

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF CUSTOMER FEEDBACK  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2023 – 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024**



## **FOREWORD**

This report provides an overview of the operation of the Customer Feedback Scheme (CFS) including details of the level of feedback received, as well as proposed developments and improvements to the scheme for the year 2023/24.

Overall, CFS contacts to the Council for 2023/24 have increased by 38% in comparison to 2022/23, with the number of CFS contacts remaining low and accounting for less than 0.2% of the total contacts recorded by the Council's Contact Centre. Within this overall position, there was a positive increase of 163% customer comments following work with services to raise the importance of capturing customer feedback and 800 complaints received, representing a 37% increase on the previous year, and can in part be correlated to frontline service changes to waste management.

Improvement work was progressed on process enhancements, adoption of new digital systems and strengthening data capture arrangements, and analysis and reporting that has enabled the CFS service to be more effective and efficient in its overall management. Building upon previous work, this has ensured that all customer interactions including comments, compliments and complaints are more effectively recorded, with data quality and accuracy further improved as we have migrated away from legacy systems to modernised digital platforms. With migration to the new digital platform completed mid 2023/24, the benefits of a full year usage of new process and systems will be reported in 2024/25.

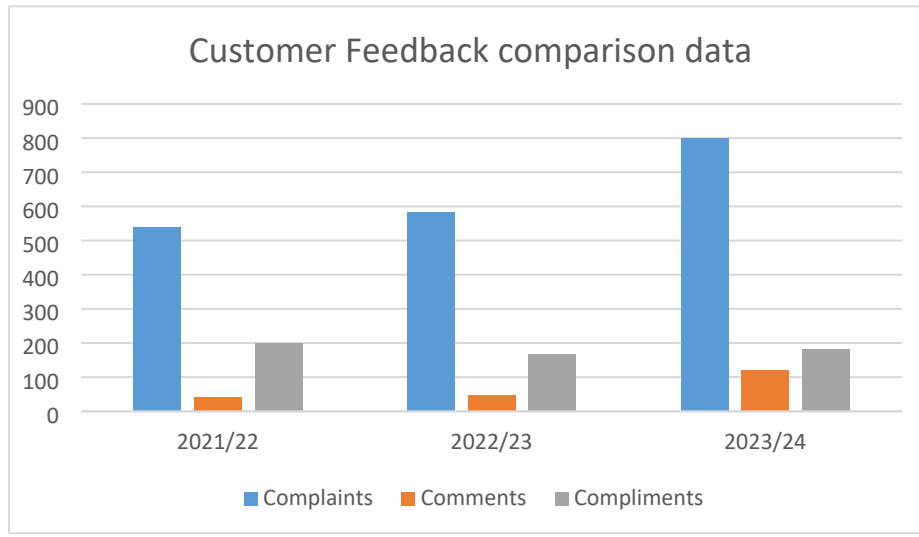
To maximise the benefit of the new process and digital systems, training for service area complaint coordinators has been undertaken, and services now have access to their own feedback and complaints performance data that provides the ability to better inform service delivery. This will continue to be an area of focus for improvement with plans to pilot the use of digital feedback devices in customer facing locations to capture feedback.

Jayne Thomas, Service Improvement, Customer Feedback and Engagement Manager

## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK BY SERVICES AREA 2023/24

Service Area	Complaints by Stage		Total complaints	Comments	Compliments	Total Feedback
	1	2				
Arts and Theatres	1	0	1	0	2	3
Bereavement Services	3	0	3	0	0	3
Contact centre	6	2	8	2	11	21
Corporate Estates	8	0	8	0	4	12
Council tax/Sundry Debtors	64	1	65	5	5	75
Crosscutting	33	3	36	1	8	45
Democratic Services and comms	4	0	4	0	1	5
Education and Inclusion	30	2	32	4	4	40
Finance	5	0	5	0	0	5
Frontline Services	425	14	439	82	97	618
Heritage Services and Heritage Park	1	0	1	0	7	8
Housing	23	2	25	2	1	28
Housing Benefit	7	1	8	0	0	8
Human resources	7	0	7	1	0	8
Information management	2	0	2	2	1	5
Insurance	4	0	4	0	0	4
Legal	11	0	11	0	1	12
Leisure	16	0	16	7	4	27
Libraries	4	1	5	0	3	8
Parks, countryside, parks maintenance and Pontypridd Lido	15	0	15	7	5	27
Public health	34	4	38	3	5	46
Prosperity and Development	44	16	60	5	23	88
Trees and allotments	7	0	7	0	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1103</b>

## KEY THEMES FOR CUSTOMER FEEDBACK



	2021/2022	2022/23	2023/24
• Complaints	540	582	800
• Comments	41	46	121
• Compliments	200	168	182
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>1103</b>

### Key Themes

- A total of 1,103 feedback items were logged for 2023/24 which is an 38% increase compared to 2022/23.
- Ongoing work has improved the capture and reporting of feedback in a number of service areas; however, this will continue to be a priority area for improvement during 2024/25 to further modernise data capture / reporting processes that are paper based.
- A 2023/24 priority for improvement was increasing the number of comments from customers and we positively saw a 163% increase in the number of comments received.
- Frontline services remain the service area with the highest level of feedback, these primarily in relation to waste management.
- Comments, compliments, and complaints have been more effectively recorded, with data quality and accuracy further improved as we have transitioned away from legacy systems to modernised digital platforms.
- Customer feedback through the Council's website and by e-mail remains the preferred option for customers to communicate with the Council.

