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Spotlight Session on Corporate Complaints

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To build a fairer, greener and more vibrant Mendip that values our distinctive towns and rural communities



Objectives

1. Corporate Complaints Review
2. What is the Councils Corporate Complaints definition and process
3. Corporate Complaints Received
4. Reporting and Lessons Learnt
5. MDC Corporate Complaints Journey
6. Local Government Reorganisation
7. Summary
8. Feedback

Corporate Complaints Review



Complaints

What is a MDC Corporate Complaint?



Definitions

A justified complaint is where the Council have investigated and have evidence that supports the allegation and / or had to take action to resolve the issue.

A partially justified complaint is when a complaint that has been logged on the system has been investigated by the manager and deemed to be reasonable in part but not all areas.

An unjustified complaint is when a complaint that has been logged on the system, has been investigated by the manager and deemed not to be reasonable or the process the staff followed is within regulation / policy.

What MDC can not investigate as a corporate complaint?

- The planning decision and appeals process
- Decisions made under statutory or regulatory provisions and appeals process
- Challenges against a car park penalty charge notice
- Appeals against decisions on business rates, council tax or housing benefit
- Appeals against Discretionary Housing Payment awards
- Complaints against councillors, including Parish Councils
- Appeals against food business inspection results

Resolving Corporate Complaints

Stage 1

At this stage the complaint will normally be handled by a Senior Officer in the service the complaint is about. We will do our best to resolve the issue as quickly as possible and within 10 calendar days of a complaint being made.

If this is not possible, we will contact the complainant and let them know when to expect a full response.

Stage 2

If the complainant is not happy with the outcome at stage 1 they can appeal.

To help us investigate further, we do ask to be clear about which parts of the original complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed by our stage 1 response. If they appeal the complaint will normally be handled by the Head of Service who will review how the complaint was dealt with and provide the complainant with a full response within 10 calendar days of the complaint being escalated. If this is not possible, we will contact the complainant and let them know when to expect a full response.

Key Contractor / Partner Complaints



Reporting and Lessons Learnt

Reports:

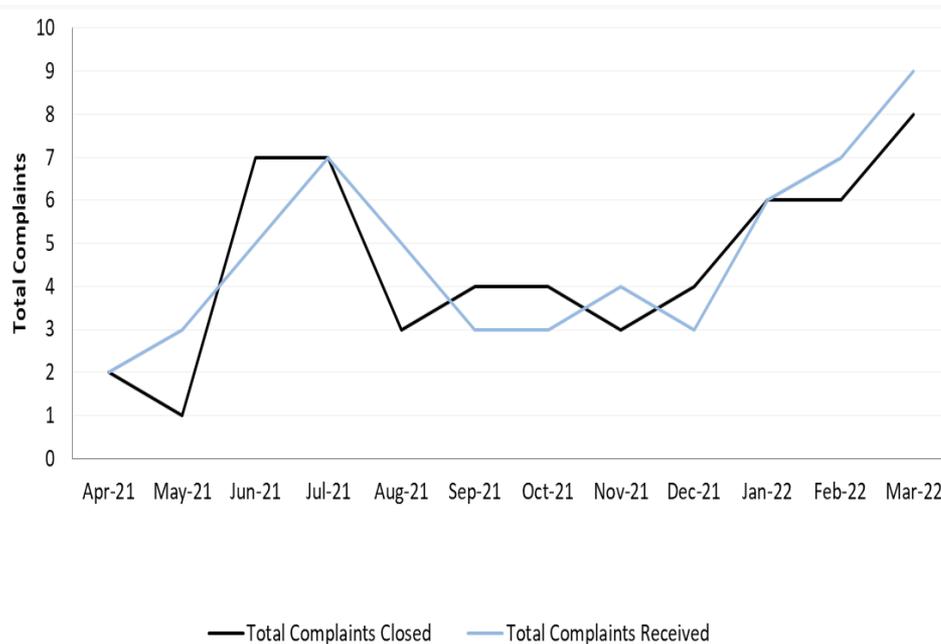
- By When
- To Whom
- And Why



Lessons Learnt:

Why should we learn from Complaints?

MDC Corporate Complaints Received



Services	Corporate Complaints received
5 Council's	31
Housing Services	4
Strategic Leadership Team	1
Community Health Services	0
Law and Governance Services	1
Neighbourhood Services	8
Corporate Services	0
Planning and Growth Services	12

