

Summary of Compliments and Complaints 2012/13 to 2014/15

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 2014/15, with comparisons to 2012/13 and 2013/14.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.

3 Background

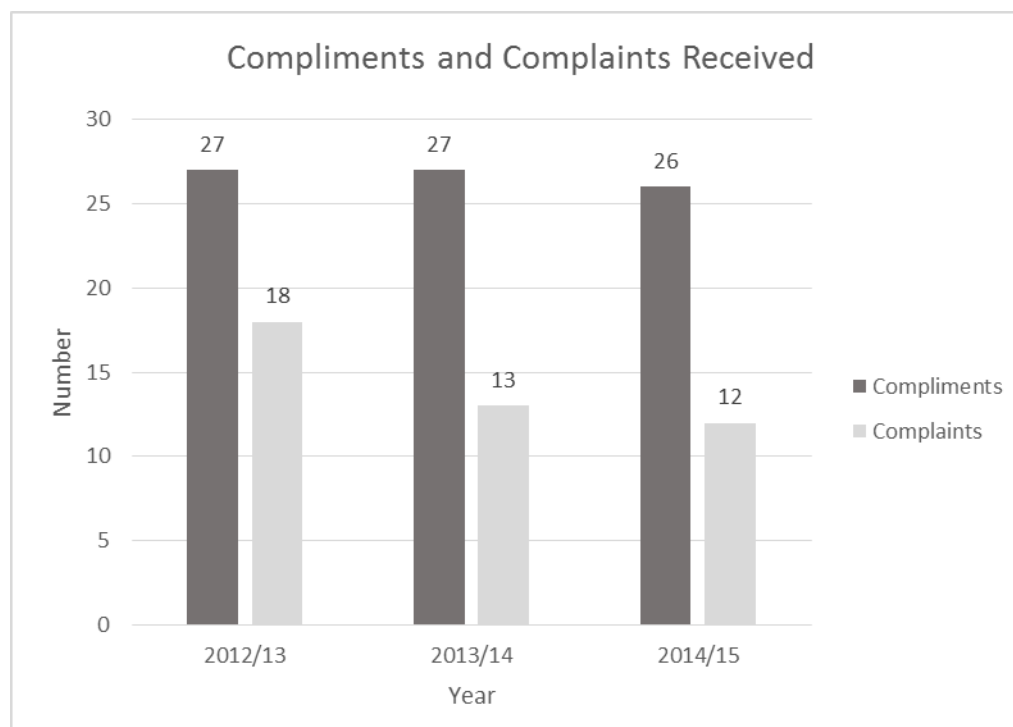
The Fire Authority's vision and strategic aims stress a commitment to providing high quality services to the community of Shropshire. The Service takes seriously both compliments and complaints made about the quality, nature or delivery of the services provided. Comments are also used to review the effectiveness of the provision of these services. All compliments and complaints are recorded.

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 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15

Figure 1 (below) illustrates the number of compliments and complaints received over the three-year period 2012/13 to 2014/15.

Figure 1



Where appropriate, compliments are summarised and posted on the Service's website. All complimentary letters etc. received are made available to each meeting of the Fire Authority and also copied to those, who have been acknowledged for good service within the correspondence. The number of compliments received is actually far greater than shown in Figure 1, which represents only those addressed directly to the Chief Fire Officer or Headquarters. Many more compliments are sent to stations, watches or departments and are not always passed on to Headquarters.

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 2014/15, together with examples of some of the compliments received.

The appendix provides a breakdown of complaints received. There are no nationally prescribed categories for recording complaints but, to facilitate local benchmarking between the periods 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15, complaints received have been segregated into five 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
- * Other

Of the 12 complaints lodged during 2014/15, 5 were fully upheld, 2 were partially upheld, 4 were overturned and 1 was anonymous.

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 or the Local Government Ombudsman during 2014/15.

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. It would not be appropriate to publish the actions taken in relation to individuals within this report.

6 Complaints Procedure Review

The review of the Complaints Procedure is ongoing and it is hoped that this will be completed within the next calendar year. It is unlikely that the review will result in any major changes to the Procedure itself but rather that it will tighten up areas that have been identified as issues, for example ensuring that all relevant departments are informed about complaints when they are received.