- The number of customer complaints made up less than 0.2% of all customer contacts recorded by the Contact Centre.
- The Council received 800 complaints through the Customer Feedback Scheme (a 37% increase on the previous years), 94% of which were resolved at Stage 1 with only 6% progressing to Stage 2.
- There is a correlation of the increase in complaints in part due to frontline service changes to waste management.
- Performance in relation to complaint resolution at stage 1 remains consistent and is a positive reflection on complaint handling across the Council.
- 56% of Stage 1 complaints were dealt with within 10 working days with 15.7% being resolved within 20 working days. Combined, performance is 72% for 20 working days (Public Services Ombudsman timescale for monitoring performance) slightly lower than the performance target of 75% and consistent with performance in 2022/23, in the context of increased demand. 49% of Stage 2 complaints were dealt with within the designated 20 working days with 25% of those responded to within a 10-day period.
- 48.5% of complaints were determined to be not upheld, 30% were upheld or partially upheld, 1% were withdrawn, 2.5% were deemed not to merit an investigation and 18% had no determination recorded. (Whilst we continue to record those complaints that are partially upheld the Complaint's Standards Authority no longer accepts this as a valid finding and all partially upheld complaints for their recording purposes will be considered upheld).
- The number of upheld complaints identifying necessary service improvements is low across all services areas and whilst it may be the case that there are no actions to be taken as a result of an individual complaint, identifying themes is critical in informing future service delivery.
- 9 complaints received identified equality issues, 2 identified Welsh language issues and 10 identified issues relating to Data Protection. Across all 3 areas the figures remain consistent with 2022/23 and information continues to be shared with the relevant teams in the Council for identified themes to be addressed.
- Only 64 complaints made about the Council were referred to the Public Services Ombudsman, the total number of complaints equates to 0.27 complaints per 1,000 residents. This puts the Council in the top quartile for the lowest number of complaints per 1,000 residents out of the 22 local authorities, with 0.36 complaints per 1,000 residents being the average across all Welsh local authorities during 2023/24.
- The number of complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman remains low and, excluding Children's Services and Adult Social Care, represents 5% of all complaints received. Out of all complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman, there were no findings of maladministration with complaints either passed back to the Council for local resolution, being closed with no investigation required or was out of the Public Services Ombudsman's jurisdiction.

## EXAMPLES OF COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Service Area	Detail of Compliments (Total received 182) Comments (Total received 121)
<b>Frontline Services/Drainage</b>	<i>I telephoned the out of hours emergency service last Saturday about 4pm. I'd dropped my mobile down a drain. I could see it and there was no way of rescuing it myself. The lady I spoke to said she would contact the Highways dept. When she rang back, she said that the Highways dept would send a drain cleaner lorry out on Monday to see if they could get it back. I was very grateful for this..... This morning, hero number 2 called at the house. STAFF NAME from the drain cleaning team called at my home to check which drain it was. Within 20 minutes he had returned with my rather wet mobile. I would like to thank both STAFF NAME and the lady who I spoke to on the emergency line on Saturday for the excellent and sympathetic way they dealt with my predicament. Service, over and above the call of duty!</i>
<b>Prosperity and Development/Regeneration and Grants</b>	<i>I would just like to personally thank RCT and the Regeneration team for their advice, help and assistance. This was the first time that I had applied for a grant with the Regeneration Team and to be honest it was refreshing how straight forward the application form was and how quickly and efficiently the team helped me to address any follow up questions. I am so grateful for their help and advice. Thank you. I was also lucky enough to have met some members of the team at a local event. It was great to see them in person, so helpful and friendly. Thank you.</i>
<b>Leisure</b>	<i>Please review exercise classes across all sites: I want an hour class but there seems to be a focus on short 45 minutes classes. By the time you have done a warmup and cool down it's pointless. There is a lack of circuit training classes - please add more during evenings and weekends. I'd like there to be more Saturday/Sunday classes available. Limited options currently. These could be added before/after your birthday party bookings.</i>
<b>Frontline service/recycling/bulky Item collection</b>	<i>I have recently moved to RCT and would like to thank you all for a really smooth transition into the area. I did not receive a very good service from my previous local authority in terms of waste collection (this was often forgot) or easy of contacting for additional services. It has been a completely different experience since moving and even the 3 weekly general waste collection isn't a huge impact because the recycling is so easy to do. I want to give a specific thank you to the two gentlemen who were on bulk waste collection today (24th August) in Church Village as they did a fantastic job at collecting an old bed. It really is great to live in an area where the services being provided are so top notch.</i>
<b>Frontline services/waste and refuse.</b>	<i>I contacted RCT regarding street guttering clearing &amp; overhanging trees on the lane approaching my property and within two days, the works were completed to a very high standard. I think it is important to give credit where its due when everyone is so quick to complain. Thank you RCT for the speed and quality of the work carried out.</i>
<b>Leisure</b>	<i>What a wonderful team you have at the Lido in Pontypridd, I visited today with my two grandchildren for the 1<sup>st</sup> time and nothing was too much trouble for staff, but a special thank you to STAFF NAME on reception, what an amazing lady she was today.</i>

