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Rutland County Council

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Meeting: RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL

Date and Time: Thursday, 10 September 2015 at 7.00 pm

Venue: COUNCIL CHAMBER, CATMOSE, OAKHAM,
RUTLAND, LE15 6HP

Clerk to the Panel: Kim Cross 01572 758458
email: corporatesupport@rutland.gov.uk

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Helen Briggs
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

APOLOGIES

1) RECORD OF MEETING

To confirm the record of the meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 16 July 2015 (previously circulated).

2) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Regulations, Members are invited to declare any disclosable interests under the Code of Conduct and the nature if those interests in respect of items on this Agenda and/or indicate if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to them.

3) PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

To receive any petitions, deputations and questions received from Members of the Public in accordance with the provisions of Procedure Rule 217.

The total time allowed for this item shall be 30 minutes. Petitions, declarations and questions shall be dealt with in the order in which they are received. Questions may also be submitted at short notice by giving a written copy to the Committee Administrator 15 minutes before the start of the meeting.

The total time allowed for questions at short notice is 15 minutes out of the total time of 30 minutes. Any petitions, deputations and questions that have been submitted with prior formal notice will take precedence over questions submitted at short notice. Any questions that are not considered within the time limit shall receive a written response after the meeting and be the subject of a report to the next meeting.

4) QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

To consider any questions with notice from Members received in accordance with the provisions of Procedure Rules No 219 and 219A.

5) NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

To consider any Notices of Motion from Members submitted in accordance with the provisions of Procedure Rule No 220.

6) CONSIDERATIONS OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION

To consider any matter referred to the Panel for a decision in relation to call in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

7) SENIOR PAY REVIEW

To receive a presentation from the Chief Executive.

8) QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2015/16

To receive Report No. 153/2015 from the Director for Resources.
(Previously circulated under separate cover)

9) QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2015/16

To receive Report No. 150/2015 from the Chief Executive.
(Previously circulated under separate cover)

10) ANNUAL COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REPORT

To receive Report No. 147/2015 from the Director for Resources.
(Pages 5 - 30)

11) OVERVIEW OF IT SERVICES

To receive Report No. 165/2015 from the Director for Resources.
(Report to follow)

12) REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN

To consider Scrutiny issues to review
Copies of the Forward Plan will be available at the meeting

13) ANY URGENT BUSINESS

To receive any items of urgent business which have been previously notified to the person presiding.

14) DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 12th November 2015 at 7pm.

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TO: ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL

Mr A Walters (Chairman)

Mr O Bird
Mr K Bool
Mr B Callaghan
Mr W Cross
Mr O Hemsley
Mr J Lammie
Mrs D MacDuff
Mr A Stewart
Miss G Waller

OTHER MEMBERS FOR INFORMATION

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RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL

10 September 2015

DRAFT COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REPORT 2014/2015

Report of the Director for Resources

Strategic Aim:	All	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Councillor T King, Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment and Transport) and Resources	
Contact Officer(s):	Diane Baker, Head of Corporate Governance	Tel: 01572 720941 dbaker@rutland.gov.uk
	Debbie Mogg, Director for Resources	Tel: 01572 758358 dmogg@rutland.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Resources Scrutiny Panel:

1. Endorses the content of the Council's first annual Compliments, Comments and Complaints report
2. Notes the planned enhancements to the process, which are to be introduced during the course of 2015/2016.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. On 7th October 2014 Cabinet approved the Council's new Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy. Resources Scrutiny Panel played an active role in the development of the Policy and comments made by the Panel were incorporated in the final Policy document.
- 1.2. This annual report provides an overview of the numbers of Compliments, Comments and Complaints received by the Council over a six month period from 1st January 2015, which is the date the new Policy was implemented, to 30th June 2015.
- 1.3. The Council wants to engage with its customers in order to improve its services; it also wants to demonstrate how it has responded to customers and what has been done to rectify issues where service delivery has fallen below our required standard.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Following a comprehensive review of the Council's approach to handling complaints and other contacts, a more streamlined approach was developed in order to address some of the failures of the existing system.
- 2.2. Features of the new process include a greater emphasis on:
 - Compliments and comments;
 - Reduced timescales for dealing with complaints;
 - Introduction of a vexatious complainant protocol; and
 - Better governance around recording, monitoring and reporting outcomes
- 2.3. All officers are required to send details of Compliments, Comments and Complaints through to the Governance Team, where details are recorded and then referred on to the most appropriate department.
- 2.4. Councillor Conduct complaints fall outside the parameters of this report. These issues will be reported to the Council's Conduct Committee as a separate matter.
- 2.5. The statistics contained within this report are based on information registered by the Governance Team.