7 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

8 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

9 Initial Impact Assessment

This report contains merely statements of fact / historical data. An Initial Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

10 Appendices

Appendix A

Summary of Compliments received 2014/15

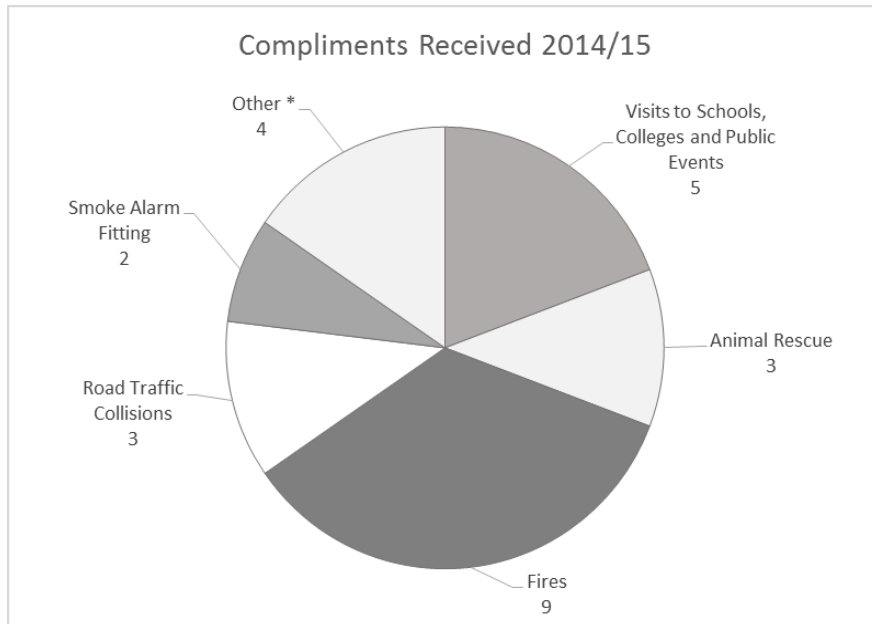
Appendix B

Summary of Complaints received 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15

11 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Summary of Compliments Received 2014/15



* Includes release from objects, flooding response and casualty evacuation from hillside

Examples of Compliments received

Below are some examples of compliments received during 2014/15. More can be viewed on the Service website via the following link:

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

Received on 27 November 2014 following a chimney fire

"We cannot praise your team too highly. Their calm assessment of the situation and the way they dealt with the problem with professional efficiency was exemplary.

We would be most grateful if you would pass on our thanks to all those involved - not only to the crew who helped at this particular incident but also to those behind the scenes who are responsible for the administration and training that results in such an admirable service to the community."

A 'thank you' letter received on 30 May 2014 following an animal rescue

A little note to express a very big sense of gratitude for your prompt and efficient response to my recent call for help. I very much doubt whether our spaniel, Spyder, would have extricated herself unscathed from the wire fence without your calm and professional assistance.

It is wonderful to know that you are always willing to turn out to assist both people and creatures in need.

Received on 20 May 2014 following an incident where a seven year old boy had his hand released from a hosereel

"Dear Firefighters thank you very much for helping me when I was trapped in the hose pipe. My hand has made a full recovery!!!"

Summary of Complaints Received 2012/13 to 2014/15

Type of Complaint	Total 2012/13	Outcomes		Total 2013/14	Outcomes		Total 2014/15	Outcomes	
Damage to property	3	1	Complaints upheld	0	0	Complaints upheld	2	1	Complaints upheld
		0	Complaints partially upheld		0	Complaints partially upheld		0	Complaints partially upheld
		1	Complaints overturned		0	Complaints overturned		1	Complaints overturned
		1	Complaints withdrawn ¹		0	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn
Poor driving behaviour	5	4	Complaints upheld	4	0	Complaints upheld	2	2	Complaints upheld
		1	Complaints partially upheld		1	Complaints partially upheld		0	Complaints partially upheld
		0	Complaints overturned		1	Complaints overturned		0	Complaints overturned
		0	Complaints withdrawn		2	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn
Conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Service	2	0	Complaints upheld	5	0	Complaints upheld	4	1	Complaints upheld
		0	Complaints partially upheld		1	Complaints partially upheld		0	Complaints partially upheld
		1	Complaints overturned		4	Complaints overturned		3	Complaints overturned
		1	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn
Failure to deal correctly with an incident / inspection	4	1	Complaints upheld	2	0	Complaints upheld	2	1	Complaints upheld
		1	Complaints partially upheld		1	Complaints partially upheld		1	Complaints partially upheld
		1	Complaints overturned		1	Complaints overturned		0	Complaints overturned
		1	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn
Other	3	1	Complaints upheld	3	0	Complaints upheld	1	0	Complaints upheld
		1	Complaints partially upheld		1	Complaints partially upheld		1	Complaints partially upheld
		1	Complaints overturned		2	Complaints overturned		0	Complaints overturned
		0	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn		0	Complaints withdrawn
Anonymous²		1			2			1	
Total		18			16			12	

¹ This figure includes those instances where the Service has been unable to take any further action, for example because of a lack of information or evidence

² Anonymous complaints are investigated as far as reasonably practicable with action taken, where appropriate. Anonymous complaints are not included within the overall statistics reported.