

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 5th November 2014

Lead Member / Officer: Councillor Hugh Irving, Lead Member for Customers and Communities
Jackie Walley, Head of Customers and Education Support

Report Author: Clare O’Gorman, Corporate Complaints Officer

Title: Your Voice annual report 2013/14

1. What is the report about?

The report provides an overview of the feedback received via Denbighshire County Council’s customer feedback policy ‘Your Voice’ during the period 01.04.13 – 31.03.14. This report excludes social services data which is reported separately.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide the Committee with an overview of the volumes and types of feedback received during 2013/14.

To provide the Committee with information regarding the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales’ annual report and accompanying letter.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee note and comment on the performance of services.

4. Report details

Headlines for 2013/14 (please see appendix 1 for further detail).

- A total of 510 complaints were recorded – a decrease of 8% compared to the previous year’s total of 556.
- Overall performance for the year is 96% (488/510) of complaints responded to within the ‘Your Voice’ timescales. This is an improvement on the 2012/13 figure of 93% and exceeds the corporate target of 95%.
- The number of complaints successfully dealt with at stage 1 decreased to 91% (down from 94% last year).
- A total of 749 compliments were recorded – a decrease of 9% compared to the previous year’s total of 820.

- A total of 67 suggestions were recorded – an increase of 319% compared to the previous year's total of 16. This is an area we are going to promote to encourage more feedback in order to shape our services.

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Thirty six complaints were made to the Ombudsman during 2013/14. This is higher than the Welsh local authority average, see appendix 2 for further detail. This in itself is not a concern as only two complaints were taken into investigation by the Ombudsman during 2013/14. This equals the Welsh local authority average. Both complaints concerned social services. One section 21 report was issued and concerned Adult Social Services. Section 21 reports are issued by the Ombudsman when the public body agrees to implement any recommendations made by the Ombudsman, and confirms she's satisfied that there is no public interest involved. Summaries of the complaints are included as appendix 3.

Four complaints of Members breaching their code of conduct were made during 2013/14. The same number as last year, see appendix 4 for further detail.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The Your Voice scheme directly contributes to the corporate aim of:
An excellent council, close to the community.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

All costs relating to customer feedback are absorbed within existing budgets.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

Not applicable.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Monthly reporting to the Senior Leadership Team, quarterly reporting to Performance Scrutiny Committee and annual reporting to Corporate Governance Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no obvious financial implications arising from the report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

By not dealing with complaints effectively, the reputation of the council may suffer.

11. Power to make the Decision

This is a paper for information, rather than for decision.