



Falkirk Community Trust

# Complaints Performance Report

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2016-2017

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## Introduction

This is the Trust's annual complaints performance report which provides information on the Trust's performance in responding to complaints, covering the period 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017.

The Trust always aims to provide the highest possible quality of service to our customers, but recognise on occasion things go wrong and fail to meet customer expectations.

A revised Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) was introduced in April 2014 to provide customers with a clear and structured way to provide feedback on their dissatisfaction with Trust services in a range of easily accessible ways. The Trust welcomes feedback as it provides information that helps us to learn from complaints and to adapt and improve the way services are delivered.

## Our Complaints Procedure

The Trust's complaints procedure is based on a two-stage process outlined below. The procedure seeks to resolve customer dissatisfaction as close as possible to the point of service delivery and to conduct thorough, impartial and fair investigations of customer complaints.

**Stage One** Issues that are straightforward and easily resolved, requiring little or no investigation. This means "on the spot" apology, explanation or other action to resolve the complaint within five working days or less. Complaints are addressed by staff or referred to the appropriate point for resolution. Complaint details, outcome and action taken are recorded and used for service improvement.

**Stage Two** Issues that have not been resolved at the first stage or that are complex, serious or "high risk". This means a definitive response is provided within 20 working days following a thorough investigation of the points raised. Investigations are carried out at Senior Manager level.

**Final Stage** Following investigation, if customers are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with their complaint, they can ask the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it. The SPSO cannot normally look at a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure first.

Full details of the Trust's complaints procedure and how to complain are available on our website: <http://www.falkirkcommunitytrust.org/about/complaint/>.

## Reporting our Complaints Performance

The SPSO have clear governance arrangements for complaints. It is a requirement of The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 for the Trust to have a compliant Complaints Handling Procedure and to satisfy these requirements for reporting and publishing.

This is the Trust's first published report of Complaints Performance and further reports will be published on an annual basis.

Statistics on complaints are based on 8 key performance indicators devised by the SPSO in conjunction with all 32 Scottish councils. These are detailed within:

<http://www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk/wp-content/media/SPSO-performance-indicators-for-the-Local-Authority-Model-Complaints-Handling-Procedure.pdf>.

## Complaints Performance 2016-17

### Indicator 1 – Complaints received per 1,000 of population

*The total number of complaints received per thousand of population.*

	2015-16	2016-17
Falkirk area population	157,140	159,380
Total number of complaints received	135	106
Number of complaints per 1,000 of the population	0.9	0.7
One complaint received per XXX residents of the Falkirk area	1,164	1,504

In 2016-17 the Trust received 106 complaints, 22% fewer (-29 complaints) than last year. 106 complaints received equates to one complaint for every 1,504 residents of the Falkirk area, a reduction from one complaint per 1,164 residents last year. This is an average of 0.7 complaints received per 1,000 of the population for 2016-17.

### Indicator 2 – Closed complaints

*Complaints closed at stage one and stage two as a percentage of all complaints closed.*

	2015-16	2016-17
Total number of complaints closed	126	99
Complaints closed at stage 1	123 (98%)	94 (89%)
Complaints closed at stage 2	3 (2%)	3 (3%)
Complaints closed at stage 2 after escalation from stage 1	3 (2%)	2 (2%)

The term “closed” refers to a complaint that has had a response sent to the customer and at the time no further action is required. The majority of complaints during 2016-17 were closed at stage one, although the percentage resolved at stage one dropped from 98% to 89%. However, the majority of complaints are still resolved as close as possible to the point of service delivery.

A small number of complaints required further investigation at stage two to reach resolution.

### Indicator 3 – Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld

*The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at each stage.*

		2015-16	2016-17
Stage 1 complaints	upheld	44 (36%)	38 (40%)
	partially upheld	37 (30%)	28 (30%)
	not upheld	42 (34%)	28 (30%)
Stage 2 complaints	upheld	0 (0%)	1 (33%)
	partially upheld	2 (67%)	2 (67%)
	not upheld	1 (33%)	0 (0%)
Escalated complaints	upheld	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
	partially upheld	2 (67%)	1 (50%)
	not upheld	1 (33%)	0 (0%)

In general there was an small increase in the relative number of complaints upheld at both stages, compared to last year.

