

**Economy and Environment Directorate
Q1 to Q4 - 2023/24**

1. Number of complaints by Stage Type, Service, and Targets Met

Table showing summary of complaints by stage type reference.

Stage Type	Count	Count Completed in Target Times	Percentage Completed in Target Times
Stage 1	239	212	88.70%
Stage 2	19	18	94.74%
Escalated Stage 1 to 2	38	33	86.84%
Totals	296	263	88.85%

Table showing how the complaints were received.

By source	Count Stage 1	Count Stage 2	Count Escalated Stage 1 to Stage 2
Contact Centre	1		
Email	156	14	36
Letter	6	1	1
On-line	56	2	1
Other	1		
Telephone	19	2	
Totals	239	19	38

2. Tables showing summary of complaints by service, for each stage type

Service	Count Stage 1	Count Completed in Target Times	Percentage Completed in Target Times
Community & Leisure	126	122	96.83%
Infrastructure	65	53	81.54%
Property	1	1	100%
Public Protection	29	21	72.41%
Regeneration & Planning	16	13	81.25%
Other - Combined	2	2	100%
Totals	239	212	88.70%

Service	Count Stage 2	Count Completed in Target Times	Percentage Completed in Target Times
Community & Leisure	6	6	100%
Infrastructure	6	6	100%
Property	0	0	
Public Protection	0	0	
Regeneration & Planning	7	6	85.71%
Other - Combined	0	0	
Totals	19	18	94.74%

Service	Count Escalated Stage 1 to Stage 2	Count Completed in Target Times	Percentage Completed in Target Times
Community & Leisure	13	12	92.31%
Infrastructure	14	12	85.71%
Property	1	0	0%
Public Protection	3	2	66.67%
Regeneration & Planning	7	7	100%
Other - Combined	0	0	
Totals	38	33	86.84%

More detailed information on the above corporate complaints data, is currently maintained, by the Directors PA on a dedicated database.

There were various reasons identified with regards to response times not being met. Some examples are listed below:

- Insufficient staff to undertake necessary inspections.
- Health and Safety issues taking precedence which were beyond the staffs' control.

The Director's PA continues to provide training to all staff where required, which covers a wide range of topics, focusing particularly on compliance procedures and ways to avoid missing the deadline dates. For example, staff are advised that an extension of time letter can be sent to the complainant advising them that more time is required to deal with the matter in question. This keeps the complainant informed of any progress made and an update on any amended deadlines which then avoids missing the compliance date. This training has been very successful as we are managing to sustain reasonable response times.

3. Key complaints - identified by type or theme

List of key specific types, or themes, of repetitive, or pertinent complaints received during this reporting period.

Complaints by Themes	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Grand Total
Refuse-Recycling-Green Waste-Missed Collections	2				2
Planning-General	3				3
Parking	1				1
Other matters	16	16		1	33
Poor Communications	1	1	2	1	5
Delays in service delivery	1				1
Dog Bins	2				2
Refuse-Recycling-Green Waste-Other	8	10	10	9	37
Trees	2	7		1	10
Grass Cutting	2				2
Refuse-Recycling-Green Waste-Missed Collections	6	14	9	16	45
Planning-General	3	6	1	8	18
CA Sites	1	2	2		5
Parking	1	5		3	9
Cleansing	1			2	3
Delays in Service Delivery	7	5	9	3	24
Highway Maintenance Works	4	4	3	12	23
Transport	2	3			5
Delays in Responses	5	3	14	2	24
Cemeteries	1	4	1		6

Noise	1				1
Environmental Health Issues		3		3	6
Street Lighting		1	1		2
Illicit Tipping		1	1	1	3
Sport and Leisure Services		4		2	6
General Weed Control-Grounds Maintenance		3			3
Road Closures-Traffic Lights		1		2	3
Drains-Flooding		2		6	8
Footpath Quality				3	3
Litter Bins				1	1
Park Maintenance-Cleanliness		1		1	2
Grand Total	70	96	53	77	296

IDENTIFICATION OF TRENDS – Particular to services

TRENDS
As stated in previous reports the complaints received during this period have been quite varied as managing expectations is very difficult as the Authority faces various financial challenges. A number of complaints were received regarding missed collections but given the fact that we undertake circa 9.75 million collection per annum, the amount received didn't cause any major issues. It is also worth noting that a percentage of recycling wasn't collected due to the fact that the contents of the bin were contaminated and relevant advice would have been provided before the next collection took place.
Examples
Garden waste not collected (previously dealt with as a service request but waste was found to be contaminated).
Sticker placed on bin just saying refuse to empty it. 2nd time and feels its personal.
Recycling bins are not being emptied on a Monday causing bins to overflow, already an issue on street with a certain house with rubbish outside and in the gardens causing rats to be in street Reported twice.
Household waste and recycling constantly being missed. Missed the one day and not collected until the following fortnight.
Complained on numerous occasions regarding trees of concern - no responses nothing done - stage 1 informed that inspection would be carried out and still nothing done.

