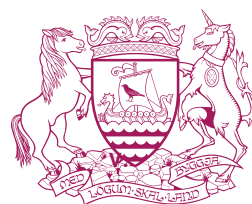


Feedback Monitoring Report **2020/21**



Shetland Islands Council
shetland.gov.uk/comments_complaints

Introduction



Our Ambition, the Council's Corporate Plan says

"We will maintain a clear focus on delivering excellent services to the public"

And

"We will be a learning organisation with a culture that supports psychological safety, intellectual bravery, experimentation, innovation and a willingness to learn from our mistakes, our experiences and from employee, customer and community feedback without fear or defensiveness."

This report sets out the Council's annual performance on complaints handling. You will see from the data that we receive a very small number of complaints compared to the number of customer contacts and the wide range of services delivered to our community.

Our focus on excellent service means we generally achieve a positive outcome at our first point of contact.

However, every single complaint is an opportunity for the Council to reflect and learn. We welcome customer feedback, to help us to identify and address problems for customers, and to improve our services.

We produce this report to:

- learn from our mistakes so that we can improve our services
- encourage people who have cause to complain to make comments and suggestions to help us make these improvements
- show how we've responded to complaints and what we've done to try to put things right
- publicise and explain our complaints process

Maggie Sandison

Chief Executive

The image is a vertical photograph of a historic stone building. The upper portion shows a clock tower with two circular clock faces. Below the tower is a dark roof with two small, pointed dormer windows. The lower portion shows a stone wall with arched windows and a flagpole in the foreground. The entire image has a purple color overlay.

Summary

The Model Complaints Handling Procedures were revised in 2019 by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman in consultation with all sectors. As part of that, the local authority and social work procedures were combined into a single procedure.

The revised Complaints Handling Procedure will help us provide better services, improve relationships with our customers, enhance public perception of our council and help us keep service users at the heart of the process, while enabling us to better understand how to improve our services by learning.

As well as launching the revised procedure from April 2021, a number of communications were sent out to staff. Effective Complaints Handling Training was developed and made available to all staff on the council's online iLearn training platform. Managers were given the opportunity to attend online Investigation Skills training hosted by the SPSO.

The indicators within this report have been produced by the SPSO in consultation with local authority stakeholders and Audit Scotland.

"Handled well, complaints provide a low cost and important source of feedback and learning for organisations to help drive improvement and restore a positive relationship with customers who feel let down by poor service. Handled badly, they erode public confidence and trust in public services."

Source: Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

Our Ambition

'Our Ambition 2021-26' is based on a vision of working together to create a POSITIVE, CONFIDENT and SUSTAINABLE future for Shetland. A Shetland where the community's OPPORTUNITIES attract people of all ages to live, work, study and invest in our islands.

As part of our commitment to Excellent Service we must ensure we deliver services right first time through Customer First and applying our learning from complaints and customer feedback.

Our Values

Excellent Service
Taking Personal Responsibility
Working Well Together

"Excellent service is at the heart of everything we do. We provide excellent service by taking personal responsibility and working well together."

We're asking everyone to keep our new values in mind when working with our customers and with each other – excellent service, taking personal responsibility and working well together.

There is no doubt that putting our customers first (whether colleagues or members of the public) will improve the experience they have when they interact with us.

- Taking personal responsibility

by empowering staff to have confidence in handling complaints as soon as they are received. Often, complaints can be de-escalated at frontline by calm and polite staff.

- Working well together

by passing on complaints to the relevant service to be investigated, and ensuring complaints are then followed up and closed within timescales.

- Excellent Service

by dealing with complaints in a calm, polite and professional way, by passing on information and following up on complaints within timescales we can provide an excellent service.



SHETLAND PARTNERSHIP

The Shetland Partnership brings together public, private and voluntary sectors, community councils and Shetland Charitable Trust to oversee and deliver the community plan.

There are FOUR main areas of change:

Participation, People, Place and Money

"Shetland is a place where everyone is able to thrive; living well in strong, resilient communities; and where people and communities are able to help plan and deliver solutions to future challenges"

Participation – people participate and influence decisions on service and use of resources.

