

Summary of Compliments and Complaints 2015/16 to 2017/18

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report advises Members of summary details regarding the compliments and complaints received during 2017/18, with comparisons to 2016/17 and 2015/16.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.

3 Background

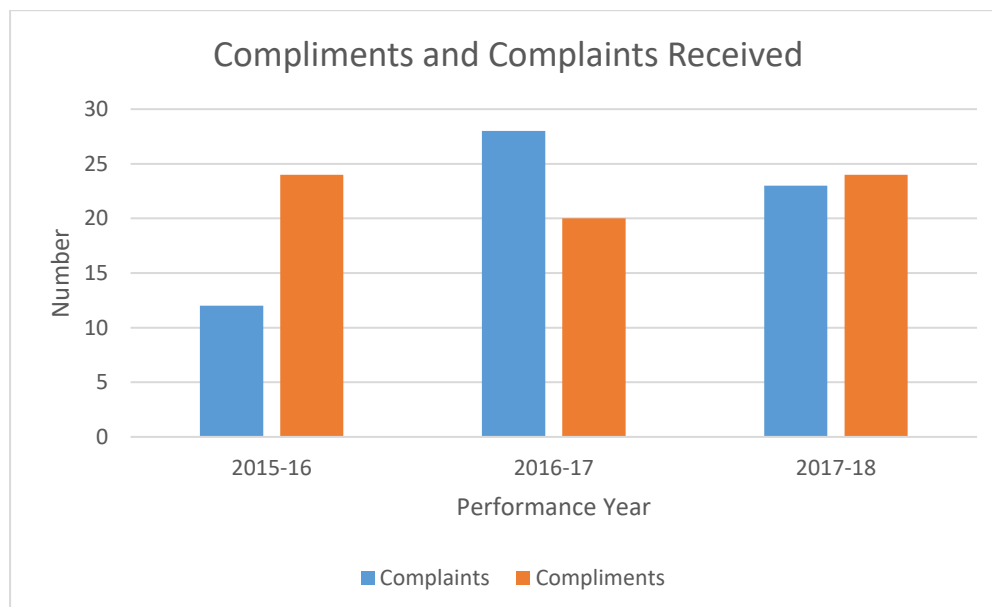
The Fire Authority's vision and strategic aims stress a commitment to providing high quality services to the community of Shropshire. The Service takes seriously both compliments and complaints made about the quality, nature or delivery of the services provided. Comments are also used to review the effectiveness of the provision of these services. Complaints are recorded, as are compliments, when they are addressed to the Chief Fire Officer or come to the attention of Executive Support Officers.

The Fire Authority has in place a Comments and Complaints Procedure to ensure complaints are handled in a fair and objective manner and that views expressed about the quality of services provided are acknowledged.

4 Summary of Compliments and Complaints Received during 2015/16 to 2017/18

Figure 1 (below) illustrates the number of compliments and complaints received in 2017/18, compared with the previous two-year period.

Figure 1



Compliments

The details of all complimentary communications received via the Executive Support Officers are circulated to the personnel concerned, their line management and Executive Officers. They are also published in the Service's weekly internal newsletter, 'The Pink', for all staff to appreciate and on the Service's website for public information. Care is taken, at each stage, to ensure that any personal, identifying details are removed.

The number of compliments received is likely greater than shown in Figure 1, which represents only those addressed directly to the Chief Fire Officer or passed to Executive Support. Compliments are sent direct to stations, watches or departments and may not always be passed on to Executive Support Officers.

The number and variety of compliments received make it difficult to benchmark specific areas of performance over a given period of time. However, Appendix A to the report provides a breakdown by type of the compliments received in 2017/18, together with some examples.

Complaints

Appendix B provides a breakdown of complaints received. There are no nationally prescribed classifications for recording complaints but, to facilitate local benchmarking between the periods 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18, complaints received have been categorised into six key areas.

These are:

- Damage to property
- Poor driving behaviour
- Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service
- Failure to deal correctly with an incident / inspection / procedure
- Environmental
- Other

Of the 23 complaints lodged during 2017/18:

- 4 were substantiated
- 8 were partially substantiated
- 11 were unsubstantiated

Only a minority of complaints continue to be fully substantiated but there has been a noticeable decrease over the last two years in those that are unsubstantiated (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.

