
Corporate Complaints – Annual Report 2021-22

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The report provides information on how the Council has dealt with complaints during the period between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 and performed against the statutory indicators, which have been agreed between the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the Local Authorities Complaint Handlers Network.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Audit and Scrutiny Committee consider and note the content of this report.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 All Council services follow the SPSO's model complaint handling procedure (CHP). A requirement of this model procedure is that the Council report to the SPSO on a standard set of statutory performance indicators, and prepare an annual report for consideration by Members. The report attached at appendix 1 has been prepared in order to satisfy this requirement.
- 3.2 The scope of this report includes complaints received in relation to Live Argyll, and also includes complaints which relate to the Social Work service within Argyll and Bute HSCP
- 3.3 The SPSO introduced a new model complaints handling procedure from 01 April 2021, which all local authorities were required to adopt. This updated procedure incorporates complaints in relation to the Social Work service, which were previously reported separately, and also introduced a new complaint outcome where officers can conclude a complaint as "resolved".
- 3.3 Details around the common themes of complaints, service areas and further analysis of the root causes of complaints are provided within Appendix 2 to this report. This additional information is provided to allow Members to consider this information when reviewing future service planning and decisions, and more details about specific issues or types of complaint can be made available if required.

- 3.4 The annual report usually features a section on benchmarking, where we provide a comparison of data between our “family group”. This data is not available from the Local Authority Complaints Handlers Network (LACHN) yet, and will be presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee once it has been circulated by LACHN.
- 3.5 The corporate complaints procedure is administered centrally by the Compliance and Regulatory team within Legal and Regulatory Support, and quarterly performance reports are provided to departmental management. Performance reports are published on the Council’s website: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/do-it-online/comments-and-complaints>
- 3.6 The Compliance and Regulatory team produce monthly performance update reports, which are circulated to all Heads of Service and Directors, to draw attention to any areas where complaints performance may be falling. This includes detailed information, including the ward area and reasons for late response.
- 3.7 It should be noted that the increased number of complaints during 2021-22 can be attributed to some particular factors:
- Increased staff awareness of the need to capture and record complaints – training was carried out to support the introduction of the new complaints handling procedure, which raised awareness throughout the organisation.
 - Inclusion of Social Work complaints with the local authority procedure, where these were previously reported separately

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Council has dealt with the majority of complaints it has received in accordance with the requirements of the complaints handling procedure and has complied with the obligation to prepare an annual report. Once it has been presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, the annual report will be published on the Council’s website.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1	Policy	None
5.2	Financial	None
5.3	Legal	Statutory requirement to prepare report
5.4	HR	None
5.5.1	Fairer Scotland Duty	None
5.5.2	Equalities – Protected Characteristics	None
5.5.3	Socio Economic Duty	None
5.5.4	Islands	None
5.6	Risk	None
5.7	Customer Service	None

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22 August 2022

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Annual Complaints Report 2021-22
Appendix 2 – Themes of Complaints