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**Report to Audit Committee**

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**Date of Meeting: 11 October 2018**

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**Subject: Annual Complaints Report 2017/18**

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**Report by: Customer Services Manager**

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**1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the volume and nature of customer complaints recorded in 2017/18, key performance information related to the handling of complaints and areas for further improvement.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1. It is recommended that Committee:

- a) note, comment on and challenge the volume and nature of complaints recorded in financial year 2017/18, including comparisons with previous years.

**3.0 Background**

- 3.1. An improved Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) was introduced by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in September 2012 to help simplify, standardise and improve complaints handling across Scottish local government.
- 3.2. A key driver for the updated approach was to reduce the significant resource and cost in dealing with complaints. The model CHP aims to resolve more complaints at source, learn more from customer feedback and use feedback to improve service delivery.
- 3.3. Council services are required to demonstrate they analyse complaints data to identify trends, patterns and opportunities for service improvement. Additionally, councils are expected to publish some key statistics externally. Quarterly reports are published on ClacksWeb.

**4.0 Progress to date**

- 4.1. A total of 183 complaints were logged in the complaints database in 2017/18 (compared to 185 in 2016/17).

- 4.2. These are broken down further in Appendix 1 by service area, number dealt with at stage 1 and stage 2, percentage resolved within target timescale and number upheld/not upheld/partially upheld.
- 4.3. Key points of note from this year's performance data are:
- 157 out of 183 (86%) were resolved at Stage 1 (81% in 2016/17)
  - 76% of Stage 1 complaints were resolved within the target time of 5 days (79% in 2016/17).
  - 26 complaints were passed to Stage 2 for investigation; 23 out of the 26 (88%) were responded to within the target time of 20 days (81% in 2016/17).
  - 80 out of 183 complaints (44%) were either upheld or partially upheld (71% in 2016/17).
  - The main reason for complaints was about aspects of Service Provision (47%), then Employee Issue/Attitude (27%). (This was the same in 2016/17 with Service Provision (48%) then Employee Issue/Attitude (18%))
  - There were a total of 51 positive comments formally recorded in year (60 in 2016/17).
- 4.4. Customers unhappy with the Council's final response to their complaint can raise the matter with the SPSO and request an investigation. There were a total of six complaints raised with SPSO in 2017/18 (compared to 14 in 2016/17). Two complaints were moved into the investigation stage; both were not upheld (relating to special education needs and housing improvements).

## **5.0 Areas for development**

- 5.1. Improvements continue to be made on an ongoing basis in the following areas:
- Services need to continually review their internal systems to ensure they meet the service standard of responding to Stage 1 complaints within 5 days. If a complaint cannot be resolved within 5 days, then the customer should be advised immediately of the expected timescale.
  - There is an ongoing need for services to record what action has been taken to correct things that have gone wrong and to communicate these improvements via ClacksWeb.
  - There is an ongoing need for services to routinely gather customer feedback on how well their complaint was handled.
  - Given the large number of customer interactions processed on a daily basis, the total number of complaints formally recorded is still very small in comparison. (183 complaints out of approximately 500,000 contacts per year equates to 0.04%.)

## 6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1. The Council's performance in recording and responding to complaints is being routinely monitored and reported internally and externally using a range of performance indicators.

## 7.0 Sustainability Implications

- 7.1. There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

## 8.0 Resource Implications

- 8.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## 9.0 Exempt Reports

- 9.1. Is this report exempt? No

## 10.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box )

- Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all
- Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life
- Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential
- Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

- (2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

## 11.0 Equalities Impact

- 11.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?  
Yes  No

## 12.0 Legality

- 12.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

## 13.0 Appendices

13.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1 - Annual Complaints Review 2017/18

#### 14.0 Background Papers

14.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

No

##### Author(s)

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Brian Forbes	Customer Services Manager	2187