- 59% of people in Shetland are satisfied with local services (health care, schools and public transport)

Indicators of change: Satisfaction with public services

People are encouraged to make complaints about the standard of service they receive. This allows us to learn from the feedback we receive and change the way we deliver our services.

indicator

Complaints received per 1,000 population

01

This indicator allows us to track our progress against previous years, and compare ourselves to other authorities.

During 2020-21, we recorded **98** complaints from the public. Using the population estimate of 22,920 that gives a value of:

4.3

complaints
per 1000 population



In 2019-20 we received 104 complaints. Which is 6% less complaints compared to last year. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic perhaps fewer complaints were made as people were less likely to be using some council services.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
- Shetland	82	104	98
- Orkney	101	121	97
- Western Isles	72	75	63

indicator

Closed Complaints

02

This indicator allows us to monitor what proportion of our complaints are dealt with "at front-line" (Stage 1). Dealing with complaints quickly and efficiently is a priority for the Council and the Scottish Ombudsman. **The proportion of Stage 1 complaints should be high.**

Stage 1

complaints are usually straightforward issues that can be resolved requiring little or no investigation

Stage 2

complaints are issues where it is apparent that an investigation should take place to establish the cause of the issue

Stage 2 "after escalation"

complaints where the issue has not been resolved to the customer's satisfaction at Stage 1 and have therefore been escalated to a more thorough (Stage 2) investigation

2019/2020



8.5%

were closed at **Stage Two after escalation** from stage 1 (9 complaints)

69.8%

were closed at **Stage One** (74 complaints)

21.7%

were closed at **Stage Two** (23 complaints)

2020/2021



16.8%

were closed at **Stage Two after escalation** from stage 1 (16 complaints)

72.6%

were closed at **Stage One** (69 complaints)

10.5%

were closed at **Stage Two** (10 complaints)



The proportion of complaints at Stage 1 has remained much the same as last year. The proportion of Stage 2 and Escalated complaints combined are much the same as last year however it is interesting to see the number of escalated complaints has

increased by 50%, this may indicate we are getting better at dealing with complaints at Frontline (Stage 1) then a proportion of those are later escalated to do a more thorough investigation.

indicator

03

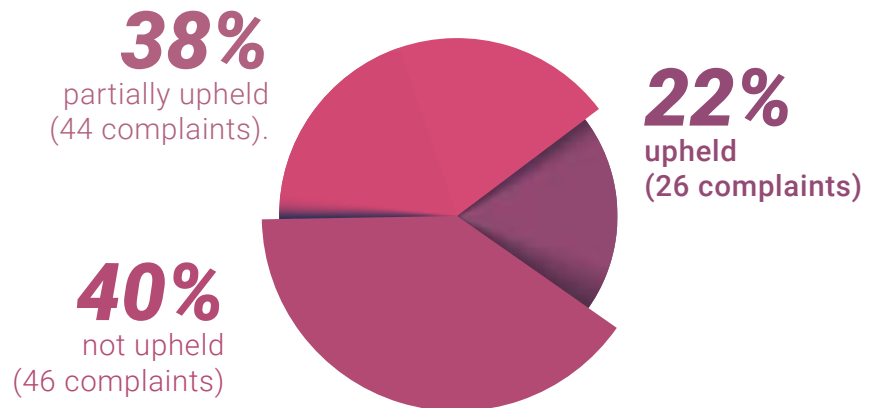
Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld

This indicator allows us to monitor what proportion of our complaints were upheld, or partially upheld.

Outcome of all complaints combined (Stage 1 + Stage 2 + Stage 2 escalated):

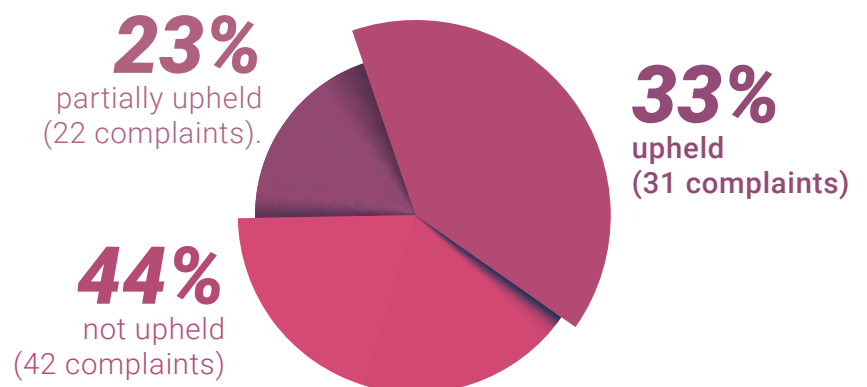
Outcome of all complaints combined 2019/2020