#### Indicator 4 – Average times

*The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage.*

	2015-16	2016-17
Average time to respond to Stage 1 complaints	4	8
Average time to respond to Stage 2 complaints	9	2
Average time to respond to complaints after escalation	17	4

The average time to fully respond to complaints at each stage reflects the requirement for thorough investigation of points raised by stage two complaints. The average time to fully respond to complaints increased significantly for stage 1 complaints, and exceeded the 5-day timescale for resolution. Processes have been identified to improve Trust responses and quickly resolve complaints within the required timescale.

#### Indicator 5 – Performance against timescales

*The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and twenty working days.*

	2015-16	2016-17
Stage 1 complaints closed within 5-day timescale	102 (79%)	71 (70%)
Stage 2 complaints closed within 20-day timescale	2 (33%)	3 (60%)
Escalated complaints closed within 20-day timescale	2 (67%)	2 (100%)

The Trust's complaints procedure requires complaints to be closed within five working days at stage one and twenty working days at stage two. The Trust closed fewer stage one complaints within the set five-day timescale in 2016-17, a slight drop from the previous last year, leaving room for improvement. It is recognised that customer satisfaction with the handling of their complaint is enhanced by quick resolution. The Trust strives to ensure these timescales are met in all cases.

### Indicator 6 – Number of cases where an extension is authorised

*The number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the five or twenty working day timeline has been authorised.*

	2015-16	2016-17
Stage 1 complaints where extension was authorised	9 (7%)	3 (3%)
Stage 2 complaints where extension was authorised	2 (33%)	1 (20%)
Escalated complaints closed within 20-day timescale	2 (67%)	1 (50%)

Our complaints procedure allows for an extension to the timescales to be authorised in certain circumstances. Extensions to the handling of a complaint are a rare occurrence and the incidence of them being granted has decreased this year compared to last year.

### Indicator 7 – Customer satisfaction

Falkirk Community Trust is committed to delivering high quality services that enrich the lives of all Falkirk's residents and visitors. Customer perception and opinion is integral to Trust service improvement: we must listen to our customers and act on what they tell us in order that our customers are satisfied. Responding quickly to customer complaints and comments will build a sense of trust between the Trust and its users.

Customer satisfaction with the Trust is captured regularly via surveys, including through a major high-level survey first carried out in 2012 and was repeated recently in late-2016. It is recognised that it would be useful to capture information relating to people's everyday experiences of Trust services. During 2017-18 we plan to continue developing customer feedback systems to enable customers to consistently comment on their experiences of Trust products and services. Information gained from these will be used to improve our performance.

### Indicator 8 – Learning from complaints

The Trust takes all complaints seriously and is committed to using information gained from complaints to improve our services. Complaints give us valuable information that we can use to improve customer satisfaction. Our complaints handling procedure helps us to address a customer's dissatisfaction and may also prevent the same problems that led to the complaint from arising again.

Complaints received during 2016-17 are summarised below, and categorised where specific themes have emerged.

Complaint	No	Learning outcomes
Access to facilities	3	Access requirements reviewed and improvements considered when upgrading facilities.
Anti-social behaviour	1	Management arrangements reviewed regularly.
Asset condition	4	Informs capital planning and facility improvement works.
Cleanliness	6	Informs facility operating plans, specifications and training needs.
Customer service	9	Customer care focus and introduction of world host training

Policy	9	Taken account of where possible and /or appropriate.
Pricing	3	Customer comments considered in the review process undertaken annually.
Programme	13	Taken account of where possible and/or appropriate.
Service provision	18	Needs of majority of customers taken account of when introducing changes.
Staff	7	Dealt with in individual staff meetings and appraisals.
Systems	5	Customer comments help the commissioning of new customer-facing systems.

## Summary of Complaints Performance

For our staff, complaints provide a first-hand account of customer views and experience. Resolving complaints early saves resources and creates better customer relations. Every Trust employee has received awareness training of our complaints procedure with appropriate staff trained in complaint handling and recording using our Customer First system.

The Trust's senior management team scrutinise complaints performance twice-yearly at their management meetings and are reported annually to the Trust Board. Complaints performance is also published annually on the Trust's website in line with the SPSO's complaints handling procedure.

In summary, complaints performance for 2016-17 included:

- A big reduction in the number of complaints received;
- A small increase in the relative number of complaints upheld;
- The average time to respond to stage 1 complaints increasing;
- A reduced number of in complaints requiring an extension to resolve.

## Contact Us

If you would like to find out more about our complaints procedure, or about our annual report, please contact us.

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