

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Resources, Performance And Development Overview And Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Committee** 19th September 2006

**Report Title** Corporate Complaints - Follow Up Report

**Summary** This report sets out the actions responding to Members comments from the 25th July meeting

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**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** No.

**Background papers** None

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** Details to be specified

- Other Committees  .....
- Local Member(s)  .....
- Other Elected Members  Cllr Atkinson, Hicks and Booth
- Cabinet Member  .....
- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  David Carter
- Finance  .....
- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....

Other Bodies/Individuals

Corporate Complaints Officers

**FINAL DECISION YES**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

Details to be specified

Further consideration by  
this Committee

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To Council

.....

To Cabinet

.....

To an O & S Committee

.....

To an Area Committee

.....

Further Consultation

.....

## Agenda No

# Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 19th September 2006.

## Corporate Complaints - Follow Up Report

### Report of the Strategic Director of Performance & Development

#### Recommendation

That the Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee note:

1. The definitions of the different levels of decisions made by the Ombudsman, and
2. The improvement actions taken as a result of directorates receiving complaints

#### 1. Background

1.1 At the July meeting of this committee, Members looked at the Annual Complaints Report and resolved that a further report be submitted to include:

- The definitions of the different levels of decisions made by, and additional information on complaints referred to the Ombudsman
- Improvement action taken as the result of directorates having received complaints

#### 2. Complaints to the Ombudsman

2.1 Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked for more information on the complaints referred to the Ombudsman. The breakdown of detail is attached in Appendix 1. Further detail of the decision types given by the Ombudsman was requested. Full definitions are listed below:

2.2 **Local Settlements:** - decisions by letter discontinuing the investigation because action has been agreed by the authority and accepted by the Ombudsman as a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

2.3 **Maladministration and Injustice Reports:** - where the Ombudsman has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice.

- 2.4 **No maladministration:** - where the Ombudsman has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the council
- 2.5 **Ombudsman's discretion:** - decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation in which the Ombudsman has exercised his general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that they have found no or insufficient justice to warrant pursuing the matter further.
- 2.6 **Outside jurisdiction:** - these are cases, which were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction
- 2.7 **Premature complaints:** - decisions that the complaint is premature. The Ombudsman does not normally consider a complaint unless a council has first had an opportunity to deal with that complaint itself. So if someone complains to the Ombudsman without having taken the matter up with a council, the Ombudsman will usually refer it back to the council as a 'premature complaint' to see if the Council can itself resolve the matter.

### 3. Improvements Resulting from Complaints Reporting

- 3.1 The Committee asked for information on the changes prompted by complaints received. Directorates have provided examples of improvements made under the old departmental structure.

Dept.	Complaint Area	Improvement Actions
PTES	Attitude of contractor staff at recycling centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor staff have been offered customer care training and the complaints are used as a customer service indicator in the contract management, adding to an incremental score, which results in bonus payments or penalty clauses for the contractor</li> </ul>
	Door-stepping recycling campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policy changes resulted in door-steppers not being allowed to talk to children if their parents were not in and not canvassing a house if there were signs of it being occupied by an elderly person</li> </ul>
	Van policy at household waste sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policy of not allowing people to use vans to dispose of their waste at recycling centres was introduced to stop commercial waste being disposed of at household waste sites unless they held a permit. The scheme was set up in 1999 and reviewed in 2003.</li> </ul>
	Bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buses running early, late or not following the correct route – these complaints are related to Bus Service operators, however the County Council monitors these and uses them for contract management purposes</li> <li>Children misbehaving on buses – all allegations are followed up, often through the County Council quality standards inspector</li> </ul>
F & R	Issues surrounding driving of Fire & Rescue vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All individuals were reminded of the Service Policy relating to driving of vehicles and how this related to the individual circumstances of the incident.</li> </ul>
	Cleaning service to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions were set up with Head teachers to fully explain the Cleaning SLA</li> </ul>

CAMS	Quality of food/ hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents invited to see catering service and discuss provision</li> <li>Changes to menus</li> <li>Food hygiene standards checked and all implemented (hair in food)</li> </ul>
	Customer care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer care standards reinforced to staff</li> </ul>
TR	Payslip sealing machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of payslip sealing machine – rectified</li> </ul>
PS	Contractor's service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultant took photos of the work and sent them to the contractor. Works currently being rectified</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PS told contractor to complete works within 14 days or would terminate the contract</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor no longer carries out any works for WCC</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigation carried out and all staff and operatives on site re-inducted.</li> </ul>
CX	Website information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website information corrected</li> </ul>
	Confetti litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibility of using biodegradable confetti investigated</li> </ul>
SS	Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption procedures reinforced by leaflet providing information (Children's)</li> </ul>
	Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written information to be reviewed to improve communications to reduce further risks of breaching confidentiality (Children's)</li> </ul>
	Contact arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The team manager will ensure that all staff will be briefed about holidays and supervision of contact arrangements will be made where it affects families (Children's)</li> </ul>
	Data protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses will be checked before letters are sent out to ensure they're not sent to the wrong addresses. Computer records were updated (Adults)</li> </ul>
	Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new driver drove too fast and went the wrong way. In future all new drivers will be supervised and monitored during their initial journeys (Adults)</li> </ul>
LHTS	Return of library books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drop off boxes installed for library books</li> </ul>
	Prices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researched prices in line with those of neighbouring counties</li> </ul>
	Anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changed People's Network procedure at Library which has significantly reduced youth misuse and disturbance</li> </ul>
	Library tickets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased library ticket number size for low vision when next reprinted.</li> </ul>
ED	Complaint to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If complaint found to be justified, advice offered to schools regarding revision of procedures in order to avoid future problems. Parents and governors are encouraged to offer suggestions on ways to improve service. Lessons learnt regarding Best Practice disseminated by Area Officers to other schools.</li> </ul>
	Council policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Details are forwarded onto appropriate officer to consider if a revision of council policy is appropriate</li> </ul>
	School specific policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools encouraged to review their procedures in light of concerns raised about school specific policies. Suggestions for revision offered by Directorate if deemed appropriate.</li> </ul>

	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where complaints about facilities are received, information is shared with relevant Council team where appropriate. Assistance and guidance offered to school if necessary.</li></ul>
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DAVID CARTER  
Strategic Director of  
Performance & Development

Shire Hall  
Warwick10 August 2006

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Detail</b>
Local Settlement	Social Services	Services for adults
	PTES	Highways
No Maladministration	Education	Admissions
	Education	Admissions
	Education	Admissions
	Education	Admissions
	Education	Admissions
	Education	Admissions
	Education	Student support
	Social Services	Other
	Social Services	Services for adults
	PTES	Highways
Ombudsman's Discretion	Education	Admissions
	Education	Transport
	Social Services	Services for children
	PTES	Highways
Premature Complaints	Education	Student support
	Education	Special educational needs
	Social Services	Services for adults
	Social Services	Services for children
	Social Services	Services for children
	Social Services	Other
	Social Services	Other
	PTES	Highways
Outside Jurisdiction	PTES	Highways
Still Open	Education	Other
	PTES	Consideration/ neighbour amenity
	PTES	Consideration/ neighbour amenity
	PTES	Enforcement