##### Approved by

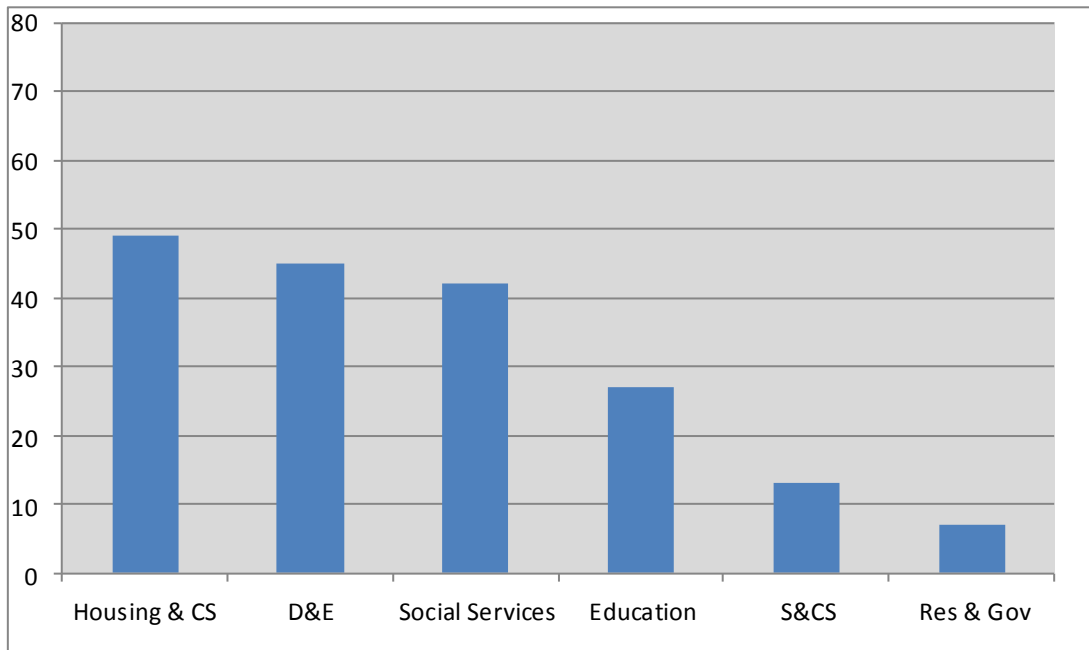
NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Stuart Crickmar	Strategic Director Partnership & Performance	
Nikki Bridle	Chief Executive	

## **APPENDIX 1 - ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REVIEW 2017/18**

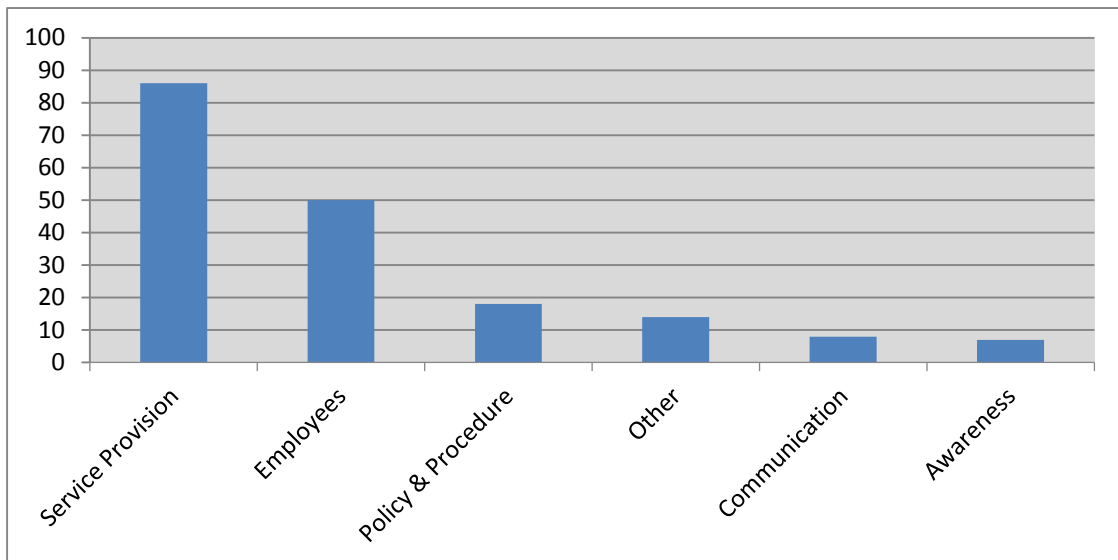
<b>2017/18</b>	<b>S&amp;CS</b>	<b>Res &amp; Gov</b>	<b>D&amp;E</b>	<b>Housing &amp;CS</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Social Services*</b>	<b>Council</b>
Total Number of Complaints Received	13	7	45	49	27	42	<b>183</b>
Total Stage 1 - closed	12	5	40	39	21	40	<b>157</b>
Stage 1 within timescale	12	4	26	39	11	28	<b>120</b>
Stage 1 % in timescale	100%	80%	65%	100%	52%	70%	<b>76%</b>
Total Stage 2 - closed	1	2	5	10	6	2	<b>26</b>
Stage 2 within timescale	1	1	5	10	4	2	<b>23</b>
Stage 2 % in timescale	100%	50%	100%	100%	67%	100%	<b>88%</b>
Total Number Upheld	2	1	13	12	3	8	<b>39</b>
Total Number Partially Upheld	9	2	12	4	3	11	<b>41</b>
Total Number Not Upheld	2	4	20	33	21	23	<b>103</b>