3. COMPLIMENTS

- 3.1. A compliment can be defined as customer feedback, which tells the Council that it has provided a service well, or how helpful a member of staff has been.
- 3.2. During 1st January to 30th June 2015 the Council registered 44 compliments from customers; **Appendix A** provides an overview of the departments involved. No themes have been identified at this stage in the new process. However, it can be seen from the quarter 1 statistics that Customer Services have shown an increase in the number of compliments received. This is because they are actively engaging their customers in the feedback process; we are intending to expand this across other areas of the Council as part of our improvement plan for this financial year.
- 3.3. All compliments were acknowledged within one working day and immediately forwarded to the relevant Service Head.
- 3.4. We are unable to compare against previous years as this information was not historically recorded. However, the numbers are encouraging. We are engaging with our customers to record their views by piloting a proactive approach on the Customer Service reception. This involves handing customers a feedback form to capture their views at the time of their interaction. This will be extended to other departments in due course (taking into account different methods of contact).

4. COMMENTS

- 4.1. A comment can be defined as an idea, suggestion or opinion on how the Council could improve its services. The LGO recommends recording comments as a way of gathering performance information. Many customers want to make comments that they wish to be taken into account but that are not complaints.
- 4.2. During 1st January to 30th June 2015 the Council registered 7 comments from service users; **Appendix B** provides an overview of the departments involved.

Again, no themes have been identified at this stage but we will continue to record these comments as a method of identifying issues and potential service improvements.

- 4.3 All comments were acknowledged within one working day and immediately forwarded to the relevant Service Head.
- 4.5 As above, we are unable to compare against historical data as this information has not been recorded in the past. The main objective of the inclusion of 'comments' in the Policy is to allow our service users the opportunity to comment on a particular service or issue. The comments are now formally recorded whereas in previous years they were handled in a less formal manner.

5. COMPLAINTS

- 5.1. A complaint can be defined as dissatisfaction with any service provided by the Council.
- 5.2. The corporate Policy requires service heads to respond to a stage 1 initial complaint within 10 working days of acknowledgement of the complaint. If the customer remains dissatisfied with the service received, they have the option of escalating their concerns to stage 2 of the process. This part of the process requires the Director to respond within a further 10 working days from acknowledgement of the request to escalate. If the issue is complex; the timescale can be extended following discussion with the complainant.
- 5.3. The Social Care statutory complaints process is more protracted and involves independent review. However, all complaints are recorded at the initial stage and allocated a unique reference number. Monitoring of the process is then undertaken by team admin assistants.
- 5.4. During 1st January to 30th June 2015 the Council registered 106 complaints from service users; **Appendix C** provides an overview of the departments involved. It can be seen that there is a high percentage of 'upheld' outcomes; these will be discussed at individual departmental management teams where root cause analysis and service improvements can be agreed. As of 1 July, all departments now notify service improvements to the Governance Team where complaints are upheld. This will be reported in future under the 'you said – we did' section of the report. Customers will also be able to see these improvements on the Council's website. (See paragraph 8 below).
- 5.5. The Governance Team will continue to issue reminders to assist officers to comply with the response timescales. If it becomes apparent that a timescale may be compromised, the Governance Team will work with the officers to remedy the problem and ensure the customer is kept up to date.

6. VEXATIOUS ACTIVITY

- 6.1 During the period of this report, the Council progressed one case under the vexatious complainant protocol. The customer was contacted by letter at stage 1 to explain how their behaviour was considered to be unreasonable and how it needed to improve.

7. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN

- 7.1 The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) looks at complaints about Councils in a fair and independent way. All LGO decision statements are published
- 7.2 An annual review letter and report from the LGO is attached as **Appendix D**
- 7.3 It can be seen that the LGO handled 14 complaints in respect of Rutland County Council services. Unfortunately, data regarding management of the cases through the former complaints system is not held. However, changes to the process have rectified this for future years.
- 7.4 One case was upheld by the LGO, which related to the charges levied for registration services. The Council agreed to award a financial compensation payment to the customer of £100 for 'time and trouble' and undertook a full review of registration fees. The LGO was satisfied that the review had been completed thoroughly and that it addressed the findings of their case. The results of this review were presented to Cabinet on 10th February 2015, report number 48/2015.
- 7.5 In comparison to last year's statistics, the LGO handled the same number of complaints and enquiries and upheld one matter. It is anticipated that the Council's new process should reduce the number of issues referred to the LGO. The current process provides a higher level of overview in a shorter period of time therefore customers should receive a better standard of service and a satisfactory resolution when complaining to the Council.
- 7.6 Cases referred for local resolution relate to issues where the customer has failed to follow the Council's complaint procedure and instead, have prematurely involved the LGO in the dispute.
- 7.7 The Council has fully met its performance target of 28 days when responding to LGO enquiries. This target has become difficult to follow as the LGO now varies the response timescale depending on the issue under investigation. For example, the LGO may be in the process of assessing whether a complainant has followed an internal process before involving the LGO. In these cases, the LGO will require a prompt response. In future, we will register cases where the LGO has commissioned a full investigation.

8. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN 2015/2016

- 8.1 The current Policy has been in place since January 2015. As with any new process, areas of improvement have been identified and will be addressed during 2015/2016.
- An analysis of trends will be undertaken at mid-year and then at end of year to identify key issues. Findings will be included in the next annual report to Resources Scrutiny Panel, which will be scheduled for September each year.

- A review of how departments are managing learning points from outcomes will be undertaken. We need to identify how we can develop service delivery to reduce the upheld: not upheld ratio for the future, for example regular reporting to Departmental Management Teams (DMT) could address this.
- Establish a link to show our customers how 'you said – we did' translates into clear service improvements. Promote this openly on the Council's website and through social media channels.
- A proactive approach to engage customers in providing feedback will be extended to all departments. We will also work with Departments to encourage them to report compliments.
- An analysis of responses will be undertaken by the Governance Team to ensure our replies to Complaints are consistent and professional. Advice and guidance will be offered where appropriate.
- The Governance Team will continue to monitor compliance with the target response times and provide management statistics where we have failed to achieve this target.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1. There is no requirement to consult on this subject; the report focusses on internal arrangements to manage customer contact in respect of compliments, comments and complaints.

10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 10.1. The alternative option is to fail to follow a procedure for managing compliments, comments and complaints. This approach would contradict the Government's transparency agenda and would not allow the Council the opportunity to monitor service delivery and subsequent improvements.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, but clearly there is a cost associated with managing this process. Dealing with complaints effectively at an early stage prevents them from escalating thereby reducing the overall time spent on handling them.
- 11.2. There is a risk that failure to properly manage the process could result in a complaint being upheld by the LGO and this may result in the award of financial compensation. There is no tariff of financial compensation awards; each case is assessed on its individual circumstances on the basis of quantifiable loss.

12. LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 The Council has an ongoing obligation to manage and act upon customer feedback. The LGO considers a complaints system to be an integral part of a Council's service provision and believes the authority should take responsibility for putting things right.

13. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 13.1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed as the report concerns internal administrative processes.

14. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. None.

15. HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1. Good governance arrangements promote the general wellbeing of the local community.

16. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1. Although this process has only been in operation for a few months it can be seen that stronger governance arrangements are in place around acknowledgement of complaints, recording and tracking and overall compliance. Work still needs to be done to improve the system and show how our customer feedback improves service delivery.
- 16.2. The LGO, in its Annual Review of Local Government Complaints report, suggests that many Local Authorities are dealing with increasing numbers of complaints and have less resource available to manage them due to resources being cut in complaint handling teams. The warning is also backed by research showing that on average, people spent nine months trying to resolve their complaint before registering with the LGO.
- 16.3. Despite the rising number of complaints nationally and the obvious pressures this creates, Rutland County Council has managed to implement a better system, which reduces the timeframe for our customers. Further enhancements to the process will serve to increase customer satisfaction and create an open culture around customer feedback.

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1. Annual Review of Local Government Complaints 2015 – Local Government Ombudsman

18. APPENDICES

- 18.1. Appendix A – Compliments received during 1st January – 30th June 2015
Appendix B – Comments received during 1st January – 30th June 2015
Appendix C – Complaints received during 1st January – 30th June 2015
Appendix D – LGO annual report in respect of Rutland County Council.

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.