(Stage 1 + Stage 2 + Stage 2 escalated)



Outcome of all complaints combined 2020/2021

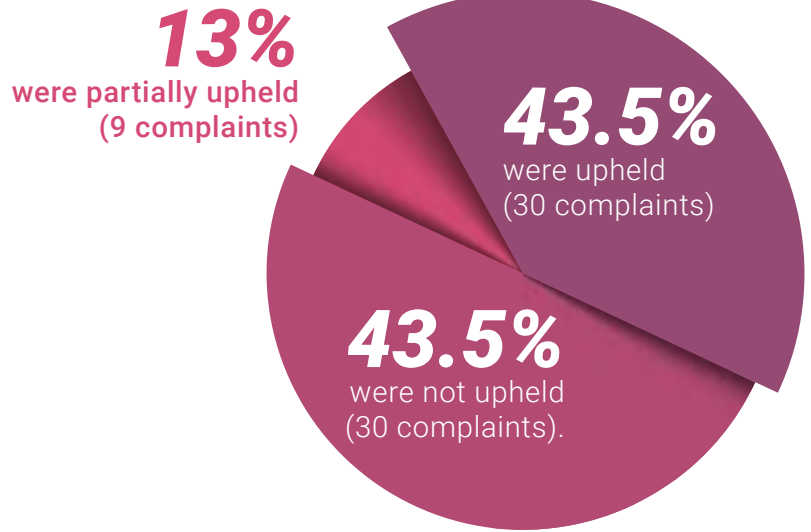
(Stage 1 + Stage 2 + Stage 2 escalated)



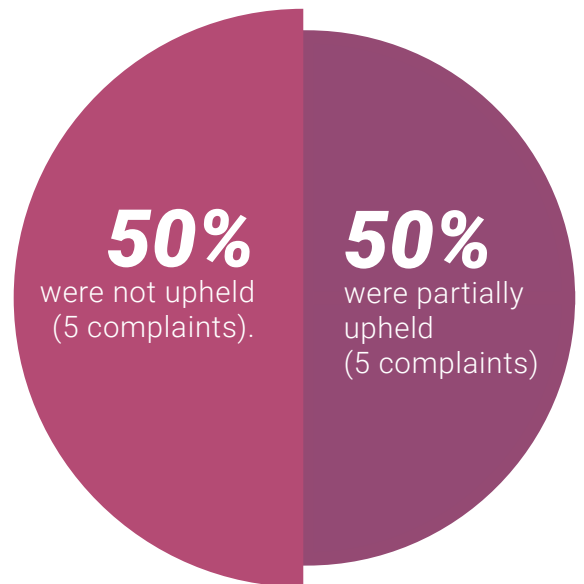
Complaints sometimes have more than one element to them, especially more serious complaints. This often results in a decision of "partially upheld" when one or more elements of service were not delivered to an acceptable standard, but others were.

We learn from these complaints. Where complaints are upheld (or partially upheld), we investigate the "root cause" and consider actions to improve performance and minimise the likelihood of similar events in the future.