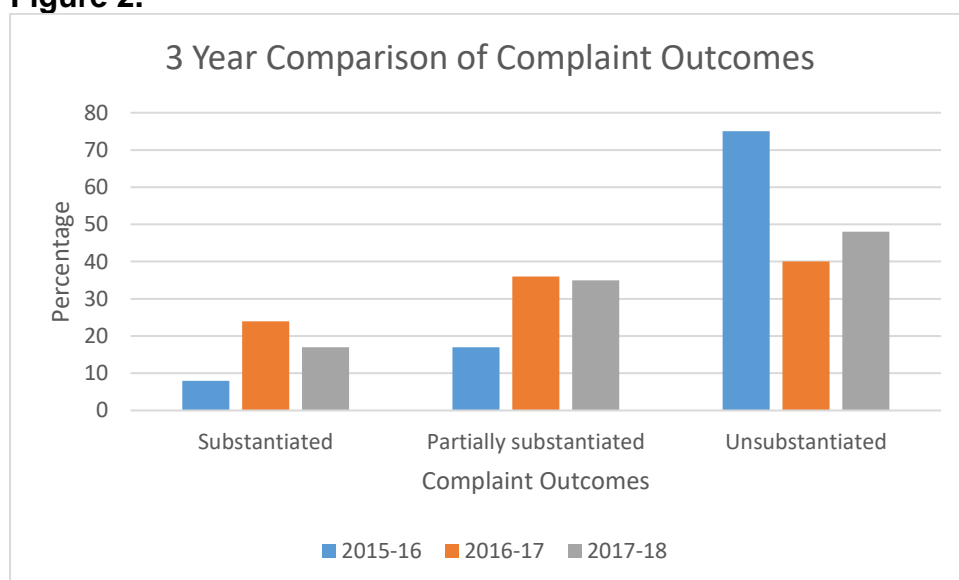
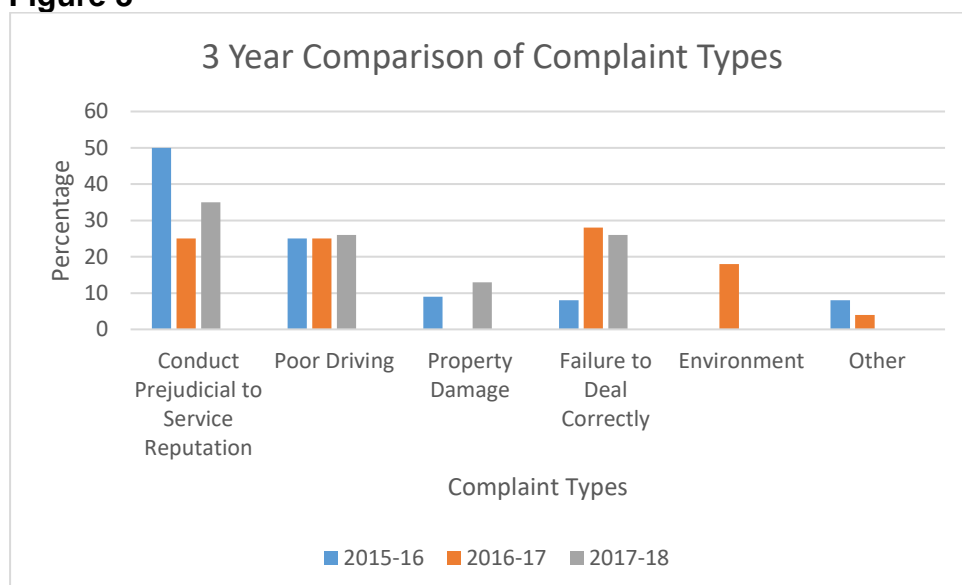


Figure 3



5 Management of Compliments and Complaints

Performance Standard

All complaints are fully investigated, with a written response provided to the complainant, advising of the outcome of the investigation. The Fire Authority sets a performance standard of 28 working days, in which to furnish the complainant with a written response, or advise of an extension of time, where necessary. This standard has consistently been achieved.

Appeals

Complainants dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation are entitled to appeal to the Chief Fire Officer and / or the Chair of the Fire Authority. If the complainant remains dissatisfied following this, an appeal may be directed to the Local Government Ombudsman.

