

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 27 NOVEMBER 2017

**OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED - BIENNIAL UPDATE**

**Summary**

The Committee agreed that it would be helpful to receive a regular report giving brief details of formal complaints received by the Council. This would enable the Committee to identify whether there are any common themes arising from the complaints. If so, the Committee could then consider whether it should scrutinise the area(s) of activity identified.

This report sets out how complaints are dealt with, and gives brief details of those received since 1 April 2017.

**Recommendations**

**Background Papers:**

Council's Complaints Procedure  
Sustainability Impact Assessment  
Equalities Impact Assessment

**Reporting Person:**

Joanne McIntosh, Legal Services Manager  
Ext. 3038, E Mail: [Joanne.McIntosh@woking.gov.uk](mailto:Joanne.McIntosh@woking.gov.uk)

**Contact Person:**

Joanne McIntosh, Legal Services Manager  
Ext. 3038, E Mail: [Joanne.McIntosh@woking.gov.uk](mailto:Joanne.McIntosh@woking.gov.uk)

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## Overview of Complaints Received - Biannual Update

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 It has been agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should have a regular report giving brief details of formal complaints received by the Council. This would enable the Committee to identify whether there are any common themes arising from the complaints. If so, the Committee could then consider whether it should scrutinise the area(s) of activity identified.

### 2.0 The Council's Complaints Procedure

- 2.1 A copy of the Council's Complaints Procedure can be found at:-

<https://www.woking.gov.uk/council/about/customercarestandards/comments>

- 2.2 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction. It could relate to:

- A failure to deliver a service;
- A delay in providing a service;
- A poor quality of service;
- A failure to comply with Council policies, or
- The conduct or behaviour of a member of staff.

- 2.3 When a complaint is received, it is allocated to a manager within the relevant service concerned. The complaint is acknowledged within five working days' of receipt, and details of the Officer who will investigate it are provided to the complainant.

- 2.4 The intention is that investigations into complaints are completed within fifteen working days of allocation to the Officer who will investigate it. If this is not possible, the complainant will be advised of the date by which he/she will receive a full reply.

- 2.5 If the complainant has good reasons to believe that the complaint has not been investigated properly, he/she can appeal and ask for a further review to be undertaken. The appeal has to be submitted within six weeks of the initial determination. The Deputy Monitoring Officer will decide whether there are grounds to support a further review of the complaint. Her decision should be made within fifteen working days of receipt of the request. If the Deputy Monitoring Officer considers that there are grounds for a review, the complaint will be investigated by a member of the Corporate Management Group. The decision of the CMG member will be final, and should be made within fifteen working days of the complaint being allocated to him/her.

- 2.6 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome under the Council's Complaints Procedure, he/she can refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman or Housing Ombudsman (as appropriate).

- 2.7 If a complaint relates to a service provided by a contractor, the complainant must submit it to the contractor under the contractor's complaints procedure. Once this process has been completed, the complainant can request a review under the Council's Complaints Procedure (as outlined in paragraph 2.5 above).

- 2.8 Under the Council's Constitution, the following arrangements exist for dealing with decisions of the Local Government Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman:-

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- (i) The Monitoring Officer deals with compensation payments which are neither disputed nor significant. This is subject to oversight by the Standards and Audit Committee.
- (ii) Full Council has responsibility for compensation payments which are disputed or significant.

### 3.0 Complaints received by the Council since 1 April 2017

3.1 The following complaints have been received

Ref Number	Department	Summary of Complaint	Request for Review?	Review Allowed
267-2017	Revenue and Benefits	Dispute business rates bill.		
268-2017	Planning	Handling of planning application.	Yes	No
269-2017	Planning/Env Health	Sewage drainage at traveller's site.		
270-2017	Housing	Has been housed unsuitably in B&B for 6 weeks and inconsistent info from housing staff.		
271-2017	Parking	Incorrectly Issued ticket.		
272-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of planning application.		
273-2017	Parking	Number of suitable parking spaces for motorcycles in town centre.		
274-2017	Customer Services	Member of staff being rude and offensive when customer trying to pay council tax.		
275-2017	Environmental Health	Civil Enforcement Officer giving fine for smoking without sufficient warning being given and being rude.		
278-2017	NVH	Accessing ASB Information on Website.		
279-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Issues with Tree outside of house.		
280-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of planning application.		
282-2017	Legal	Complaint regarding handling of postal vote application.		
283-2017	Legal	Complaint regarding time frame for oversea postal vote.		
284-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of planning application.		
285-2017	Green Spaces	Complaint regarding burn to child from Woking Park slide.		
286-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Complaint regarding overgrown trees and hedges.		