COMPLIMENTS 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2015

APPENDIX A

Ref	Category	Subject	Other comments	Ward Area
Places				
138	CA Site - Cottesmore	Friendly staff and clean facilities		Cottesmore
Resources				
92	Disc. Council tax support	Appreciates council tax support		Oakham North West
97	Elections	Help with nomination papers		Unknown
111	CST compliment	"Brilliant service".		Unknown
137	Customer Services	"Brilliant service".		Exton and Horn
136	Customer Services	"Helpful and polite"		Oakham North East
153	Customer Services	"How can you improve on perfection?"		Oakham North East
154	Customer Services	"Exemplorary service"		Oakham North East
155	Customer Services	"Excellent service".		Oakham North East
People				
106	Adult Duty Social Care	Respite care		Out of Rutland.
107	Adult Duty Social Care	Rutland Care Village		Oakham North West
125	Adult Social Care	Thanks for support.		Unknown
149	Adult Social Care	Thanks for support.		Unknown
142	Adult Social Care	Thanks for invitation to and information received at Carer's Event.		Oakham North East
104	CST	Bin repair		Ketton
157	Highways	Organising of VE Day events.		Whissendine
126	Museum	"Very good exhibition".		Oakham North East
132	Adult Social Care	Thanks for kindness shown.		Unknown
114	Planning	Planning applications.		Oakham South West
124	Registrars	Wedding ceremony.		Normanton
148	Registrars	Excellent service.		Unknown
Places		1		
Resources		8		
People		12		
Total		21		

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COMPLIMENTS 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2015

APPENDIX A

Ref	Directorate	Category	Subject	Other Comments	Ward Area
Places					
C36-15	Places	Culture & Leisure	Thank you for excellent service at the Museum		Oakham South East
C39-15	Places	Culture & Leisure	Museum services & organisation of school		Oakham North East
C54-15	Places	Culture & Leisure	9 general compliments regarding Museum services	Compliments in Museums visitors book	Oakham South East
C55-15	Places	Development Control	Planning		Martinsthorpe
C9/15	Places	Environmental Services	Arranging assisted bin collection		Greetham
C24-15	Places	Environmental Services	Street Cleaning - steps on railway footbridge Oakham		Unknown
C40-15	Places	Environmental Services	Going back to collect neighbours missed refuse bin		North Luffenham
C17-15	Places	Environmental Services	Damage to car repaired efficiently		Uppingham
C16-15	Places	Highways	New Footbridge - Thorpe by Water		Lyddington
C20-15	Places	Highways	Completed road works and new sign for Uppingham		Uppingham
C74-15	Places	Highways	Repair of road surface (Wymondham & Teigh)		Cottesmore.
C10/15	Places	Housing	Help & support in securing a property		Oakham (ward unknown)
C11/15	Places	Housing	Help & support in securing a property		Unknown
C68-15a	Places	Parking	CEO informed customer their residents parking permit was due to expire		Oakham (ward unknown)

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COMPLIMENTS 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2015

Resources					
C30-15	Resources	Finance	RCC managing customers finances	Previous Complaint, turned into compliment	Oakham North East
C60-15	Resources	Benefits	Help & support in securing benefits		Oakham North West
C79-15	Resources	Election	Extra Information provided regarding voting		Not in Rutland.
People					
22	People	Occupation Therapy	Thanks for help installing a path.		Exton and Horn
76	People	Occupation Therapy	Thanks for support.		Ketton
85	People	Occupation Therapy	Excellent service.		Oakham North West
32	People	REACH	Thanks for care of mother.		Unknown
66	People	SEN	Thanks for support.		Unknown
80	People	SEN	Thanks for support.		Oakham North West

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Places	14
Resources	3
People	6
Total	23

APPENDIX B

Ref	Category	Issue	Action Taken	Ward Area
Resources				
119	Revenues and Benefits	Vacant property discount scheme	Customer was offered advice.	Unknown
Places				
135	Environmental Services	Weeds at Catmose	Further maintenance to remove weeds.	Oakham North East
139	Culture and Leisure Services	Leisure	The commentor did not leave contact details.	Out of Rutland
146	Oakham Library	Eating in library	Staff made aware of strict no-eating policy.	Oakham North East
People				
NIL				
15				
122	?	Bad Driving	The commentor did not respond to follow-up e-mails. The driver in question could therefore not be identified.	Unknown.

