

Quarterly Customer Feedback Summary

1st January 2017 – 31st March 2017

Introduction

At Bath & North East Somerset we value our customers and their feedback so we closely monitor all the compliments, comments and complaints that we receive and use the information gained to improve the services that we provide. This process is managed through the Council's Customer Feedback Procedure (details available on the [Council's website](#)).

Customer feedback may include:

- General feedback and suggestions for improvement
- Reports about service failure
- Compliments about good service
- Complaints

We work hard to avoid and minimise complaints but, where they do occur, our procedure defines that they are fairly and courteously treated, reflecting best practice both for the customer and the Council.

This report gives a corporate overview of the customer feedback that has been received and responded to in the past quarter, and notes any key actions or considerations that have resulted from a high level review.

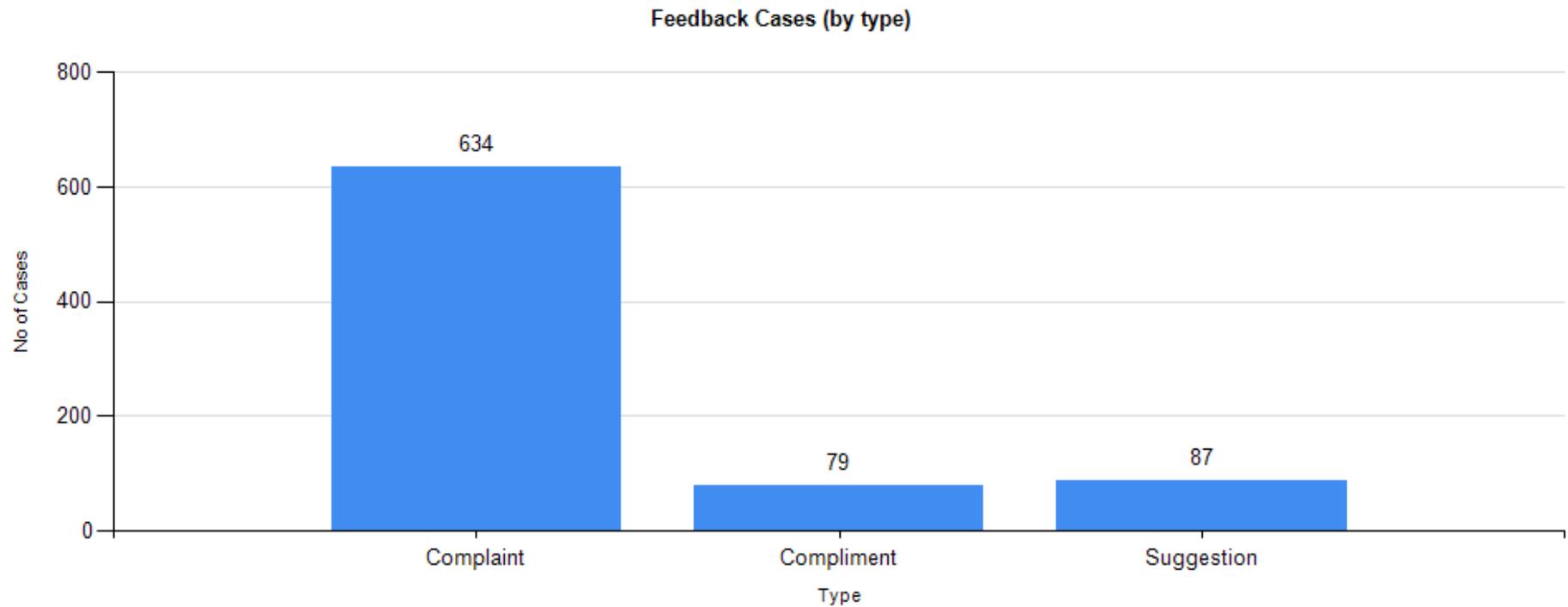
Our Service Teams, responsible for specific services delivered by the Local Authority, handle their own customers' feedback cases and provide quarterly updates on trends, issues or changes that the service is undertaking as a direct or partial result of the feedback they have received. Some of the key outcomes of that feedback are detailed in the "*You said / We did...*" section of this quarterly summary report, compiled directly from the Customer Feedback Officers (CFOs) responsible for each service area.

