

## Frequent Complaints

## Appendix 2

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Percentage change from 2014/15 and most frequent cause for complaint</b>	<b>Comments from Services</b>
Waste and Recycling	+53%  Missed collections and repeatedly missed collections.	In 2015-16 it was identified that contamination of recycling bins was increasingly becoming a significant issue with recycling loads being rejected by the reprocessor. In order to tackle this issue there was a focus on households with contaminated bins and communications informing residents what could and could not go into the bin. Bins which were put out for collection but were contaminated were rejected and stickered as contaminated. This action led to an increased number of 'missed collections' complaints. Additionally, some households with contaminated bins were then refilling their black bins with the contamination and re-presenting after collections were made, or reporting the bin as missed. The recent survey conducted during June 2016 with Cheshire East Council's Citizens' Panel (Influence Cheshire East) bore extremely positive results, with satisfaction with the waste collection service overall up to 90%, up from 69% in 2008. Results for satisfaction with refuse collection and doorstep recycling are also similarly high and also up since 2008. This is also reflected in the increased number of compliments received by the service in 2015-16.
Highways Operations	No change  Slow response/fix to street lights reports. Lack of response to highways reports. Unhappy with cases being closed with no action or explanation. Unhappy with the information available on the online: Report it, track it" facility.	Reduced Highway Investment Programme (HIP) funding has limited the ability of the Highway Service to continue improvement of the overall network condition but this has been offset by an improved communication strategy and more efficient practices, which have prevented an increase in complaints.
Council Tax, Business Rates and Billing	+15%  Unhappy with recovery action taken	Whilst complaints for this area remain below the national average, the increase is

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	(including bailiffs). Unhappy with account processing, e.g. application of exemptions, details not being updated.	acknowledged. There were an additional 11 complaints in respect of the 80,000 recovery notices issued. The wording of these notices is continuing to be reviewed in order to make them as clear as possible for customers to understand and act upon. The other area of increase relates to discounts. A review of single person discounts was undertaken during 15-16 which caused a small number of residents to question the reason and method. It is encouraging that there has been a reduction in complaints relating to staff and in respect of response to telephone enquiries.
Development Management	-7%  Lack of contact/response from Officers. Dissatisfaction with Officers' recommendations and decisions. Applicants unhappy with the time taken to determine applications.	2015/16 was another challenging year for Development Management with continued high levels of planning applications and planning appeals. Efforts to recruit replacement staff were not successful which resulted in continued high staff caseloads. Improved customer communication support helped to reverse the trend of increased complaints during the last couple of years. Amendments to the recruitment and retention offer for Development Management staff have been put in place, which should help to deliver further improvements.
Adults Social Care	+13%  Charging – changes to charging policy resulted in a small number of complaints; there were a number of challenges to the local authority decision to take an individual's	There has been an increase in complaints and in compliments. There was a public consultation exercise and a comprehensive communication programme about the changes to charges and individual issues were addressed as they arose; the LGO has not yet found fault with the local authority's processes on decisions on the issue of Deprivation of Assets; administrative errors were quickly

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	<p>house into account as part of the financial assessment; an IT problem resulted in some administrative errors. Communication – delays in responding to requests for assistance and breakdown of communication between services. Care Plans – concerns about whether a care plan is sufficient and about some gaps in service provision.</p>	<p>rectified. Significant efforts are being made to reduce delays where these are occurring and to recognise the importance of communication between partners. There is an ongoing need for dialogue between assessors and users/ carers as part of the assessment and support planning process; it is recognised that there are some pressures on service capacity which are actively being addressed.</p>
<p>Children's Social Care</p>	<p>+6%</p> <p>Inaccuracies and delays in minutes, reports and assessments. Some minutes and assessments not received. Lack of information and updates. Lack of notice about meetings. Telephone messages not returned. Lack of written correspondence.</p>	<p>Even though there was a marginal increase in complaints during 2015/16, there was also an overall increase in referrals and assessment of children and families in need (an additional 700) and so the percentage of complaints to referrals actually reduced from 3.2% in 2014/15 to 2.75% in 2015/16. Overall, Children's Social Care received 3790 referrals and conducted 4200 assessments, with only 104 of these resulting in a complaint. Nevertheless, there are recurring themes and the service is continuing to work to address these</p>