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287-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Complaint regarding glass in the road after bin collection.		
288-2017	Woking Pool in the Park	Complaint regarding Woking Pool in the Park.		
289-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Complaint regarding glass in the road after bin collection.		
290-2017	Referred to Deputy Monitoring Officer by NVH	Stage two complaint re anti social officer.	Yes	No
291-2017	IT	Complaint regarding display of information to residents.		
276-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of planning application.	Yes	No
292-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Complaint re mess left after bin collection.		
293-2017	NVH & Housing Benefit	Complaint re communication between NVH, Benefits and Customer.		
294-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Complaint re Non Collection of Garden Refuse Bin and clearing of vegetation.		
241-2017	Parking	Complaint re PCN and not changing address.		
243-2017	Legal	Breach of data.		
244-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Bin collection.		
245-2017	Benefits and Revenue	Council Tax Charge on Empty Property.		
246-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Uneven man hole.		
247-2017	Referred to Deputy Monitoring Officer by NVH	Stage Two Complaint, NVH1166.	Yes	No
249-2017	Benefits and Revenue	Council Tax.		
354-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of planning application.		
296-2017	CMG	Environmental Health Department.	Yes	No
297-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of planning application.		
298-2017	Parking	Pot hole in car park.		
299-2017	Douglas Spinks	Complaint regarding length of planning meeting.		
300-2017	Parking	Access to Peacocks car park.		
301-2017	Housing	Housing Situation.	Yes	Yes
302-2017	Referred to Deputy Monitoring Officer by NVH	Stage Two Complaint, NVH.	Yes	No
303-2017	Douglas Spinks	FOI handling.		
304-2017	Douglas Spinks	FOI handling.		
305-2017	Planning	Outcome and handling of		

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		planning application.		
306-2017	Neighbourhood Services	West Byfleet Play Ground.	Yes	No
308-2017	Neighbourhood Services	Bin collection.		
309-2017	Green Spaces	Kingsmoor Play Park.		
310-2017	Green Spaces	Lack of lighting in Woking Park.		
311-2017	Benefits and Revenue	Council Tax Complaint.		
313-2017	Town Centre Engineers	Complaint re building works outside of flat/access to flat.		
314-2017	Douglas Spinks	FOI handling.		
315-2017	Benefits and Revenue	Housing Benefit.		
316-2017	Housing	Unlawful suspension on bidding on properties.		
317-2017	Business Rates	Complaint re lack of response and systems not working in business rates.		
318-2017	HR	Missing drain cover caused personal damage.		

3.2 It should be noted that it would not be appropriate for the Committee to review the circumstances of, or decisions reached in respect of, individual complaints. The purpose of submitting this report is to assist the Committee in identifying possible topic areas for future scrutiny.

### 4.0 Complaints received by the New Vision Homes since 1 April 2017

NVH Ref	Month In	Stage	Subject	Primary Cause
1133	April	Stage 1	Asset Man	Uncategorised
1134	April	Stage 1	Asset Man	Health & Safety issue
1135	April	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1136	April	Service Failure	Housing	Uncategorised
1137	April	Stage 1	Asset Man	Health & Safety issue
1138	April	Stage 1	Repairs	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1139	April	Service Failure	Repairs	Missed appointment
1140	April	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1141	April	Stage 1	Repairs	Missed appointment
1142	May	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1143	May	Service Failure	Asset Man	Uncategorised

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1144	May	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised
1145	May	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised
1146	May	Stage 1	Housing	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1147	May	Service Failure	Repairs	Staff rudeness
1148	May	Service Failure	Repairs	Staff rudeness
1149	May	Stage 1	Housing	Uncategorised
1150	May	Stage 1	Housing	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1151	May	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1152	May	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised
1153	May	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1154	June	Stage 2	Asset Man	Health & Safety issue
1155	June	Stage 2	Housing	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1156	June	Stage 1	Housing	Uncategorised
1157	June	Stage 2	Housing	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1158	June	Stage 1	Asset Man	Staff rudeness
1159	June	Stage 2	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1160	June	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1161	June	Service Failure	Repairs	Health & Safety issue
1162	June	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1163	June	Service Failure	Repairs	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1164	June	Stage 1	Housing	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1165	July	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised

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1166	July	Stage 2	Asset Man	Poor standard of work
1167	July	Stage 1	Housing	Uncategorised
1168	July	Stage 1	Repairs	Poor standard of work
1169	July	Stage 1	Repairs	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1170	July	Stage 1	Asset Man	Uncategorised
1171	July	Service Failure	Housing	Uncategorised
1172	July	Stage 1	Asset Man	Health & Safety issue
1173	July	Service Failure	Repairs	Staff rudeness
1174	July	Stage 1	Asset Man	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1175	July	Service Failure	Repairs	Staff rudeness
1176	July	Stage 1	Housing	Poor advice
1177	July	Stage 2	Repairs	Uncategorised
1178	August	Service Failure	Housing	Uncategorised
1179	August	Stage 1	Asset Man	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1180	August	Service Failure	Repairs	Missed appointment
1181	August	Stage 1	Housing	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1182	August	Stage 1	Asset Man	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1183	August	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1184	September	Service Failure	Housing	Uncategorised
1185	September	Stage 2	Asset Man	Health & Safety issue
1186	September	Stage 1	Repairs	Health & Safety issue
1187	September	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised
1188	September	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised
1189	September	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale

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				incorrectly used)
1190	September	Stage 2	Asset Man	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1191	September	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1192	September	Stage 1	Housing	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1193	September	Stage 1	Repairs	Uncategorised
1194	October	Stage 1	Repairs	Poor standard of work
1195	October	Stage 1	Housing	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1196	October	Stage 1	Asset Man	Uncategorised
1197	October	Stage 2	Housing	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1198	October	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1199	October	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised
1200	October	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1201	October	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1202	October	Service Failure	Repairs	Missed appointment
1203	October	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1204	November	Stage 1	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1205	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Poor standard of work
1206	November	Stage 1	Housing	Uncategorised
1207	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised
1208	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)



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1209	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised
1210	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised
1211	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1212	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1213	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Communication (ie, no call backs, updates on progress)
1214	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1215	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Missed appointment
1216	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised
1217	November	Service Failure	Asset Man	Uncategorised
1218	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised
1219	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Incorrectly managed (ie, repair timescale incorrectly used)
1220	November	Service Failure	Repairs	Uncategorised

### Financial

5.1 None

### Human Resource/Training and Development

5.2 None

### Community Safety

5.3 None

### Risk Management

5.4 None

### Sustainability

5.5 None

### Equalities

5.6 None

**6 Conclusions**

- 6.1 Submitting a six-monthly report to the Committee on complaints received will enable the Committee to identify whether there are any common themes arising from the complaints. If so, the Committee could then consider whether it should scrutinise the area(s) of activity identified.

REPORT ENDS

## Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to improve the work of the Council by making sure that it does not discriminate against any individual or group and that, where possible, it promotes equality. The Council has a legal duty to comply with equalities legislation and this template enables you to consider the impact (positive or negative) a strategy, policy, project or service may have upon the protected groups.

		Positive impact?			Negative impact?	No specific impact	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? (action) <b>THIS SECTION NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED AS EVIDENCE OF WHAT THE POSITIVE IMPACT IS OR WHAT ACTIONS ARE BEING TAKEN TO MITIGATE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS</b>
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations			
<b>Gender</b>	Men					x	
	Women					x	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>						x	
<b>Race</b>	White					x	
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups					x	
	Asian/Asian British					x	
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British					x	
	Gypsies / travellers					x	
	Other ethnic group					x	

		Positive impact?			Negative impact?	No specific impact	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? (action) <b>THIS SECTION NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED AS EVIDENCE OF WHAT THE POSITIVE IMPACT IS OR WHAT ACTIONS ARE BEING TAKEN TO MITIGATE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS</b>
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations			
<b>Disability</b>	Physical					x	
	Sensory					x	
	Learning Difficulties					x	
	Mental Health					x	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Lesbian, gay men, bisexual					x	
<b>Age</b>	Older people (50+)					x	
	Younger people (16 - 25)					x	
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	Faith Groups					x	
<b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b>						x	
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>						x	
<b>Socio-economic Background</b>						x	

The purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment is to improve the work of the Council by making sure it does not discriminate against any individual or group and that, where possible, it promotes equality. The assessment is quick and straightforward to undertake but it is an important step to make sure that individuals and teams think carefully about the likely impact of their work on people in Woking and take action to improve strategies, policies, services and projects, where appropriate. Further details and guidance on completing the form are [available](#).

## Sustainability Impact Assessment

Officers preparing a committee report are required to complete a Sustainability Impact Assessment. Sustainability is one of the Council's 'cross-cutting themes' and the Council has made a corporate commitment to address the social, economic and environmental effects of activities across Business Units. The purpose of this Impact Assessment is to record any positive or negative impacts this decision, project or programme is likely to have on each of the Council's Sustainability Themes. For assistance with completing the Impact Assessment, please refer to the instructions below. Further details and guidance on completing the form are [available](#).

<b>Theme (Potential impacts of the project)</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>No specific impact</b>	<b>What will the impact be? If the impact is negative, how can it be mitigated? (action)</b>
Use of energy, water, minerals and materials			x	
Waste generation / sustainable waste management			x	
Pollution to air, land and water			x	
Factors that contribute to Climate Change			x	
Protection of and access to the natural environment			x	
Travel choices that do not rely on the car			x	
A strong, diverse and sustainable local economy			x	
Meet local needs locally			x	
Opportunities for education and information			x	
Provision of appropriate and sustainable housing			x	
Personal safety and reduced fear of crime			x	
Equality in health and good health			x	
Access to cultural and leisure facilities			x	
Social inclusion / engage and consult communities			x	
Equal opportunities for the whole community			x	
Contribute to Woking's pride of place			x	