Period of this report: Quarter 4 2016/17 (January – March 2017)

Exclusions

Some service areas have mandatory or legislative routes for formal complaints. The main areas excluded are: Complaints about Councillors or individual schools, Adult Social Services, Children's Services, and matters over which the Council has no legal authority or powers of action. These complaints are therefore excluded from the corporate process and this report; more information is available from the service directly or on the [Council's website](#)

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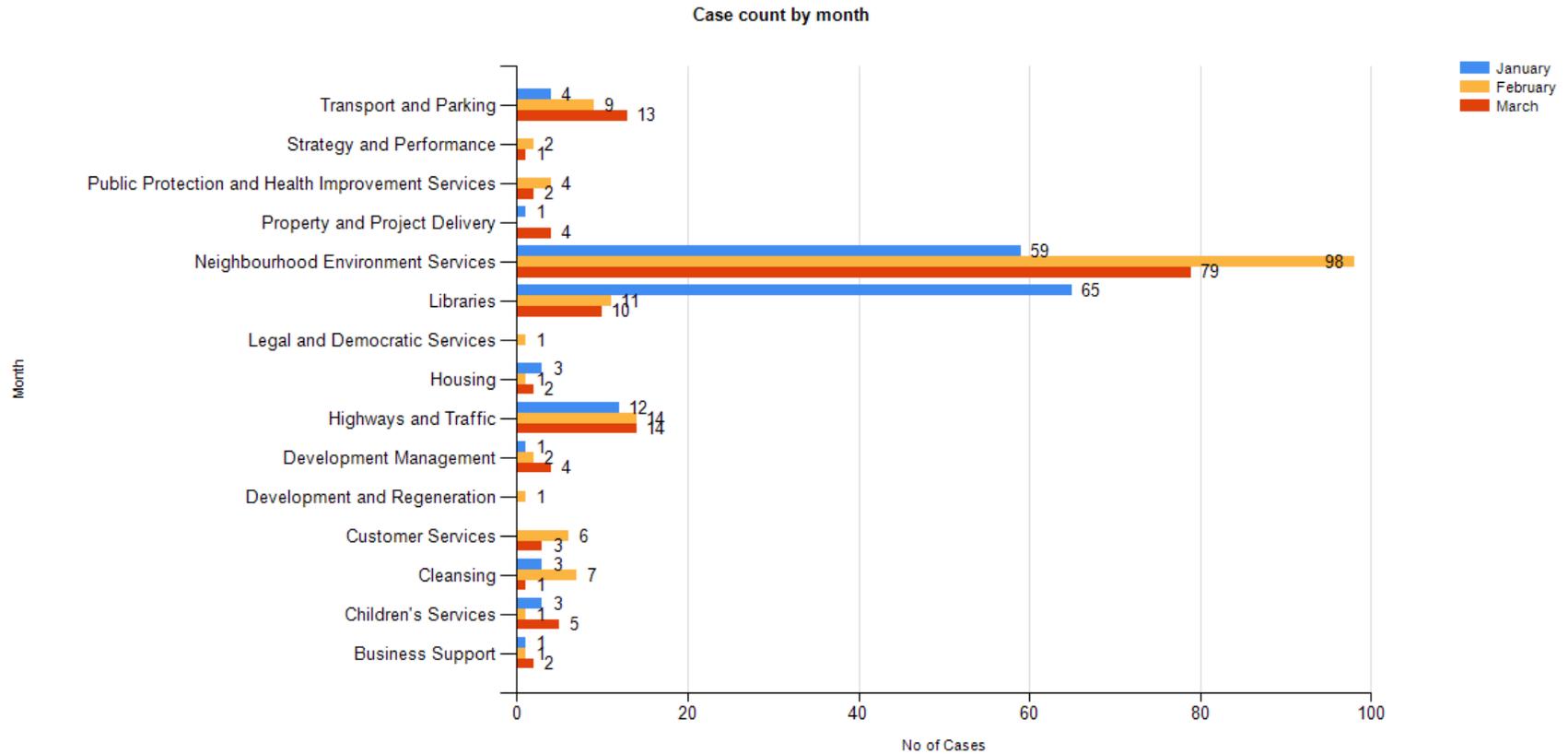
This table shows ALL feedback received – it illustrates all feedback received for all services. It is important to bear in mind that during the same period the Council Connect contact centre handled **31,885** telephone, email and social media contacts

Complaints represents **1.99%** of those contacts.

The table has shown **Feedback** as a whole (**Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions**). The following focus on all **Complaints**, defined as complaints by customers.

