo, the team will look to ensure that all service areas are adhering to the Council's Complaints Policy in terms of acknowledging and responding in full within the set timescales.

Our policy states that we will formally acknowledge a complainant's concerns within 5 working days and that we aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible - expecting to deal with the vast majority within 20 working days.

If you would like further information about the Corporate Complaints Team, the Ombudsman, or complaints in general, please contact us using the e-mail address below.

Quick Links



Corporate Complaints & Compliments Contact email

 Corporate Complaints Team / Tim Cwynion Co...



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Documents & Information

Standard Operating Procedures



Corporate Complaints Standard Operating Procedure



Cabinet Correspondence Standard Operating Procedure



Member Enquiries Service (MES) Standard Operating Procedure



Ombudsman Standard Operating Procedure

Policies



Welsh Complaints Policy



Social Services Complaints Policy and Procedure



Guide to handling complaints and representations by LA social...



Complaints Policy

Useful Documents



Letter Privacy Disclaimers & Footers(English & Welsh) July 2022