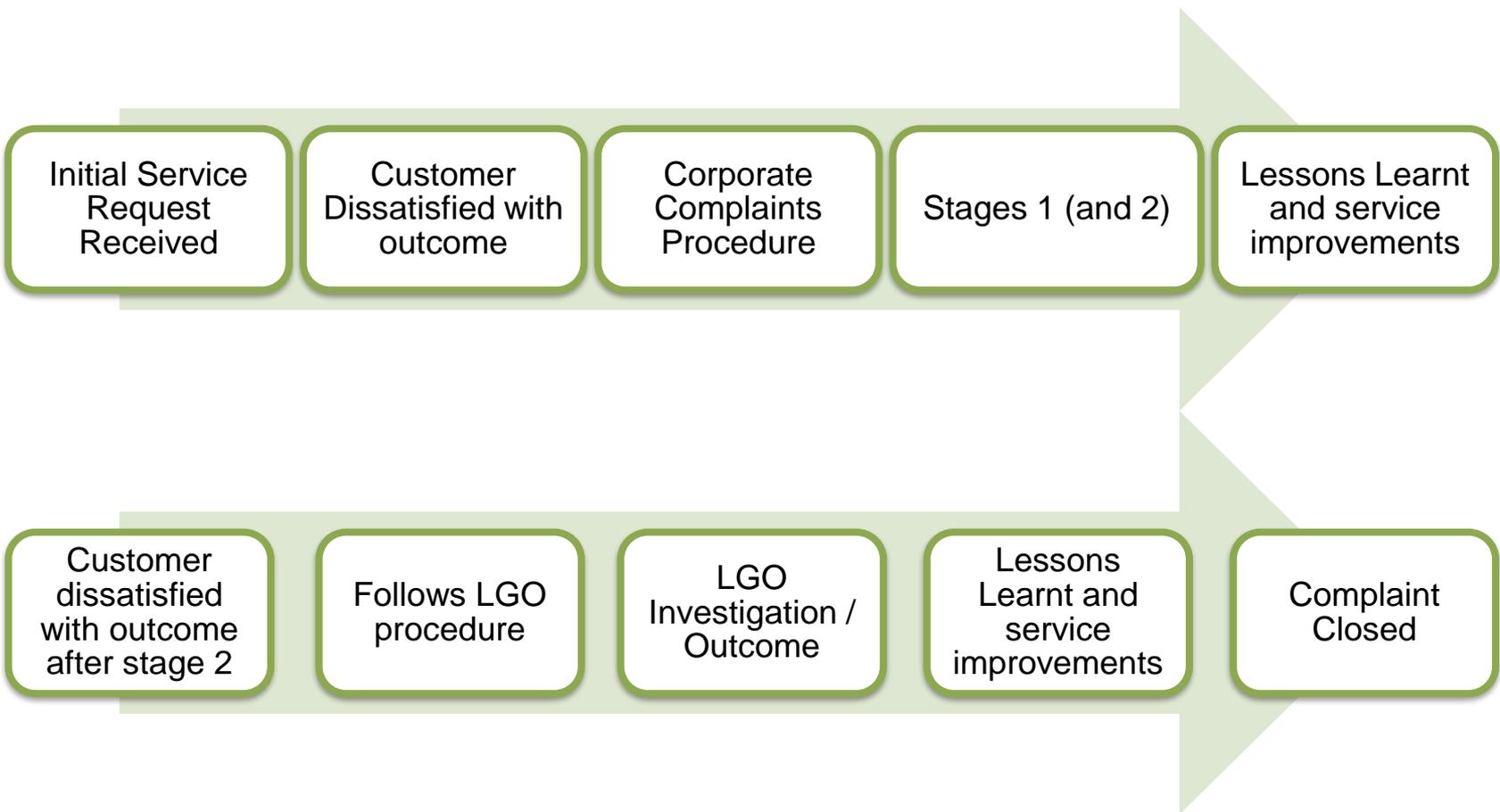
Examples of lessons learnt - MDC

MDC Corporate Complaint	Lesson Learnt
The customer was informed by SWP that their waste collection would resume by a certain date, but it did not happen.	SWP have been reminded of the need to ensure to reply within the SLA timescales to customers Internal audit was asked to provide guidance and improvements.
No minutes have been produced for the Licensing sub-committee meetings for certain dates.	The service reviewed the process to publish the approved minutes in a timely manner.
Customer says that changes to their account have not been actioned in a timely manner resulting in them receiving a summons	If the service had dealt with the discount correctly at the time, it would not have escalated this far. The service has refreshed the process and training was given to staff.
MDC failed to deal appropriately with a homeless application and the customers mental health suffered as a result	Learning was around making safeguarding referrals where the client appears not to engage due to mental health.

Example of lessons learnt - LGO

LGO Complaint	Outcome
<p>A small development of five dwellings has been granted 'prior approval' by MDC without any consultation with four immediately adjacent properties or issuing of site notices to inform other affected people. The council has an obligation to consult adjacent properties to the development before 'prior approval' can be granted. No consultation took place. No site notices were issued</p>	<p>Upheld: Maladministration and Injustice – no further action, satisfactory remedy provided by the organisation. The Council has apologised and put in place procedures to stop this from reoccurring. The LGO consider this a suitable remedy for any injustice caused.</p>
	<p>Lesson Learnt</p> <p>The service amended the internal procedure to ensure that such a situation will not happen again. This involved an 'event note' being attached to any case which experiences a technical issue, this highlights the issue to the officers to ensure the checks and steps taken to resolve the issue are properly carried out and recorded.</p>

MDC Corporate Complaints Journey



Local Government Reorganisation

In Scope

1. To provide ideas to the workstream to develop the New Somerset Council Complaints Process
2. Implement minor improvements to the existing Corporate Complaints process at Mendip
3. To continue to support the Complaints Champions in their role
4. To continue to learn from the Corporate Complaints that are registered
5. To continue to monitor the level of Corporate Complaints being received

Out of Scope

1. To implement major changes to the Corporate Complaints process
2. To include service requests / issues as part of the Corporate Complaints process and report on these to Scrutiny

Summary

- ✓ The Council has a Corporate Compliments, Complaints and Comments Policy stating the stages of the process to follow
- ✓ Service requests are dealt with by service areas in the first instance, these are not classified as corporate complaints at this stage
- ✓ If the customer is dissatisfied with the outcome, after going through the stages set out in the Policy they can contact the LGO or other relevant body to investigate
- ✓ The Council learns from complaints not only those that have been investigated by the LGO but also through the Councils own process
- ✓ There is scope, at this stage, to feed into the LGR workstream to develop the new Somerset Council complaints process

Feedback