Places	3
Resources	1
People	0
Not aligned	1
Total	5

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COMMENTS 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2015

APPENDIX B

Ref	Category	Issue	Action Taken	Ward Area
Places				
C14-15	Library Services	Overheard other user swearing	No contact with customer as anonymous	Unknown
Resources				
C45-15	Customer Service	Closed for staff briefing	SB called customer to explain - customer did not want to register as a complaint	Unknown
People				
NIL				

Places	1
Resources	1
People	0
Total	2

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COMPLAINTS 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2015

APPENDIX C

Ref	Category	No. of days to	Issue	Outcome (upheld)	Action Taken	Ward Area
141	Abandoned Vehicle	7	Removal of abandoned vehicle	Upheld	Explanation provided to complainant via meeting. Procedures revised.	Out of Rutland.
99	Bin Collections	9	Bins not collected.	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to complainant.	Oakham South West
96	Bin Collections	1	Bins hadn't been cleared	Upheld	Complainant's requests have been actioned.	Greetham.
93	Bus Driver	12	Bus driver ignored complainant.	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to complainant.	Uppingham
143	Cemetery (Oakham)	Open	Cemetery in poor condition			Out of Rutland.
145	Civic Amenity Sites	1	Civic Amenity Site closed prior to advertised access times.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to complainant.	Cottesmore
112	Dust Cart Damage	7	Dust cart damaging front garden.	Upheld	Explanation provided to complainant.	Normanton
103	Equality Act	1	Lack of disabled access at Ryhall Village Hall	Upheld	Liaised with Peterborough Legal.	Ryhall and Casterton
120	Grass Cutting	Open	Grass not cut in Health Drive Play Area			Cottesmore
95	Grass killing	9	Grass has been killed	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to complainant.	Oakham South West
113	Hedge Trimmings	N/A	Hedge trimmings left to rot.	Upheld.	No response given to complainant as was her request.	Whissendine
109	Highways	1	Tree covers solar panels and is infested with fungi.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to complainant.	Oakham North West

COMPLAINTS 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2015

115	Highways	10	Poor road conditon (Glebe Way)	Upheld.	Repair work due to begin.	Oakham South West
158	Highways (Signage)	9	Ordering of speed safety signs hasn't been actioned.	Not upheld	Explanation provided to complainant.	Ryhall and Casterton
101	Litter	2	Roadside covered in litter.	Upheld	Explanation and resolution offered to complainant.	North Luffenham
128	Parish Clerk Details - Preston	4	Incorrect details kept.	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to complainant.	Braunston and Belton
147	Planning - Prelim	4	Delay in preliminary planning reference response.	Upheld	Apologies offered to complainant. Procedures revised.	Out of Rutland.
98	Recycling Centre	13	Conduct of recycling centre worker.	Not Upheld	Explanation of findings offered to complainant post an enquiry.	Normanton
110	Rubbish on Tesco land	10	Land surrounding Tesco unkept.	Upheld	Explanation and reassurance provided to complainant.	Oakham North East
105	School Transport	1	Waiting facilities not safe on bus route.	Not Upheld	Arranged meeting with complainant.	Braunston and Belton
152	Transport	9	Attitude of bus driver.	Upheld	Apology and explanation of research provided to complainant.	Oakham North East
150	Verge Cutting	5	Roadside verge grass cut inappropriately.	Upheld	Apology provided to complainant.	Normanton
102	Housing Benefit	4	Complainant notes lack of help regarding Council Tax	Upheld	Resolution offered to complainant.	Exton and Horn
118	Election	3	Lack of assistance regarding where to hand in postal vote	Upheld	Reassurances and explanation offered to complainant.	Oakham North East
133	Elections	9	Lack of information.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to	Oakham South East.

COMPLAINTS 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2015

140	Elections	25	Complainant unable to vote.	Upheld	Apology and explanation provided to complainant. Procedures revised (additional training).	Uppingham
129	Parish Council	5	Conduct of Ketton Parish Council	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to complainant.	Ketton
116	Benefits	10	Statutory Council Tax appeal	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to complainant. Customer has opted to progress to Stage 2 of the process.	Out of Rutland.
C94-15	Adult Social Care	10	Patient mishandling.	Not Upheld	Explanation of procedure provided to customer.	Out of Rutland.
C127-15	Adult Social Care	8	Long wait for replacement disabled toilet.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer. Meeting arranged. Customer has opted to progress to stage 2 of the process.	Oakham South East.
130	Adult Social Care	5	Referred to adult mental health, waiting for follow up meeting.	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to customer.	Oakham South West.
117	Carers Support	10	Customer's mother left without care.	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to customer. Procedures revised.	Normanton.
90	Childrens Social Care	9	Unhappy with SEN's service.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to and meeting offered with customer.	Greetham
108	Childrens Social Care	36	Neglect of child.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer.	Out of Rutland.
123	Childrens Social Care	2	Carer ignored customer's wishes.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer. Customer opted to progress to Stage 2 of the	Greetham
131	Childrens Social Care	6	Problems with social services.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer. No formal letter as per customer's request.	Cottesmore.

