

# Report C



## **Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee**

### **Complaints and Compliments Report Half Year April - September 2015/16**

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## 1. Principles

Carmarthenshire County Council's Complaints Procedure adopted in May 2011, emphasise the following principles:

- To ensure that as many complaints as possible are **resolved at stage 1** local resolution.
- To ensure that investigations follow the '**Investigate Once, Investigate Well**' principle.
- To adopt a stronger emphasis on **learning from complaints** and utilising them where possible to reform service design.

## 2. Definition

A **definition of a complaint** is:

- an expression of dissatisfaction or concern
- about a public service provider's action or lack of action
- or about the standard of service provided
- which requires a response
- whether about the public service provider itself, a person acting on its behalf, or a public service provider partnership.

The complaints referred to within this report are the ones where the investigation has been completed during the period of this report. This report does not reflect any complaints which are currently open and under investigation.

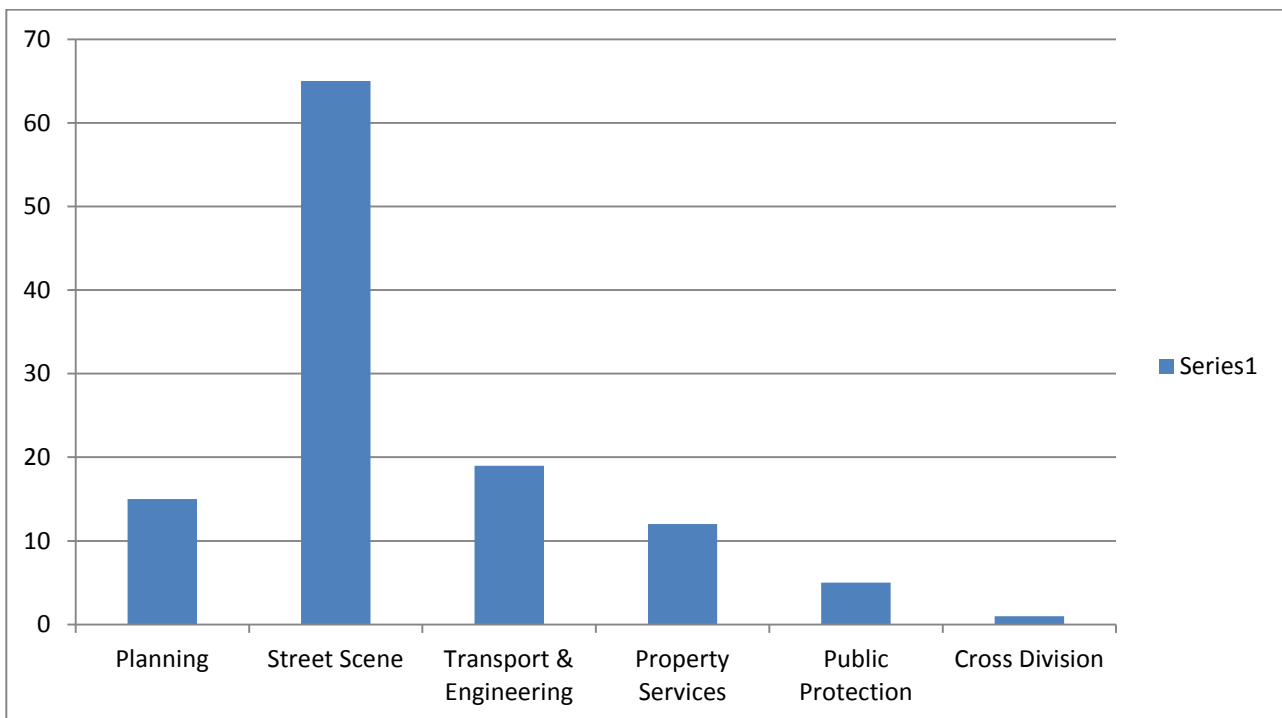
## 3. Summary of findings

- 117 complaints were investigated during this period, compared to 135 complaints during the previous year's Q2
- 70 of these complaints (60%) received a response within the allocated time period. This reflects a decrease from the same period, with last year's percentage of 69%.
- 5 Public Protection complaints were recorded, there were none last year. Planning has seen a slight decrease from last year's figure of 19 to this year's total of 15.

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## 4. Complaints investigated and responded to within Q2 of 2015/16

SERVICE	Stage 1			Stage 2		
	No. of Complaints responded to <sup>1</sup>	No. receiving a full response within allocated time period <sup>2</sup>	No. receiving a full response after allocated time period <sup>3</sup>	No. of Complaints responded to	No. receiving a response within allocated time period <sup>4</sup>	No. receiving a response after allocated time period
Environment	104	64 (62%)	40 (38%)	8	4 (50%)	4 (50%)
Public Protection	3	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	2		2 (100%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>66 (62%)</b>	<b>41 (38%)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4 (40%)</b>	<b>6 (60%)</b>



<sup>1</sup> This is the cumulative figure of complaints investigated and responded to within the period of the report this financial year

<sup>2</sup> Any corporate complaint which has been investigated and responded to within 10 working days.