No appeals against the outcome of a complaint have been made to either the Chief Fire Officer, Chair of the Fire Authority or the Local Government Ombudsman during 2017/18.

Lessons Learned

All lessons learned from complaints are communicated in the most appropriate manner to staff, with remedial action taken as necessary, e.g. retraining, discipline etc. Actions taken in relation to individuals are not published within this report, as it would not be appropriate.

6 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

Appendix A

Summary of Compliments received 2017/18

Appendix B

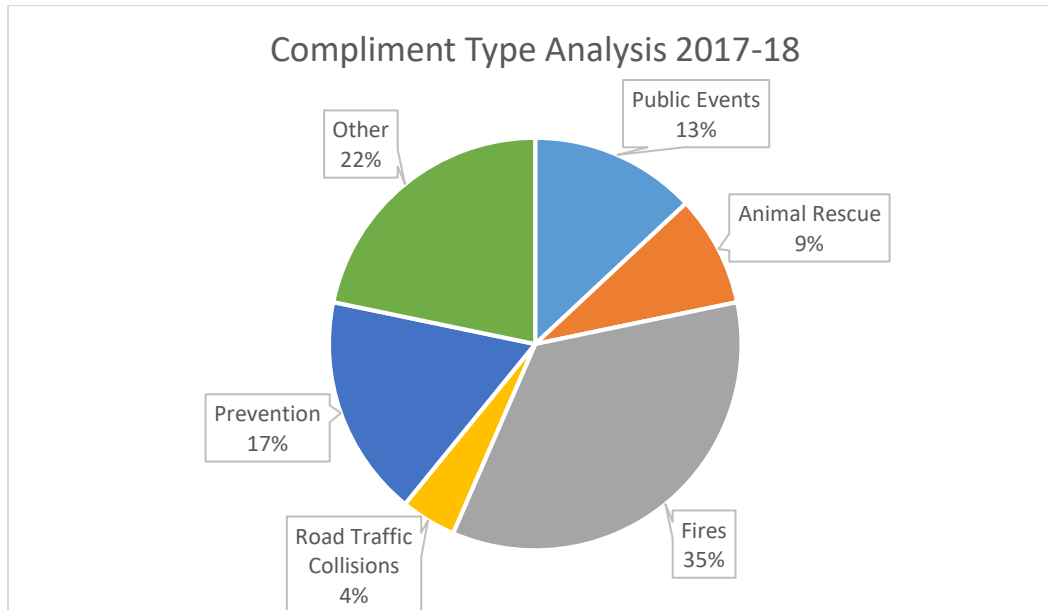
Summary of Complaints received 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18

9 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Summary of Compliments Received 2017/18

Figure 4



NB 'Other' includes appreciation received following the rescue of children accidentally locked in property, a non fatal incident at Shrewsbury Railway and evidentiary assistance to a court case.

Examples of Compliments Received

Below are some examples of compliments received during 2017/18. More can be viewed on the Service website via the following link:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/management-support/compliments-and-thanks>

Thank you letter from the Director of Adult Services and Housing, Shropshire Council to the Chief Fire Officer.

"I am writing to formally thank you for the support your Service gave to our START (Short Term Assessment and Reablement Team) during the severe weather episodes we experienced this winter.

The START service support people in their own homes to get back on their feet after spending time in hospital. They visit people up to four times a day, seven days a week and these visits are often critical to the wellbeing of those service users.

Back in December the team were supporting a very vulnerable person in Bridgnorth and you kindly supported us with a driver to collect our worker and take them to the gentleman's house twice in one day during the heavy snowfall. Again in March we needed to reach a vulnerable person in the Church Stretton area following heavy snow and your Service enabled our worker to carry out this visit.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your assistance; I firmly believe that this type of cooperation between our organisations is crucial to our commitment to support local communities."

Please see below a lovely compliment received via our website following an incident in Bridgnorth on Tuesday evening (27 March).

"I just wanted to express my thanks and gratitude the men and lady (I think her name was Alice) who attended my property tonight. My 4 year old had locked me out of the house and himself in. They got me back in my property very quickly and professionally and were really lovely to my boy who they offered to have a look at the fire engine, unfortunately he was too upset to appreciate it at the time. Though is now very happy to tell people the firemen rescued him.