COMPLAINTS 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2015

151	Childrens Social Care	Open	Unhappy that granddaughter has been removed from daughter.		Complaint still open.	
158	Childrens Social care	Open	Unhappy with service.		Complaint still open.	
144	Foster carers	4	Raising concerns of Rutland Carers.	Upheld	Explanation provided to customer. Procedures revised.	Out of Rutland.
121	Social Worker Complaint	3	No response to service request	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to customer.	Out of Rutland.
Places		22				
Resources		6				
People		12				
Totals		40				

Ref	Category	No. of days to respond	Issue	Outcome(upheld)	Action Taken	Ward Area
Places Directorate - Environment, Planning and Transport						
C5/15	Transport	1	Bus Service Late	Not Upheld	Vehicle tracking checked - No results	Market Overton
C46-15	Transport	10	Transfer of Pupils	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer - College and Bus company contacted	Anonymous
C28-15	School Transport	10	School Transport - Taxi Service	1 Upheld, 1 Not Upheld	Apology & explanation provided to customer	Not provided (complain made via email.
C8/15	Highways	2	Pothole - Damage to Vehicle	Not Upheld	Incident Report Form sent to customer - claim rejected	Out of Rutland.
C63-15	Highways	N/A	Residents Car Park (Barleythorpe Rd)	Not Upheld	Anonymous - unable to respond to customer but comments addressed.	Oakham North West.
C72-15	Highways	3	Lack of parking spaces on West Rd Oakham	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Ryhall and Casterton
C19-15	Highways	0	Traffic Bollards	Upheld	Bollards replaced	Uppingham.
C41-15	Highways	2	Footpath Access	Upheld	Apology & explanation provided to customer	Braunston.
C43-15	Highways	10	Street Names Sign replacement	Upheld	Sign Replaced	Oakham South West.
C67-15	Highways	0	No response to service request	Upheld	Letter of apology sent	Oakham North East.
C70-15a	Highways	13	No response to service request	Upheld	Light fixed & Apology for delay (IT issues)	Oakham South West.
C73-15a	Highways	1	Issue with new road surface	Upheld	Contractors rectifying problem	Great Casterton.
C12-15	Development Control	2	Tree Work	Not Upheld	Historical Planning applications investigated	Braunston.
C15/15	Environmental Services	2	Abandoned Vehicle	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Langham
C27-15	Environmental Services	1	Hedges Maintenance	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	South Luffenham.
C34-15	Environmental Services	5	Hedges Maintenance	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Ashwell.
C49-15	Environmental Services	3	Pest Control	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Cottesmore.
C59-15	Environmental Services	0	Blocked Passage way	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Uppingham.
C77-15	Environmental Services	4	Civic Amenity Site	1 Upheld, 1 Not Upheld	Contractor spoken with regarding customer service and explanation provided to customer	Oakham South West.
C13-15	Environmental Services	2	Bin Collection	Upheld	Compliance Notice issued to Cory (waste contractor)	Greetham
C21-15	Environmental Services	20	Verge Maintenance	Upheld	Contractor instructed to Carry out work	Exton and Horn
C26-15	Environmental Services	1	Litter	Upheld	Explanation provided to customer - customer happy	Rutland.
C56-15	Environmental Services	9	Litter & Damaged Bin	Upheld	Litter collected & bin replaced	Lyddington.
C82-15	Environmental Services	3	Civic Amenity Site	Upheld	Investigated with Contractor	Ketton.
C83-15	Environmental Services	20	Damage to verges	Upheld	Contracts & local residents reminded of new route for bin collection vehicle	Braunston and Belton.
C50-15	Parking	4	Residents Car Park (Barleythorpe Rd)	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Oakham North West.
C25-15	Parking	8	Civil Enforcement Officer Conduct	Upheld	Letter of apology sent by CEO & Manager	Oakham South East.
C44-15	Parking	6	Residents Car Park (Barleythorpe Rd)	Upheld	Speed Survey to be carried out	Oakham North West.
C47-15	Burials	8	Allocation of burial plot	Upheld	Contractor oversight; customer financially compensated	Oakham North West.
C48-15	Property Maintenance	8	Fencing at Oakham Cemetery	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer - regular checks implemented	Oakham North East.