**Libraries**

*I turned up at the Library in Pontyclun today and needed to print some documents off, the gentleman that greeted us was so helpful as I didn't know how to do the printing, he stayed with me making sure I done it correctly. He is a credit to your workforce. I just wanted to tell you as people are quick enough to complain.*

## YOU SAID WE DID

The following information demonstrates how services have used customer comments received either through service engagement (SE), direct feedback (DF) or Planned Consultations (PC) to review their services and consider what improvements can be made to better meet the needs of residents and visitors to Rhondda Cynon Taf. Whilst this information is not specific to the Customer Feedback Scheme, it positively demonstrates service areas proactive consideration and response to resident's feedback.

Service Area	Feedback source *	You said	We did
<b>Arts and Culture</b>	DF	You asked us to enable Hynt card* concessions and carers to be able to book their theatre and event tickets online.	We made it possible for bookings using the Hynt card with concessionary discounts, to be made online.
<b>Arts and Culture</b>	SE	You asked us to provide more information on what is happening locally in terms of the arts service and sector as a whole.	We created an Artists Newsletter and Improved our communication of jobs and opportunities within the creative sector.  Offered CPD opportunities and training for facilitators.  Started an artist network, meeting in person once per quarter.
<b>Libraries</b>	DF	You said that the children's area in Llantrisant Library needed more space, that there was no room for pushchairs and that the entrance was too near the automatic exit doors.	We moved shelving to create more space and made the entrance bigger and more accessible to accommodate pushchairs.
<b>Libraries</b>	DF	You said there was not enough Welsh Language books in Porth library.	We located a spare kinder box and filled it with Welsh Language children's books as well as increasing our allocation of new Welsh language stock to Porth library.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Feedback source *</b>	<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
<b>Libraries</b>	DF	Teenagers at Treorchy Library asked if there could be a piano in the library as they had seen and used one in Pontypridd library.	We sourced a large electronic keyboard (donated) that is now available for use in the teens library space.
<b>Leisure</b>	DF	You asked for more weekend fitness classes in Hawthorn LC.	Classes now run on Saturdays and Sundays.
<b>Leisure</b>	DF	Female customers asked for a Glute machine in Rhondda Fach SC.	We purchased the equipment and added to the fitness suite.
<b>Heritage Services</b>	PC	Numerous groups have asked the Heritage Service to deliver talks on RCT's history.	A number of sessions have been set up across RCT.
<b>Heritage Services</b>	DF	Regarding the display in the museum above the cafe in the Ponty Lido. <i>"The gentleman in the photo is my uncle and I think the story of my uncle should be detailed with his photograph, as it was in the original display, when the Lido first opened in 2015."</i>	The information will be added as soon as possible, and we've asked the relative if they would be able to expand on NAME'S story any further. Any further information will be used in conjunction with the RCT War Memorials project and the commemorative of NAME in the Park.
<b>Heritage Services</b>	SM	Comments on social media suggested that the first bench on the Rhondda Fach active Walkway should be moved to face the river.	The bench was moved to face the river within 24hrs of the comments being received.
<b>Armed Forces</b>	DF	We were asked to provide training for older veterans to help them access social media and use digital devices.	With successful funding, we launched our Veterans Connected project, enabling veterans to hire digital tablets and receive training through Digitalisation Wales.
<b>Armed Forces</b>		Following the Lord Etherton Review on the historical Armed Forces 'Gay ban,' we were asked to provide support to LGBTQ+ veterans.	In collaboration with Cardiff Council, we established our first LGBTQ+ veterans group, 'Served and Proud.' This group has welcomed LGBTQ+ veterans to come together and receive support as needed.



Service Area	Feedback source *	You said	We did
Armed Forces	DF	The Cwm Parc Blitz committee requested us to take over the upkeep and carry out various repairs to the memorial site.	The Council has now taken over the upkeep of the memorial. They have repointed the stonework, planted new trees, and ordered a memorial bin along with an information board.

\*a Hynt card is a national access scheme that works with theatres and arts centres in Wales.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES**

Following the review of the Customer Feedback process and analysis of the data presented in this report below are key improvement priorities for 2024/25:

### **Complaints Process and Training**

Working with services to capture comments/compliments/complaints and improve their CFS logging, categorisation and the triage of these feedback items. Other areas of training will be undertaken in line with the ongoing optimisation of digital systems.

### **Data and Insight**

Working with services to develop data dashboards in order to enable improved data analysis and provide insight for services to better inform service delivery.

### **Improved Customer Feedback**

Working with services that currently receive comments and feedback in writing and seek opportunities to digitise this feedback to allow for ease of reporting and to provide greater insight into customer's needs.