Outcome of Stage One complaints

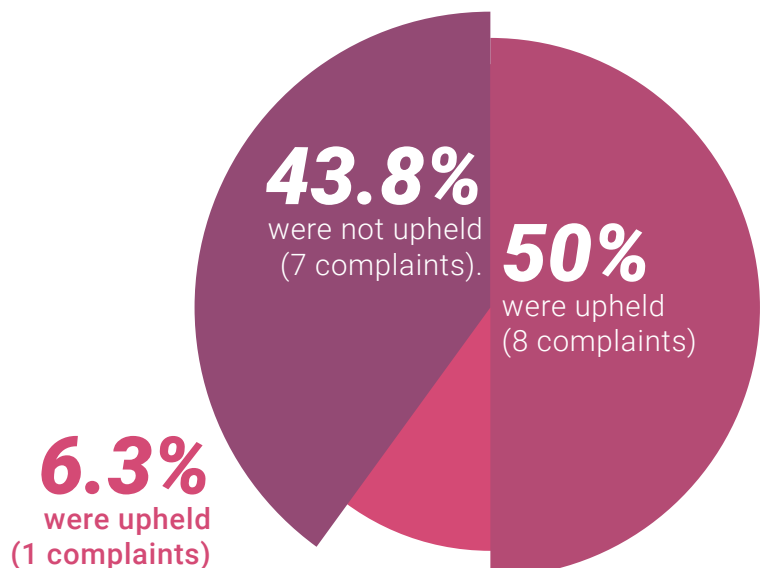


Outcome of Stage Two complaints



Outcome of Stage Two complaints

escalated
from
Stage 1



indicator

Average Times

04

This shows how long, on average, we're taking to deal with complaints. The target for Stage 1 complaints is 5 days, and the target for Stage 2 complaints is 20 days. This allows us time to fully investigate the more serious, Stage 2, complaints.

There are occasions when a 5-day time extension can be granted. This should only be done in order to gather more information, resulting in a more accurate investigation. Extensions should be agreed with the person making the complaint.

The indicator is measured in working days, and should be as low as possible, while not compromising the quality of the investigation.

Average time in working days to close complaints 2019/2020

Stage One

5.1 days



Target 5 days

Stage Two

22.9 days



Target 20 days

Average time in working days to close complaints 2020/2021

Stage One

5.4 days



Target 5 days

Stage Two

22.2 days



Target 20 days

Stage Two escalated complaints

The average time to close complaints after escalation was 43 days compared to 49 days in 2019/20. This has a target maximum of 25 days.



Our performance handling Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints has improved significantly over the last two years. In 2018/19 our average days for Stage 1 was 12.7 days and 35.6 days for Stage 2. This shows we are making great progress towards our targets.

indicator

05

Performance against Targets

This indicator shows the proportion of complaints closed within the agreed deadlines.

Ideally, we'd be closing all our complaints within the national guidelines. However, sometimes it's prudent to continue the work to identify causes and solutions beyond the deadline date. Obviously, these cases should be in the minority. **The following indicators should be as high as possible.**

2019/2020

Stage one

61% **39%**

Within
target

Outwith
target

Stage two

48% **52%**

Within
target

Outwith
target

Stage two escalated

33% **67%**

Within
target

Outwith
target

2020/2021

Stage one

65% **35%**

Within
target

Outwith
target

Stage two

80% **20%**

Within
target

Outwith
target

Stage two escalated

12.5% **87.5%**

Within
target

Outwith
target



Our Stage 1 figures have shown a steady improvement over the last two year's. Disappointingly our Stage 2 Escalated figures have deteriorated. It is clear from the data that we are taking too long to close Stage

2 Escalated complaints within the target timescales.

indicator

06

Cases where an extension was granted

Extensions are granted where a short, but necessary, extension is needed to ensure we deal with the complaint properly. Extensions can only be approved by a Senior Officer, and only when the customer agrees. E.g. when we are waiting for information from an external source, such as a contractor.

This indicator shows the proportion of complaints that fulfilled the criteria to be granted an extension by a Senior Officer. **These figures should be low**, but extensions are often necessary to avoid further issues.

2019/2020

Stage one

2.7%

2 in 72

Stage two

13%

3 in 23

Stage two escalated

33.3%

3 in 9

2020/2021

Stage one

1.4%

1 in 69

Stage two

0%

0 in 10

Stage two escalated

25%

4 in 16



The proportion of extensions is low, as it should be. However, there may have been opportunities to extend Stage 2 Escalated complaints and remain within target.

indicator

Customer satisfaction

07

We have many methods for collecting feedback on our service delivery. Many Services, such as Housing, send regular follow-up surveys after customer contacts.