To ensure continuity in collection services the supervisors investigate each complaint to establish why there are recurring instances with regards to missed collections. The teams are addressed and reminded of expectations going forward. Training will be provided if this is identified.

4. Number of complaints by Category

Table showing complaints by category.

Category	Count Stage 1, Stage 2 & Escalated 1 to 2
1 Collaborative Working	1
2 Decision Making	21
3 Delay in Service Provision	119
4 Officer/Contractors Conduct with public (including sensitivity/empathy of staff/politeness)	12
5 Following Council Policies/relevant Legislation	41
6 Accessibility of Services	6
7 Clarity/Accuracy/Timeliness of information	9
8 Quality of Work	85
9 Openness/ Fairness and Honesty	2
10 Compliance with Complaints procedure	
11. Combination of Categories (Non-specific)	
Total	296

5. Number of complaints by outcome and lessons learned

Table showing complaints by outcome.

Outcome Data	Count Stage 1, Stage 2 & Escalated 1 to 2
Upheld	107
Not upheld	189
Totals	296

The following tables shows more information regarding the complaints counts above, that were, Upheld, Not Upheld, by Service Area.

Services – Stage 1	Upheld	Not Upheld
Community & Leisure	74	51
Infrastructure	9	55
Property		1
Public Protection	7	21
Regeneration & Planning	3	13
Other - Combined		2
Totals	93	143

Services – Stage 2	Upheld	Not Upheld
Community & Leisure	1	5
Infrastructure		6
Property		
Public Protection		
Regeneration & Planning		7
Other - Combined		
Totals	1	18

Services – Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	Upheld	Not Upheld
Community & Leisure	7	6
Infrastructure	4	10
Property	1	
Public Protection	1	2
Regeneration & Planning		7
Other - Combined		
Totals	13	25

List of lessons learned. The table below comments on key findings resulting from the complaints in this reporting period, that may help curtail, prevent, or impede future repeats.

Nature of Complaint	Lessons Learned	Category
Paid for a dropped kerb over 12 weeks ago and still not been carried out	Regular updates required with Contractor to confirm delivery dates, and to keep residents up to date with any delays	3 Delay in Service Provision
Dog bins on canal by Darren Road - full and require replacing - complained 3 times	Resident should have been contacted and advised of arrangements previously made.	3 Delay in Service Provision
Non collection of green waste - put out in black bag, crew ripped open bag grass cutting fell all over street, crew left it there	Whilst the team acted appropriately in their assessments any spillages should be addressed. Team notified to ensure any requirements of this nature are addressed.	8 Quality of Work
The Ridgeway from Llanfabon Area - Access to Senghenydd and Eglwysilan Mountain	It has been reiterated to Officers the need to ensure a timely response to enquiries or a holding response where matters are still being investigated.	3 Delay in Service Provision
Continual non collection of assisted collection service and attitude of staff	Unfortunately, supervisor erred when identifying location and team to undertake the remedial actions causing the delay. Once realised this was swiftly responded to. Whilst this is an unusual error for the supervisor to make, it is recognised to take more care when addressing complaints moving forward.	8 Quality of Work

<p>Non collection of green waste - put out in black bag, crew ripped open bag grass cutting fell all over street, crew left it there. Complainant felt that their complaint was brushed under the carpet and not taken seriously. Also not happy to be charged for the purchase of green waste bags.</p>	<p>Photographic evidence proved incorrect feedback initially received from the team to the supervisor in relation to what was presented by the resident. The team have been addressed in regard to this issue and reminded of their responsibilities moving forward. Supervisor monitoring performance.</p>	<p>7 Clarity/Accuracy/Timeliness of information</p>
<p>Dog bins on canal by Darren Road - full and require replacing - complained 3 times. In our stage 1 response we have stated burnt bins removed and replaced but they have not been.</p>	<p>Whilst noting some mitigating circumstances that caused failure to completion of works it is recognised that failure to communicate between staff and officers has led to the necessity for the complainant to raise the complaint and equally become dissatisfied with the response due to incorrect update being provided. Staff have been advised to improve on this element moving forward.</p>	<p>3 Delay in Service Provision</p>
<p>Two separate complaints received from husband and wife - merged into 1 complaint - issues with how we have cut their hedge</p>	<p>A number of factors contributed. Inexperience regarding processes involved; lack of clarity regarding management responsibility for the public/private vegetation and hedge; no clear mapping information that shows land where CCBC maintain but do not own land; hasty inspections in order to process back log of service requests</p>	<p>8 Quality of Work</p>
<p>overloaded bins and dumped rubbish at the rear of our property. It is a real eyesore as well as a health hazard.</p>	<p>No lessons to learn to this regard as this was simply a communication requesting action which was undertaken by the team following the notification process.</p>	<p>8 Quality of Work</p>
<p>3 complaints - street cleansing contacted just for an update 4 times, still waiting, litter in the same lane, not happy with the site visit somebody made, when call made to cleansing dept was advised they cannot send them emails direct</p>	<p>Resourcing difficulties have led to the issue arising due to the prioritising of front-line collections in this instance. Moving forward liaison is identified as required with area chargehands to ensure basics are covered when a supervisor needs to move a cleansing operative to frontline duty. Breakdowns in communication with CRM have been addressed via line manager.</p>	<p>3 Delay in Service Provision</p>
<p>Recycling Bins not collected - Possibly contamination issues</p>	<p>Confirmation from supervisor to team to ensure contamination stickers placed and ticked to advise residents of the contamination. Bins are checked in line with contamination process.</p>	<p>8 Quality of Work</p>