COMPLAINTS 1 JANUARY TO 30 MARCH 2015

Places Directorate - Development and Economy						
C86-15	Digital Rutland	4	No Super Fast Broadband	Upheld	Explanation of future plans provided to customer	Braunston.
Resources Directorate						
C7/15	Revenues & Benefits	2	Council Tax - Recovery	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Braunston and Belton.
C52-15	Revenues & Benefits	2	Council Tax - Recovery	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Oakham North West.
C69-15	Revenues & Benefits	12	Council Tax - Vacant Property	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer - Photos of property on file deleted	North Luffenham
C61-15	Revenues & Benefits	3	Council Tax - Recovery	Not Upheld	Customer contacted (via phone) & explanation provided	Oakham South West.
C37-15	Revenues & Benefits	3	Council Tax - Recovery & Benefits Application	C Tax - Upheld, Benefits - Not Upheld	Ctax - Charges Removed, Benefits - Explanation provided to customer	Oakham North East.
C6/15	Revenues & Benefits	10	RCC Managing customers finances	Upheld	Met with customer resulted in a compliment	Oakham North West.
C33-15	Revenues & Benefits	1	Council Tax - Recovery	Upheld	CST briefed on Ctax multiple ref numbers. Procedures revised.	Uppingham.
C53-15	Revenues & Benefits	1	Benefits	Upheld	Working practice revised	Lyddington.
C58-15	Revenues & Benefits		Rate Relief	Upheld	Forms and standard letters revised	Lyddington.
C71-15a	Revenues & Benefits	1	Council Tax - Recovery	Upheld	Explanation provided to customer and process reminder to CST	Whissendine
C74-15a	Revenues & Benefits	3	Council Tax - Recovery	Upheld	Deleted Enforcement Action	Ketton.
C88-15	Revenues & Benefits	1	Council Tax - Recovery	Upheld	Recovery costs removed	Oakham North West.
C89-15	Revenues & Benefits	1	Benefits entitlement	Upheld	Benefits entitlement revised and reinstated	Uppingham.
C73-15	Finance	18	Lost Cheque	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer - Recovery action cancelled	Oakham North West.
C38-15	Finance	10	Payment issues (IT&Software issues)	Upheld	Explanation & apology provided to customer	Langham
C42-15	Finance	10	Payment issues (IT&Software issues)	Upheld	Explanation & apology provided to customer	Greetham
C62-15	Finance	20	Recovery Action following an invoice	Upheld	Reduced payment agreed with customer	Oakham North East.
C75-15	Customer Services	2	Overseas Pension - proof of life	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer	Whissendine
C18-15	Customer Services	3	Long Wait at front desk	Upheld	Explanation & apology provided to customer. Procedures revised.	Braunston and Belton.
C31-15	Councillor Contact	1	No contact from elected member	Upheld	Explanation & apology provided to customer. Procedures revised.	Braunston and Belton.
People Directorate						
57	Adult Social Care	2	Unhappy with Adult Social Care worker.	Not Upheld	Discussed with customer who did not want to progress to stage 2.	Complainant lives out of Rutland.
68	Adult Social Care	0	Safeguarding concerns.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer.	Complainant lives out of Rutland.
75a	Adult Social Care	4	Complaint against social worker.	Upheld	Explanation and apology provided to customer.	Oakham North West.
84	Ash Cottage	11	Unhappy with staff at Ash Cottage.	Not Upheld	Head of service had formal meeting with customer.	Oakham North West.
29	Childrens Social Care	24	Unhappy with restricted access to children.	Upheld	Explanation & apology provided to customer.	Out of Rutland.
51	Childrens Social Care	6	False information and mixed messages over guardianship.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer.	Oakham North East
70	Childrens Social Care	5	Concerns with Rutland's social services.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to Sir Alan Duncan as rep for customer	Uppingham.

COMPLAINTS 1 JANUARY TO 30 MARCH 2015

71	Childrens Social Care	9	Foster worker concerned with service.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to Sir Alan Duncan as rep for customer	Ryhall and Casterton
87	Childrens Social Care	N/A	Unhappy with service.	Not Upheld	Referred to LGO. Identified as Vexacious.	Uppingham.
35	Data Protection	23	Breach of data protection.	Upheld	Apology & explanation provided to customer. Procedures revised.	Greetham
23	Social Care	16	Upset with carer's attitude.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer.	Whissendine
72a	Social Work	14	Unhappy with service.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer.	Ryhall and Casterton
64	Social Work - Fostering	Open	Poor treatment of foster son.		Complaint still open.	Ryhall and Casterton
65	Social Work - Fostering	23	Unhappy with service.	Not Upheld	Explanation provided to customer.	Ryhall and Casterton

Totals
Places - 31
Resources - 21
People - 14

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18 June 2015

By email

Ms Helen Briggs
Chief Executive
Rutland County Council

Dear Ms Briggs

Annual Review Letter 2015

I am writing with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2015. This year's statistics can be found in the table attached.