From the 2019-20 Housing Service Tenant Satisfaction Survey, 79.4% of tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared to the Scottish average of 89.2%. This is a slight improvement than the previous year.

Satisfaction with repairs remains high at 95% compared with the Scottish average of 91%.

You can view the full Housing Report card here:

[- Housing Report Card 19/20 – Shetland Islands Council](#)

Tenants satisfied with repairs services

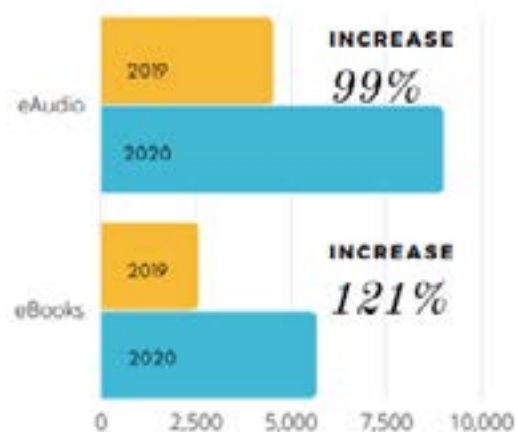
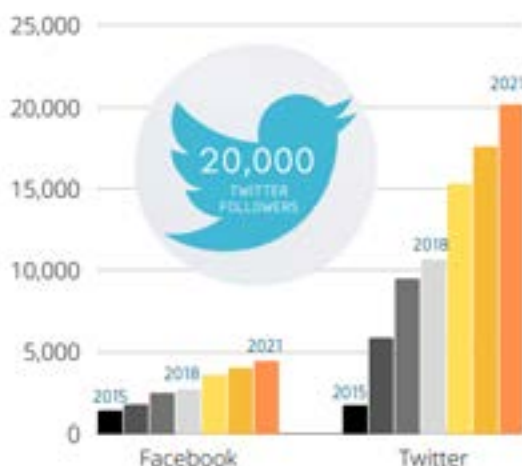
2019/2020	95.00%
2018/2019	95.01%
2017/2018	91.21%

Shetland Library Performance

Shetland Library now has 20,000 Twitter followers, an increase in 5,000 since 2019, and 10,000 since 2018.

To find out more about the Shetland Library you can view their 2020-21 performance report here:

www.shetland.gov.uk/downloads/file/3389/public-performance-report-2020-2021



"You have been brilliant. thank you very much. I have looked forward to getting my bags o books delivered to my door. Thank you all."

"E-book loans have been exponential. I've had several comments from members who have discovered ebooks who previously wouldn't have been interested."

"The library has done a great job reopening, we have missed visiting."

Adult Learning - Learner Feedback Summary 2019-2020

A total of 38 forms were returned for the 2019-2020 class programme. From the learner evaluation forms received and answers completed:

- 97% thought the room and facilities were suitable
- 93% thought the time and duration of the course was suitable
- 99% thought the tutor knew the subject well
- 99% thought there was ample opportunity to ask questions
- 99% found the tutor to be helpful and supportive

Adult Learning - Learner Feedback Summary 2020-2021

A total of 28 forms were returned for the 2020-2021 class programme. From the learner evaluation forms received and answers completed:

- 96% thought the time and duration of the course was suitable
- 98% thought the tutor knew the subject well
- 97% thought there was ample opportunity to ask questions
- 100% found the tutor to be helpful and supportive

Business Gateway Satisfaction Tracker 2020-21

(12 month average figures)

75% **Overall Satisfaction**
(extremely satisfied, very satisfied or satisfied)

74% **Service delivered met expectations**
(met or exceeded expectation)

80% **Benefit the business will gain from service received**
(all saying yes, support will be beneficial – excluding those who report it is “too early to say”)

79% **Would recommend Business Gateway**
(definitely or probably)

Shetland LEADER/ EMFF Programmes 2014-2020 Evaluation

This survey was conducted between August and December 2020 and involved a number of sources including documentation, telephone and video consultations, surveys, meetings. The full report can be accessed here:

[Evaluation of the Shetland LEADER and EMFF Programmes for 2014-2020 | Shetland LEADER](#)