<sup>3</sup> Any complaints which have been investigated and responded to outside the allocated time period

<sup>4</sup> Any corporate complaint which has been investigated and responded to within 10 working days.

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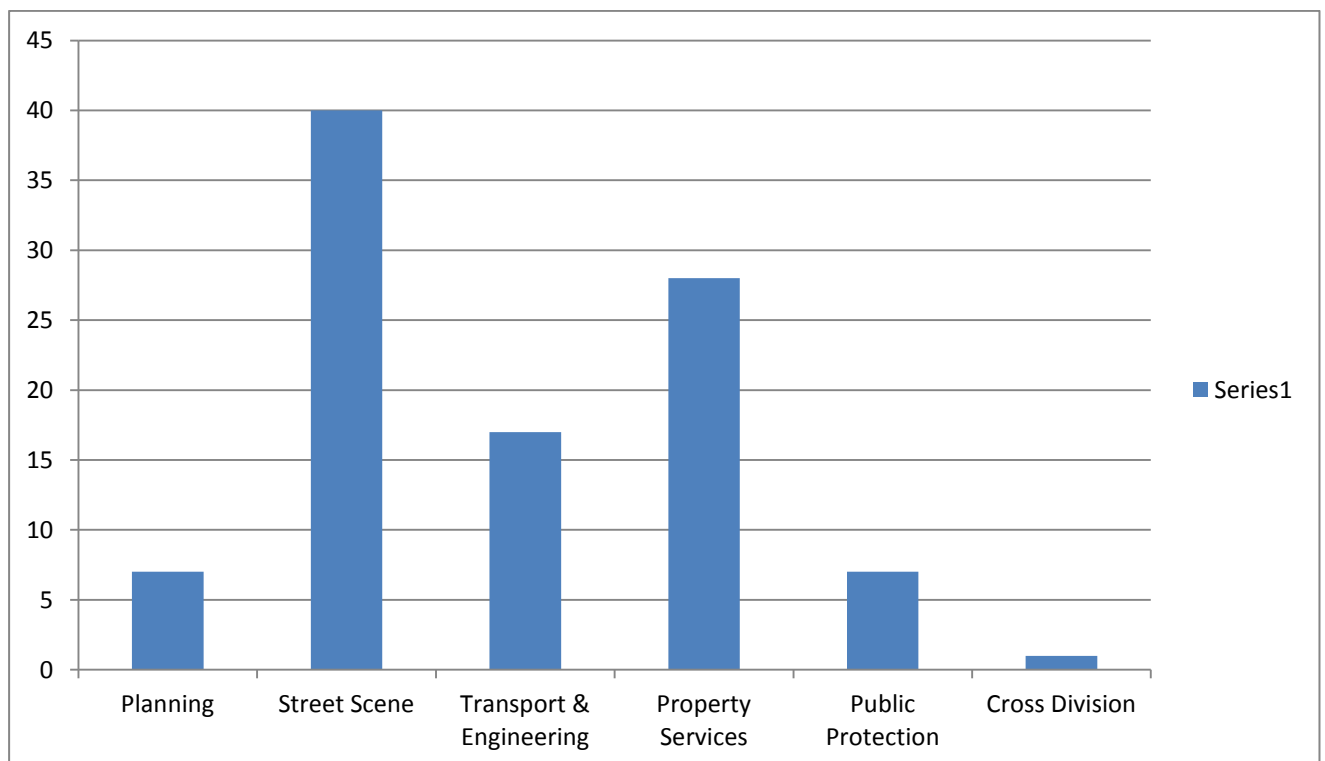
## 5. Complaints determined by the Ombudsman during Q2 2015/16

	Concluded by Ombudsman 2015-16	Ombudsman conclusion					
		Settled	Not Upheld	Discontinued	Out of jurisdiction	Referred back to Authority	Upheld
Environment	14	2	0	4	4	4	0

## 6. Compliments

- 100 compliments were received in Q2 for 2015, up from the previous year's 57.

SERVICE	No. of compliments received
Planning	7
Street Scene	40
Transport & Engineering	17
Property Services	28
Public Protection	7
Cross Division	1
Total	100



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## 7 Complaint & Compliment Analysis

### 7.1 Environment

Complaints	Planning		Street Scene		Property Services		Transport & Engineering		Cross Division	
<b>Stage 1 Complaints Investigated</b>	10		64		11		18		1	
Upheld	3	30%	18	28%	4	36%	5	28%		
Partially Upheld	2	20%	21	33%	5	46%	4	22%		
Not Upheld	5	50%	25	39%	2	18%	9	50%	1	100%
<b>Stage 2 Complaints Investigated</b>	5		1		1		1			
Upheld					1	100%	1	100%		
Partially Upheld	1	20%	1	100%						
Not Upheld	4	80%								

#### Analysis of the trends

- Property Services**

Three complaints were upheld in relation to Grounds Maintenance. Two involved grass cutting (not clearing up litter beforehand and clearing cut grass) and one involved the parking of a van near to a school entrance. A complaint regarding communication was partially upheld.