*\* Includes 1 for HSCI*

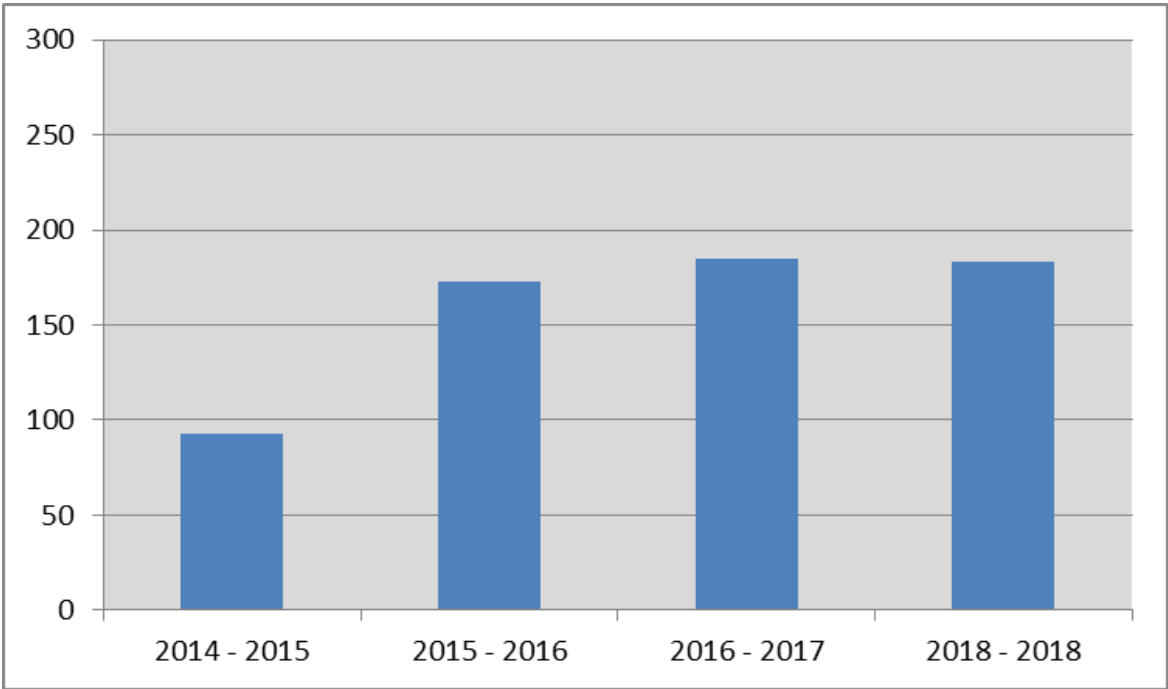
**Figure 1 - Total Number of Complaints Received 2017/18**



**Figure 2 – Category of complaints 2017/18**



**Total number of complaints over last 4 years**



**% Upheld/Partially Upheld in last 4 years**