Collection vehicles travelling through area too fast and causing damage	Supervisor has identified that staff are driving over a footway to gain access to a cul-de-sac as opposed to using the formal access which can be slightly more difficult to navigate in vehicles the size of RCVs. However, this action cannot be condoned and staff have been warned that no further misuse will be tolerated	8 Quality of Work
School transport provided always late	Busy period together with a lack of officers	3 Delay in Service Provision

Some of the key learnings identified include

- Continuity of service needed, to reduce and prevent reoccurrence's (system failures).
- Need to ensure accuracy of data pre and post communications.
- Cross service communications and prioritisation needs enhancing - complaint responses.
- Improve citizen engagement and listening first-time.
- Staff changes and turnover, could improve with better induction and suitable plant and equipment.

6. Identified relationships to Equalities or Welsh Language

Table showing a count and list of findings resulting from the complaints in this reporting period, that specifically relate to the Equalities or Welsh Language protected characteristics.

Characteristic Strand	Count Stage 1, Stage 2 & Escalated 1 to 2
Age	
Disability	6
Gender Reassignment	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	
Pregnancy and Maternity	
Race	1
Religion/Belief or Non-belief	
Sex	
Sexual Orientation	
Welsh Language	
Totals	7

Examples of Age and Disability Complaints are

Details of Complaint	Service Area	Lessons Learned	Does the Complaint relate to Equalities or the Welsh Language?
Incorrect rules imposed at Full Moon Recycling regarding banning a resident from returning the same day due to carrying more than 6 bags of soil.	Community & Leisure	Not upheld.	Race
Recycling bin not being returned to their property. Complains each time and it continues to happen. Resident is disabled.	Community & Leisure	Oversight in not making contact with the resident to update on actions taken.	Disability

		Supervisors to be mindful of ensuring residents are updated as part of our customer focused service provision	
Assisted Collections continuously missed	Community & Leisure	Assisted collection not being adhered to. Team advised to ensure no further failings occur.	Disability
Issues ongoing with assisted collection. The resident is disabled.	Community & Leisure	Not Upheld.	Disability
Neighbour is in a wheelchair and cannot get around on the designated paths for disabled people because they are breaking up because grass is growing through them and are in a disgusting state.	Infrastructure	Not Upheld.	Disability
Issue surrounding responsibility of roads and pathways and its adoption status due to relevant laws in force at the relevant time.	Infrastructure	Not Upheld.	Disability
Complaint for discrimination and failure to comply with bin collections. Since the complaint the resident feels that the Waste team are targeting them as when they are returning the bins they are putting them back in front of their car, obstructing the way and being disabled this is causing a lot of trouble.	Community & Leisure	Not Upheld.	Disability

7. Annex – Referrals to Ombudsman, complaints resulting from appeals and examples of relevant items (points to note) specific to this reporting period

There were 14 referrals made to the Ombudsman during this period, seven relating to planning matters, three environmental health matters one relating to fly tipping, one in relation to transport and 1 waste services all of which were not taken to investigation. One complaint relating to refuse was withdrawn.

8. Directors Summary – Overall Assessment and Evaluation

Overall, the Directorate is sustaining service delivery and performance levels, with some specific areas posing more challenges than others at present.

Our front-line and back-office services continue to sustain reasonable levels of service delivery despite many changes experienced in working practices and public expectations, which has posed some challenges to ongoing services and succession planning. In particular, staff retention and replacement in some services, and plant and equipment in others.

By nature of our front-facing and diversity of services delivered, we rely heavily on public feedback. Intelligence gathered through the engagement, our compliments and complaints including trends and feedback, direct service contacts, and recent 'what matters to you' programme, all provide us with sufficient knowledge to understand any areas for improvement.

There is also a system in place across the Directorate for the capture of compliments as these are equally important in terms of measuring the effectiveness of service delivery and customer satisfaction as complaints. The benefits of staff training programmes are now starting to be experienced and these will be cyclically delivered and kept under continuous review.

For further information, please contact

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