*“Young people are more involved due to the marine aquarium, able to learn about marine life and local culture and history; more use of the pier by the local community, young people, yachters, anglers etc. and improved facilities”
(Skeld Pier upgrade)*

*“The hall is used by the local history group and rowing team; health/social benefits of the gym; volunteering benefits of the volunteers; recycling through a scrap store as people donate unwanted items”
(Aald Skul)*

*“Increased mental health service provision, engaged with more people than planned, as many men as women also engaged; identified people in Shetland in caring positions”
(Mind Your Head)*

Building Standards National Customer Satisfaction Survey 2020

Overall satisfaction rate with the Building Standards Service scored 8.2 out of 10, compared to 7.6 the previous year.

You can find out more about this in our Spotlight on services feature at [Spotlight on services – Shetland Islands Council](#)

With You For You

Information is gathered through the With You For You process by asking customers who receive care services if their needs are being met. This information is then shared with The Integration Joint Board (IJB) who oversee the work of the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

Percentage of people feel their needs have been achieved, or mostly achieved after assessment

2019/2020	95%
2020/2021	94%

Climate Conversation Survey 2021

Our recent Climate Change Survey has shown that respondents recognise the need for Shetland to do its part to tackle climate change. With 848 responses, 81.7% said they believed the world is facing a climate emergency.

To read the full article visit our latest news section at [Survey results show a real desire for change – Shetland Islands Council](#)

“This is something we will be focussing keenly on as we begin to work on the ‘net-zero route maps’ for both the Council and Shetland, which will lay out our plans, projections and framework as our work progresses.”

Ryan Thomson, Chair of the Environment and Transport Committee

Critical Childcare Survey

Critical Childcare was established to support families and to allow key workers to continue delivering essential services. A survey was sent carried out between July and August 2020.

Has Critical Childcare been a positive experience for your child/children?

Yes	43
No	2

Local Government Benchmarking Framework

Figures show that all our services assessed had satisfaction levels higher than the national averages. These are shown below:

Data show below is for 2017-2020

Local libraries:	84.4% (Scotland 72.4%)
Social museums and galleries:	90.2% (Scotland 69.3%)
Local parks and open spaces:	90.4% (Scotland 83.5%)
Local leisure facilities:	90.6% (Scotland 70.1%)
Refuse collection:	87% (Scotland 74.3%)
Street cleanliness:	73.4% (Scotland 62.6%)

All
above
national
average

Data show below is for 2019-2020

Early years provision: Adults supported at home	100% (Scotland 90%)
Services and support had an impact on their quality of life:	88.2% (Scotland 83.5%)
Services and support allow them to live independently:	93.8% (Scotland 70.1%)
Have a say in how help, care, or support is provided:	87.3% (Scotland 74.3%)

More indicators and information can be found at <http://scotland.mylocalcouncil.info/>

FOI requests

2019/20

1136 responses / 93 over 20 days / **1043 within 20 days** / 92% OSIC
Performance rating Very Good.

2020/21

899 responses / 120 over 20 days / **1019 within 20 days** / 88% OSIC
Performance rating Good.

Compliments

In 2020/21 34 Compliments were recorded on our central system, compared to 13 the previous year. Our aim is to continue to improve the capture of all feedback in future years.

indicator

08

Learning from complaints

The positive value of customer complaints

Customer Complaints can be positive! We should embrace all the feedback we receive to gain a better understanding of our customers reasons for complaining then engage with our staff on ways to improve.

One of the most important aspects of the Complaints Handling Process is to learn from the feedback we receive from our customers

Staff should be encouraged to see the opportunities that feedback provides for gathering valuable information, allowing the identification of failures so that we can then learn from those to make improvements.

We must have clear systems in place to act on issues identified in complaints.

As a minimum, we must:

- seek to identify the root cause of complaints.
- take action to reduce the risk of recurrence.
- systematically review complaints performance reports to improve service delivery.

Source: [Shetland Islands Complaints Handling Procedure, Part 4 Governance.](#)

Complaints are reported by directors to elected members on a quarterly basis as part of the performance reporting cycle.

Learning Board

The Learning Board was set up as part of the council's Customer First project. The Corporate Management Team sits as the Learning Board every six weeks to extract learning from all customer interactions, share positive feedback, learn from negative experiences, understand what is driving the difference between good and poor engagement, and make improvements where we can.

