

Report to:	QSMTM Q4 2021-22
Report by:	Helen Gardner-Swift, Head of Corporate Services (HOCS) Liz Brown, Finance and Administration Manager (FAM)
Meeting Date:	11 May 2022
Subject/ Title: (and VC no)	Report on Service Standards 2021-22 VC168493
Attached Papers (title and VC no)	2021-22 Record of compliments 2021-22 Record of complaints

Purpose of report

- The purpose of this Committee Report (CR) is to inform the Senior Management Team (SMT) of our service standards performance for:
 - compliments recorded in the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021
 - complaints received and how they have been dealt with in the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.

Recommendation and actions

- It is recommended that:
 - the Senior Management Team (SMT) notes the report
 - the publications arrangements set out in paragraph 32 are agreed.

Executive summary

Record of compliments 2021-22

- Each financial year we record the compliments that we have received about our services.
- In 2021-22 we recorded 92 compliments, an 8% decrease on the number received in 2020-21 (100 compliments).
- There are no service standards or targets relating to compliments.
- The majority of compliments came from applicants (43), enquirers (22) and public authorities (19) and thanked us for helpful advice, support and professional responses.
- Compliments were also received relating to events we have taken part in.
- The attached spreadsheet “Record of Compliments” provides full details.

Record of complaints 2021-22

- The Key Document C1 Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) sets the definition of a complaint as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the Scottish Information Commissioner.”

10. A complaint may relate to: failure to provide a service, inadequate standard of service, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff, disagreement with a decision where the complainant cannot use another procedure (for example an appeal) to resolve the matter, the Commissioner’s failure to follow the appropriate administrative process. These are just examples and this list set out does not cover everything.
11. We value all complaints, treat them seriously and take the appropriate action in accordance with the CHP.
12. This CR analyses the number of complaints received in 2021-22 and responded to within the timescales set out in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Key Document C7 Performance and Quality Framework 2021-22.

Complaints received and closed

	2020-21	2021-22 Q1 & 2	2021-22 Q3 & 4	2021-22 Total
Total received	15	2	4	6
Total closed	14	3	2	5

13. 1 complaint case was open as at 31 March 2021 and closed in Q1 of 2021-22 and, therefore, is included in this years’ closure figures.
14. 2 complaint cases were open at 31 March 2022.
15. Even though the number of complaints is small, we are committed to improving our service as a result of learning from these complaints and addressing any systematic issues that may be identified.

Complaint handling

16. All complaints were either closed at the Frontline or Investigated:
 - 4 complaints were closed at Frontline Resolution
 - 1 was closed following an Investigation
17. The Frontline Resolution target was missed but the very low number of complaints means that the target times were easily affected:
 - 3 cases were closed in 5 days or under
 - 1 case took 19 days to resolve
18. Generally, cases handled at Frontline Resolution should be resolved within 5 working days, (with the possibility of a further 5 working day extension approved by a member of the SMT) and all attempts to resolve the complaint at this stage should ideally take no longer than ten working days from the date the complaint is received.
19. The case closed at investigation met the complaint Key Performance Indicator (KPI) target.

	Number	KPI Target %	Actual %
Complaints closed	5		
Resolved at frontline	4	90% resolved in 5 days	75%
		95% resolved in 10 days	75%
Closed following investigation	1	80% resolved in 30 days	100%
		85% resolved in 40 days	100%

20. The 1 complaint case closed following an Investigation was not upheld. Therefore, the KPI that fewer than 20% of complaints be upheld in part or full was met.

COVID-19 pandemic

21. Our priority as an organisation has been to continue to provide key services and guidance within available resource while safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of our members of staff.
22. Since temporarily closing our office premises on 23 March 2020 and putting in place our business continuity arrangements, we have maintained operational output and this has included ensuring complaints are managed in line with our CHP. The office premises re-opened on 3 May 2022 and a gradual return to working in the office premises is now underway.

Risk impact

23. The CHP seek to resolve dissatisfaction about any aspect of our service as close as possible to the point at which the complaint arises and, where appropriate, to conduct a thorough, impartial and fair investigation of the complaint so an evidence-based decision on the facts of the case can be made. A failure to respond to and manage complaints in accordance with our CHP is likely to have an adverse impact on the Commissioner's reputation and could result in referrals to the SPSO and the CHP helps to mitigate this risk.
24. This CR also contributes towards the control measures aimed at reducing the likelihood and impact of risk in dealing with complaints about our service in accordance with the CHP.

Equalities impact

25. There is no direct impact identified.

Privacy impact

26. There is no direct impact identified.

Resources impact

27. None identified.

Operational/ strategic plan impact

28. None identified.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

29. The CHP is currently under review to take account of the updated Model Complaint Handling Procedures published by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The HOCS is the Responsible Manager and anticipates that the review will be completed during Q1 2022-23.

Consultation and Communication

30. QSMTM Q4 minute and publication of this report.

31. A service standard report will be included in the Annual Report 2021-22.

Publication

32. Publication recommendation:

- the CR should be published in full
- the attached papers, as set out below, should be withheld on the basis that the exemption in Section 38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 would apply if a request were, at this stage, to be made for the information
 - 2021-22 Record of Compliments
 - 2021-22 Record of Complaints