Again, thank you so much. It was a horrid situation to be in and you were all great."

Comments received after a large animal rescue on 14 January 2018

Sincere thanks to all crews involved in rescuing my friend's horse today near Shrewsbury. You were all fantastic and professional, keeping calm in a very stressful situation. Thank you.

'Thank you' letter from Salop Leisure

On Thursday, 28 December 2017 a fire broke out in a caravan belonging to one of our customers on our new touring park here at Emstrey.

The response from Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service was excellent, with a fire appliance arriving very promptly. The crew who attended were fantastic. They dealt with the fire quickly and efficiently but equally importantly they were wonderful with some of our very upset customers and helped calm the situation.

We are very grateful to the crew for the outstanding service we received. I would be grateful if you could pass on our thanks to all involved.

Thank you received following a business fire on 3 June 2017.

"I write to express my thanks and gratitude for the response and thoroughly professional way in which all members of the Service performed when the incident at Wood Lane arose on Saturday, 3 June.

Without doubt, the consequences for the business would have been more severe without the swift containment and management of the situation. Please pass on my thanks to all crews and personnel involved and we are confident that Shropshire is in safe hands. once again many thanks.

Received following an incident on 29 April 2017, this expression of thanks

"On 29th April 2017 at Sainsbury's car park in Bridgnorth, my car started to gush out black smoke. A retained crew from Bridgnorth were quickly on scene along with West Midlands Ambulance Service and the Police.

The retained crew were amazing, they were so caring and professional with my 3 children who were in the car. I would like to say how grateful I am for the professionalism shown to me and my family today. All fire fighters were brilliant and a credit to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service".

Summary of Complaints Received 2015/16 to 2017/18

| Type of Complaint | Total 15/16 | Outcomes | | Total 16/17 | Outcomes | | Total 17/18 | Outcomes | |
|--|-------------|-----------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|--|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Damage to property | 1 | 0 | Substantiated | 0 | 0 | Substantiated | 3 | 0 | Substantiated |
| | | 0 | Partially substantiated | | 0 | Partially substantiated | | 1 | Partially substantiated |
| | | 1 | Unsubstantiated | | 0 | Unsubstantiated | | 2 | Unsubstantiated |
| | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn |
| Poor driving behaviour | 3 | 0 | Substantiated | 6 | 2 | Substantiated | 6 | 0 | Substantiated |
| | | 1 | Partially substantiated | | 3 | Partially substantiated | | 4 | Partially substantiated |
| | | 2 | Unsubstantiated | | 1 | Unsubstantiated | | 2 | Unsubstantiated |
| | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn |
| Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service | 6 | 1 | Substantiated | 7 | 0 | Substantiated | 8 | 2 | Substantiated |
| | | 1 | Partially substantiated | | 2 | Partially substantiated | | 3 | Partially substantiated |
| | | 4 | Unsubstantiated | | 4 | Unsubstantiated | | 3 | Unsubstantiated |
| | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 1 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn |
| Failure to deal correctly with an incident / inspection/ procedure | 1 | 0 | Substantiated | 7 | 1 | Substantiated | 6 | 2 | Substantiated |
| | | 0 | Partially substantiated | | 3 | Partially substantiated | | 0 | Partially substantiated |
| | | 1 | Unsubstantiated | | 2 | Unsubstantiated | | 4 | Unsubstantiated |
| | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 1 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn |
| Environmental | | | | 5 | 3 | Substantiated | 0 | 0 | Substantiated |
| | | | | | 1 | Partially substantiated | | 0 | Partially substantiated |
| | | | | | 1 | Unsubstantiated | | 0 | Unsubstantiated |
| | | | | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 0 | Withdrawn |
| Other | 1 | 0 | Substantiated | 1 | 0 | Substantiated | 0 | 0 | Substantiated |
| | | 0 | Partially substantiated | | 0 | Partially substantiated | | 0 | Partially substantiated |
| | | 1 | Unsubstantiated | | 0 | Unsubstantiated | | 0 | Unsubstantiated |
| | | 0 | Withdrawn | | 1 | Withdrawn (Referred to other organisation) | | 0 | Withdrawn (Referred to other organisation) |
| Anonymous | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 0 | |
| Total | | 12 | | | 28 | | | 23 | |