

Report to:	QSMTM Q3 2023-24
Report by:	Helen Gardner-Swift, Head of Corporate Services (HOCS) Liz Brown, Finance and Administration Manager (FAM)
Meeting Date:	14 February 2024
Subject/ Title: (and VC no)	Report on Service Standards 2023-24 Q3 VC200898
Attached Papers (title and VC no)	2023-24 Record of compliments – Q3 2023-24 Record of complaints – Q3

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 2023-24 Q3
 - complaints received and how they have been dealt with in 2023-24 Q3.

Recommendation and actions

- It is recommended that:
 - the SMT notes the CR
 - the SMT agree the publication arrangements set out in paragraph 29.

Executive summary

Reporting - Compliments 2023-24 Q3

- Each financial year we record the compliments that we have received about our services. In 2023-24 Q3 we recorded 23 compliments, a 23% decrease on the number received in 2022-23 Q3 (30 compliments).
- A total of 92 compliments have been received in Q1-Q3, 2023/24
- There are no service standards or targets relating to compliments and the following should be noted:
 - Almost 50% of the compliments (11) related to our Enquiries Service, thanking us for our prompt helpful responses
 - The attached pdf document “Service Standards - Record of Compliments” provides details of the compliments received.
- Information on compliments is published in the Annual Report.

Complaints

- The Complaints Handling Procedures (CHP) define 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.”

8. A complaint may relate to:
 - failure or refusal to provide a service
 - inadequate quality or standard of service or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
 - dissatisfaction with one of the Commissioner’s policies or its impact on the individual
 - failure to properly apply the law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
 - conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor (except where there are arrangements in place for the contractor to handle the complaint themselves)
 - disagreement with a decision except where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, for example an appeal to resolve the matter
 - the Commissioner’s failure to follow the appropriate administrative process.
9. The above list provides examples and does not cover everything.
10. We value all complaints, treat them seriously and take the appropriate action in accordance with the CHP.
11. Information on complaints is published on our website (quarterly by way of this CR) and in the Annual Report.

Reporting - Complaints 2023-24 Q3

12. This CR analyses the number of complaints received and responded to in 2023-24 Q3 as regards the timescales set out in the related KPIs.

13. In 2022-23:

- 14 complaints were received
- 16 complaints were closed (2 complaint cases were open at 31 March 2022 and closed in Q1 of 2022-23 and, therefore, included in the 2022-23 statistics)
- there were no complaints open at 31 March 2023.

14. For 2023-24 Q3, the relevant statistics for complaints received and responded to under the CHP are set out in the tables below:

Stage 1 Frontline Response Received

	2023-24 Q1	2023-24 Q2	2023-24 Q3	2023-24 Q4	2023-24 Total
Total received	0	1	2		3

Stage 2 Investigation Received

	2023-24 Q1	2023-24 Q2	2023-24 Q3	2023-24 Q4	2023-24 Total
Total received	1	0	0		1

Stage 2 Escalation ¹ Received

	2023-24 Q1	2023-24 Q2	2023-24 Q3	2023-24 Q4	2023-24 Total
Total received	0	0	1		1

Response time targets:

15. For both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, the response time targets for closing complaints in full were met.
16. There were no complaints closed at Investigation in Q3

Stage 1 Frontline Response Closed

	Total	Target	Met
No of cases closed	3		
No of cases closed ≤ 5 days	3		
% closed in ≤ 5 days	100%	100%	Y

Stage 2 Investigation Closed

	Total	Target	Met
No of cases closed	1		
No of cases closed ≤ 20 days	1		
% closed in ≤ 20 days	100%	100%	Y

17. 1 complaint was open at Stage 2 (via Escalation) as at 31 December 2023.

Outcome targets

	Total	Outcome	Target	Met
Stage 1	3	upheld	less than 15%	N
Stage 2	1	upheld	less than 15%	N

18. The outcome response targets, in effect, are annual targets and will also be reported on annually. The quarterly reporting helps us to monitor these targets throughout the reporting year.
19. 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.

¹ Escalated complaints are those that have been considered at Stage 1 and then have either moved to Stage 2 at the complainant's request (because the complainant was unhappy with the response at Stage 1) or because they have exceeded the maximum of 5 working days at Stage 1 and, therefore, have automatically been moved to Stage 2

Risk impact

20. 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.
21. 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

22. There is no direct impact identified.

Privacy impact

23. There is no direct impact identified.

Resources impact

24. None identified.

Operational/ strategic plan impact

25. None identified.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

26. None.

Consultation and Communication

27. QSMTM Q3 minute and publication of this report.
28. A service standards report is included in the Annual Report.

Publication

29. 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
 - 2023-24 Record of Compliments
 - 2023-24 Record of Complaints