

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
18 JULY 2017**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

10

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE - FULL YEAR REPORT ON COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS (3CS)

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER – COUNCILLOR MRS LYNDA NEEDHAM

1. SUMMARY

This information note is to update members of the Committee on the end of year position in regards to the Comments, Compliments and Complaints (3Cs) for the Council and the Contractors that provide services on our behalf. This briefing note accompanies the 3Cs dashboard at Appendix B.

2. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3Cs have reduced significantly over recent years with the numbers of complaints reducing by over 50%. In 2016/17 the number of 3Cs increased when compared to the previous year, across all elements of 3Cs, with the biggest increase for compliments. The table below provides a summary of the annual comparisons since 2013; this includes 3Cs received by NHDC and our contractors.

	Comments	Compliments	Complaints	Total
Apr 2016 - March 2017	319	610	702	1631
Apr 2015 - March 2016	246	470	644	1360
Apr 2014 - March 2015	251	495	949	1695
Apr 2013 - March 2014	472	741	1429	2642

At NHDC we strive to deliver high quality services to our customers, however, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and the 3Cs procedure enables us to learn from our customer feedback, both in terms of what is going well and where improvements or changes can be made. The continued reduction in complaints in recent years shows that we are listening to our customers feedback and where we can, we are putting things right as well as taking action to avoid repeat issues. It also demonstrates that changes to services or major projects may lead to a temporary increase in feedback, either negative or positive.

The contractors that provide key services on our behalf, including waste and recycling, grass cutting and leisure facilities have very high levels of customer interactions and deliver services that all North Hertfordshire residents will experience, therefore it is not surprising that these areas receive the highest levels of customer feedback. It is important that through contract management arrangements we are ensuring that these services meet the standards we expect for our residents, which is evident for example with Veolia who have seen a consistent reduction in the number of complaints.

The summary dashboard at appendix B shows the key 3Cs performance data for both NHDC and each of the contractors, additional information regarding the number of contacts, collections or visitors is included to provide some further context.

Although 3Cs have been decreasing in number each year, we had a slight increase in all areas of 3Cs in 16/17 when compared to the previous year, which is detailed further below:

- Planning received an increase in complaints, a number of which related to a planning consultation regarding South of Bendish Lane and a higher than usual number of Stage 2 complaints. 9% (3) of the planning complaints were justified.
- Whilst Veolia received fewer complaints and compliments, John O'Conner saw a slight increase in complaints and the Leisure Centres saw an increase generally in feedback at all three facilities, with a significant increase in compliments. During the year new customer feedback systems have been installed in each of the leisure centres to enable customers to quickly and easily record their feedback, therefore we can expect that the increase may continue. It is also worth noting that during this period North Herts Leisure Centre has been undergoing a significant refurbishment project.
- Careline continues to be an area that receives high numbers of compliments typically from users of the service who have had a need to activate their alarm for assistance, as well as the Active Communities team who receive high levels of compliments from parents of children who have used the holiday play schemes.

The LGO received eight complaints during this period, one complaint relating to the waste service had an outcome of maladministration and injustice, however the LGO noted a satisfactory remedy had already been provided. One is still being considered by the LGO whereas all others were either no fault found, out of jurisdiction or closed after initial enquiries.

3. NEXT STEPS

3Cs performance will continue to be monitored and reported to SMT quarterly and Overview and Scrutiny six monthly.

4. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Departmental breakdown of 3Cs

Appendix B - Dashboard

5. CONTACT OFFICERS

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6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None