



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13 JUNE 2019
Performance Indicator Report**

Indicator: Customer Complaints resolved within five working days

Code: CS 10

Status: Red

In any organisation, things occasionally go wrong. When this happens we need to know why customers are unhappy with the service they have received so we can try to put things right and ensure that this doesn't happen again in the future. We take all complaints seriously and see all complaints as an opportunity to improve our services.

The procedure for dealing with customer complaints comprises of three stages. Stage One is the initial assessment stage, where the complaint is received from the customer, usually as an email or letter. This is acknowledged within 24 hours and sent to the appropriate Team Leader or Senior Specialist for a response.

If the customer is dissatisfied with the response at Stage One, then they can request to move to Stage Two of the complaints procedure. At this point, the original complaint and any additional submissions are sent to the appropriate Head of Service for a response, again five working days where possible.

If the customer is still unhappy, then they are directed to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will normally only consider complaints after they have been through the Council's own complaints procedure, and investigates the detail of the complaint and the process followed by the Council.

The customer complaints procedure was the subject of a Scrutiny Review conducted in 2007/08 that developed the three stage procedure and the performance indicator that continues to be in operation.

The Pentana system used to log and track the resolution of customer complaints tracks the date that the complaint was received and sets the target date for the complaint to be resolved. In some cases the complaints can be opened and closed within a day, but sometimes due to the complexity of some of the complaints received, and the detailed investigations and interviews required by officers to understand the issues involved, the five working day deadline is not achieved. In these cases, holding letters are sent out to keep the customer informed of the delay to their response and advising of a new date where possible. However, despite us keeping the customer aware of the delay throughout, the system will mark it as not meeting the performance indicator of resolving within five working days.

Work is underway to deliver a more robust system of managing the customer complaints process to deliver a service for customers that is fair to all and delivers prompt responses alongside a performance indicator that gives members a snapshot of the delivery of the service to enable effective scrutiny.