One of the actions in the council's new

Communications Strategy is to make sure learning from these meetings is shared across the organisation, and so updates are included in some of our internal communication publications. Over the course of 2020-21, the Learning Board also served as a route through which key pandemic-related information could be considered on a regular basis to help inform strategic planning and decision making.

CASE STUDIES

Children's Services



Bullying concerns

A parent had concerns regarding bullying and homophobic abuse of their child whilst at school. On investigation, it was uncovered that the school had not recorded the incidents on the appropriate information management system, as per the expectations in Shetland Islands Council's Anti-Bullying in Shetland Schools' Policy, therefore the parents were not informed of the incidents at the time. The child had become increasingly upset and expressed to their parents that they did not want to go to school.

- *What have we learned?*

The school now record all incidents of this nature on the central information management system. Training was provided to all staff on the 'Anti-Bullying in Shetland Schools Policy'. Children's Services will continue to support the school to ensure that all aspects of the procedures and guidance within the policy are consistently followed. School staff continued to support the child and monitor the situation. Parents were provided with fortnightly updates on the child's progress and wellbeing by the schools management team.

Helen Budge

Director Children's Service

Community Health and Social Care Services

Poor Communication

Family concerns after a customer's stay at a care home for a period of respite. The customer's family felt that staff did not have adequate training to support the customers complex care needs. Communication at point of discharge was unclear and incomplete. This left the family with concerns around the quality of support their family member had received and concerns around the level of training and understanding held by the staff team.

- *What have we learned?*

Communication with families to be clear and informative. Staff contacting a family at point of discharge must have the correct information available to them and be able to answer any queries they may have. The service should ensure it is always the most appropriate member of staff available that undertakes that conversation.



Brian Chittick

Director Community Health and Social Care

Infrastructure Services



Removal and disposal of funeral wreathes

Complaint received from family member after artificial flowers had been removed from the graveside and placed in a nearby bin. Further upset was caused when the apology received was felt to be insincere.

- *What have we learned?*

Discussed with staff the importance of discretion around the disposal of wreathes and flowers. A Burial Services Complaint Procedure has been created and the Burial Services Management Rules have been updated.

John Smith

Director Infrastructure Service

Development Services

Neighbour notification not received

A member of the public had learned from the local newspaper that an extension was planned for the local school. Complainant's home was within the 20 metre boundary but a neighbour notification had not been received.

- *What have we learned?*

Complainant had received planning permission some years ago to extend part of their property and the base layer to the authority's mapping system had not yet captured the change to the property's garden ground area. Therefore when the neighbouring notification was sent out it did not include this part of the property. There is now a new procedure in place to ensure all neighbours are captured with a check for superimposed plots on the neighbour notification process for each planning application.

Neil Grant

Director Development Service



Looking ahead

Corporate Services

With our Best Value assurance audit imminent, we need to ensure we use the learning from complaints in a constructive way to demonstrate our commitment to continuously improve our services to our customers, the people of Shetland.

Coastal Communities Fund

Work has begun on a new reporting mechanism template to gather updates/outcomes delivered by projects through a short questionnaire/survey for applicants to complete to tell us what they think about the application & claims process.

It is intended that these survey questions will help to inform us of any issues that need to be addressed, and will be used as an improvement tool going forward, considering the feedback from users.

Children's Services

The key priorities for the Children's Services department are: Early Learning and Childcare; Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing; Sustaining Education in Rural Communities; Employability; and The Promise.

We will continue to deliver key actions under these priorities while ensuring that the child is at the centre of everything we do.

To leave feedback on Council services, visit:
www.shetland.gov.uk/feedback/

You can find our quarterly monitoring online:
www.shetland.gov.uk/contact-us/make-complaint



www.shetland.gov.uk

 @ShetIslandsCll

MONITOR PLEASE **GREAT**
REVIEW **UNDERSTANDING**
CERTAINLY RIGHT **SATISFIED** THANKS
SMILE **HELPFUL** POSITIVE **CALM**
HELP QUICKLY **FANTASTIC**