Two complaints regarding Building Maintenance were upheld. A Stage 2 complaint involved concerns with lack of permission and quality of work on a chimney stack that was in shared ownership. The second related to delays in addressing damp issues in a property.

Four complaints were partially upheld. These related to the tidying of rubble and fencing in a garden, delays in addressing repairs to a shed roof that was in shared ownership and also delays to work following a visit from a Building Inspector. A complaint about the standard of work carried out at a property was partially upheld because of a minor element concerning communication issues around the way Housing Services allocated the disruption payment.

- Street Scene**

One complaint was partially upheld for the Enforcement Team regarding concerns with the way a fly tipping referral was addressed. It was actioned and the resident was happy with the outcome.

Four complaints were partially upheld for Highways. They concerned the timing of road works, the manner of a member of staff whilst spraying weeds and delays to works to a pavement. A Stage 2 complaint addressed enforcement action taken because of road safety concerns.

18 complaints were upheld for Refuse, Recycling & Street Cleansing and 22 were partially upheld. The issues raised addressed subjects such as the poor quality of garden waste sacks, mess being left behind after a collection, damage to bins, not abiding to advertised Bank Holiday collection days and

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a delay in collecting a dead rat.

- **Transport and Engineering**

Parking Enforcement had one complaint that was upheld (the manner of a member of staff) and three that were partially upheld (manner/ conduct of staff and a payment machine in a car park).

A complaint was upheld for School Transport. It looked into the way issues concerning Passenger Assistants are investigated.

Three complaints were upheld for Traffic Management. They concerned crossing points not being flush with the pavement, issues with correspondence and a delay in passing on details of a traffic survey. One was partially upheld. This involved concerned with correspondence not being addressed.

- **Planning**

Three Planning complaints were upheld. They concerned a delay in processing an application regarding height of trees in a neighbouring property obscuring light and two complaints regarding delays in answering correspondence. The three partially upheld complaints related to guidance on lobbying Members around Applications, clarity around the withdrawal of an Application and subsequent updating of the website and a Planning Enforcement matter.

- **Cross Divisional**

Concerns were raised regarding signage, hedges and Authority vehicles using an access only lane.

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Compliments	Planning	Street Scene	Property Services	Transport & Engineering	Cross Division
Compliments received per division	7	40	28	17	1

## Analysis of the trends

- **Property Services**

- *"The new toilets look amazing. I'm sure the children will be delighted tomorrow"* - Ysgol Glanyfferi
- *"The Parc looks like a little jewel. Thanks for assistance with event also"* - Parc Howard
- *"...gratitude to all staff who worked so diligently to allow this to happen in such a short time"* – Carmarthen River Festival

- **Street Scene**

- *"His work, and the manner in which he did it, was most appreciated by members of the community"* - Highways
- *"Thanks for being very prompt and getting the job done straight away"* - Highways
- *"They are always cheerful, and go about their jobs with a smile"* – Refuse Crew
- *"They have done a brilliant job cleaning the street and the rear lane"* - Cleansing Team
- *"I must congratulate you on your efficiency, I am impressed. Well done and thank you very much"* – Public Lighting

- **Transport and Engineering**

- *"Thank you both for your support & efforts in building such a strong working relationships"* –Roads Policing Officer
- The work of Kerb Craft has been acknowledged by school pupils
- *"Thanks for the araf/slow signage on the road at the Graig, so prompt"*
- Parking Enforcement were thanked for their assistance during the Llandeilo Jazz Festival

- **Planning**

- *"The Website Is excellent. A terrific service, particularly for residents living in remote areas"*  
Building Control and Planning officers were acknowledged for the way in which they had handled cases. Officers were also thanked for their part in an all Wales Seminar



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## 7.2 Public Protection

Complaints	Public Protection	
Stage 1 Complaints Investigated	3	
Upheld	1	33%
Partially Upheld		
Not Upheld	2	67%
Stage 2 Complaints Investigated	2	
Upheld		
Partially Upheld		
Not Upheld	2	100%

### Analysis of the nature of complaints and the trends

5 complaints have been recorded during Q2, 3 Stage 1 and 2 investigated at Stage 2. There were none recorded during Q2 last year.

The Stage 1 complaint that was upheld related to the manner of a member of staff during a phone call. An apology was issued and the member of staff was required to attend customer care training.

Compliments	Public Protection
Compliments received per division	7

### Analysis of the trends

There was a slight increase, up to 7, from last year's 5 at Q2

*"Thank yourself and your colleagues for your excellent work and their professionalism" Court Case*

*"Most helpful and gave me a lot of useful advice.....such a good service." Pest Control*

*"I would like to thank you for all your assistance in ensuring our permit was issued in time"*