The data we have provided shows the complaints and enquiries we have recorded, along with the decisions we have made. We know that these numbers will not necessarily match the complaints data that your authority holds. For example, our numbers include people who we signpost back to the council but who may never contact you. I hope that this information, set alongside the data sets you hold about local complaints, will help you to assess your authority's performance.

We recognise that the total number of complaints will not, by itself, give a clear picture of how well those complaints are being responded to. Over the coming year we will be gathering more comprehensive information about the way complaints are being remedied so that in the future our annual letter focuses less on the total numbers and more on the outcomes of those complaints.

Supporting local scrutiny

One of the purposes of the annual letter to councils is to help ensure that learning from complaints informs scrutiny at the local level. Supporting local scrutiny is one of our key business plan objectives for this year and we will continue to work with elected members in all councils to help them understand how they can contribute to the complaints process.

We have recently worked in partnership with the Local Government Association to produce a workbook for councillors which explains how they can support local people with their complaints and identifies opportunities for using complaints data as part of their scrutiny tool kit. This can be found [here](#) and I would be grateful if you could encourage your elected members to make use of this helpful resource.

Last year we established a new Councillors Forum. This group, which meets three times a year, brings together councillors from across the political spectrum and from all types of local authorities. The aims of the Forum are to help us to better understand the needs of councillors when scrutinising local services and for members to act as champions for learning from complaints in their scrutiny roles. I value this direct engagement with elected members and believe it will further ensure LGO investigations have wider public value.

Encouraging effective local complaints handling

In November 2014, in partnership with the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman and Healthwatch England, we published *'My Expectations'* a service standards framework document describing what good outcomes for people look like if complaints are handled well. Following extensive research with users of services, front line complaints handlers and other stakeholders, we have been able to articulate more clearly what people need and want when they raise a complaint.

This framework has been adopted by the Care Quality Commission and will be used as part of their inspection regime for both health and social care. Whilst they were written with those two sectors in mind, the principles of *'My Expectations'* are of relevance to all aspects of local authority complaints. We have shared them with link officers at a series of seminars earlier this year and would encourage chief executives and councillors to review their authority's approach to complaints against this user-led vision. A copy of the report can be found [here](#).

Future developments at LGO

My recent annual letters have highlighted the significant levels of change we have experienced at LGO over the last few years. Following the recent general election I expect further change.

Most significantly, the government published a review of public sector ombudsmen in March of this year. A copy of that report can be found [here](#). That review, along with a related consultation document, has proposed that a single ombudsman scheme should be created for all public services in England mirroring the position in the other nations of the United Kingdom. We are supportive of this proposal on the basis that it would provide the public with clearer routes to redress in an increasingly complex public service landscape. We will advise that such a scheme should recognise the unique roles and accountabilities of local authorities and should maintain the expertise and understanding of local government that exists at LGO. We will continue to work with government as they bring forward further proposals and would encourage local government to take a keen and active interest in this important area of reform in support of strong local accountability.

The Government has also recently consulted on a proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the LGO to some town and parish councils. We currently await the outcome of the consultation but we are pleased that the Government has recognised that there are some aspects of local service delivery that do not currently offer the public access to an independent ombudsman. We hope that these proposals will be the start of a wider debate about how we can all work together to ensure clear access to redress in an increasingly varied and complex system of local service delivery.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local authority report – Rutland County Council

For the period ending – 31/03/2015

For further information on interpretation of statistics click on this link to go to <http://www.lgo.org.uk/publications/annual-report/note-interpretation-statistics/>**Complaints and enquiries received**

Local Authority	Adult Care Services	Benefits and tax	Corporate and other services	Education and children's services	Environmental services and public protection	Highways and transport	Housing	Planning and development	Total
Rutland CC	5	0	2	4	0	0	0	3	14

Decisions made

Local Authority	<u>Detailed investigations carried out</u>		Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Incomplete/Invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
	Upheld	Not Upheld					
Rutland CC	1	1	1	2	1	7	13

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