

Report to:	QSMTM Q4 2023-24
Report by:	Liz Brown, Finance and Administration Manager (FAM)
Meeting Date:	30 April 2024
Subject/ Title: (and VC no)	Report on Service Standards 2023-24 VC205840
Attached Papers (title and VC no)	2023-24 Record of compliments 2023-24 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 2023-24
 - complaints received and how they have been dealt with in 2023-24.

Recommendation and actions

- It is recommended that:
 - the SMT notes the CR
 - the SMT agree the publication arrangements set out in paragraph 27.

Executive summary

Compliments 2023-24

- Each financial year we record the compliments that we have received about our services.
- In 2023-24 we recorded 115 compliments, a 35% increase on the number received in 2022-23.
- There are no service standards or targets relating to compliments
- The majority of compliments came from applicants (62), enquirers (32) and public authorities (12) and thanked us for a number of aspects of our work, mainly:
 - helpful, professional assistance with appeals (at validation and investigation stage)
 - Prompt, clear responses to enquiries
- The attached pdf document “Service Standards - Record of Compliments” provides details of the compliments received.

Complaints 2023-24

- 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.”

9. We value all complaints, treat them seriously and take the appropriate action in accordance with the CHP.
10. Information on complaints is published on our website (quarterly by way of this CR) and in the Annual Report.
11. This CR analyses the number of complaints received and responded to in 2023-24 as regards the timescales set out in the related Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
12. 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.
13. For 2023-24, 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	1	4

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	2

Stage 2 Investigation Received

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

Response time targets:

14. Once complaint at Stage 1 took 7 days to close but all Stage 2 complaints met the response time target.

Stage 1 Frontline Response Closed

	Total	Target	Met
No of cases closed	4		
No of cases closed ≤ 5 days	3		
% closed in ≤ 5 days	75%	100%	N

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

Stage 2 Escalation Closed

	Total	Target	Met
No of cases closed	2		
No of cases closed ≤ 20 days	2		
% closed in ≤ 20 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

15. No complaints were open as at 31 March 2024.

Outcome targets:

Stage 1 Frontline Response Outcome

	Total	%	Target	Met
Upheld	3	75%	Upheld - less than 15%	N
Not upheld	1	25%		

Stage 2 Escalation & Investigation Outcome

	Total	%	Target	Met
Upheld	3	100%	Upheld - less than 15%	N
Not upheld	0	0%		

16. The 6 complaints that were upheld all related to appeal delays.

17. 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.

18. 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.

Risk impact

19. 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.

20. 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

21. There is no direct impact identified.

Privacy impact

22. There is no direct impact identified.

Resources impact

23. None identified.

Operational/ strategic plan impact

24. None identified.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

25. None.

Consultation and Communication

26. QSMTM Q4 minute and publication of this report.
27. A service standards report is included in the Annual Report.

Publication

28. 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