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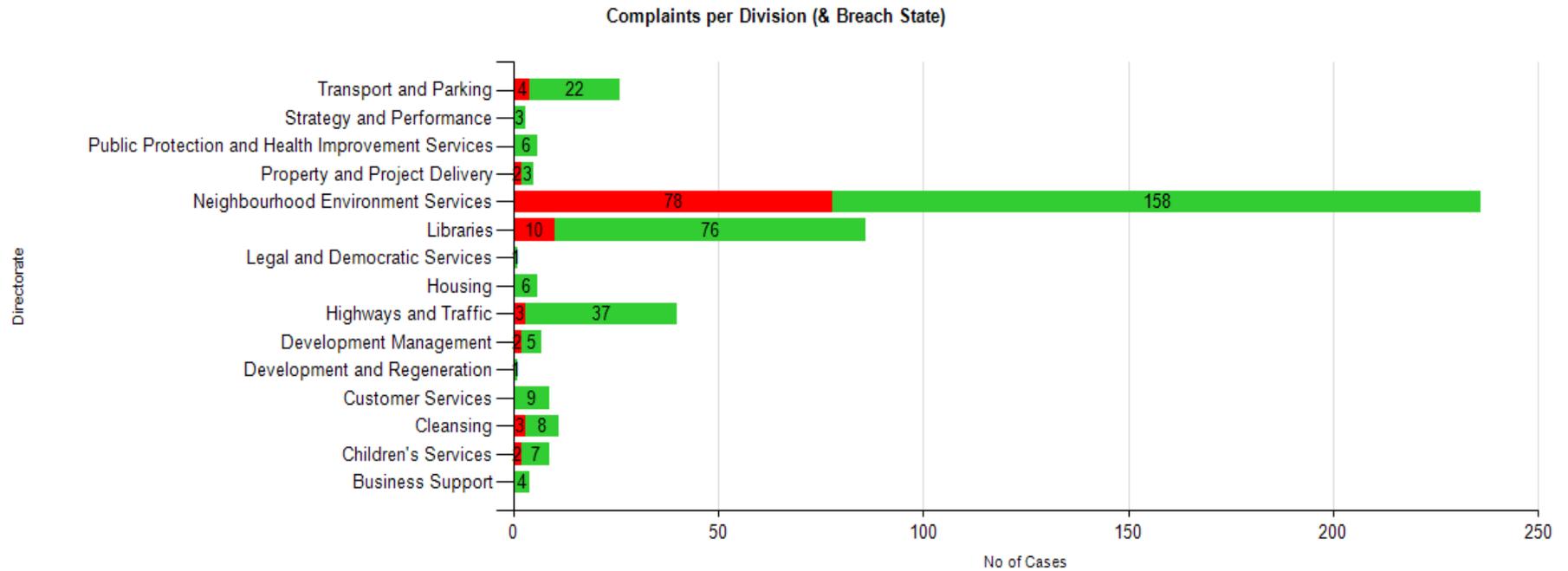
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This graph shows the number of complaints received over each month



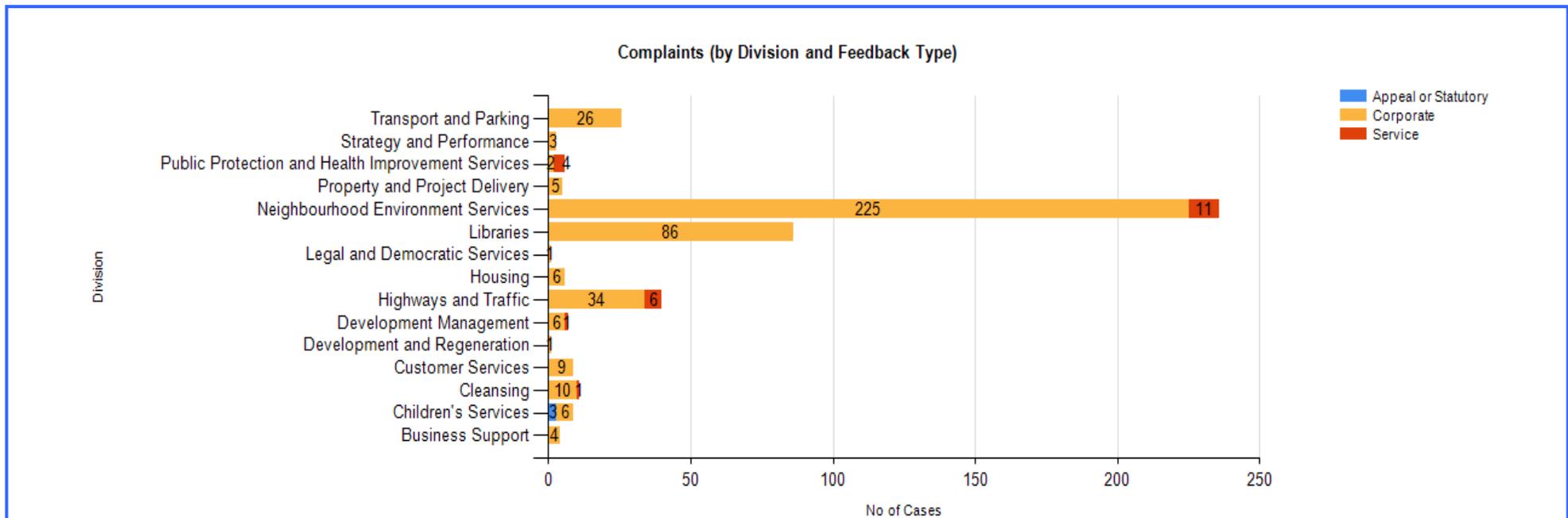
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This graph shows closed complaints (cases that have been picked up by service Customer Feedback Officers (CFOs) and either closed as outside the complaints procedure, or dealt with at Stage 1 of the process and a response issued to the complainant.) 'Breach state' (in red) shows the number of complaints not dealt with by services within 15 working days.



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This graph shows, of those which were logged as complaints, whether they were closed as ‘Appeal or Statutory’ or ‘Service Request’, or treated as ‘Corporate Complaints’

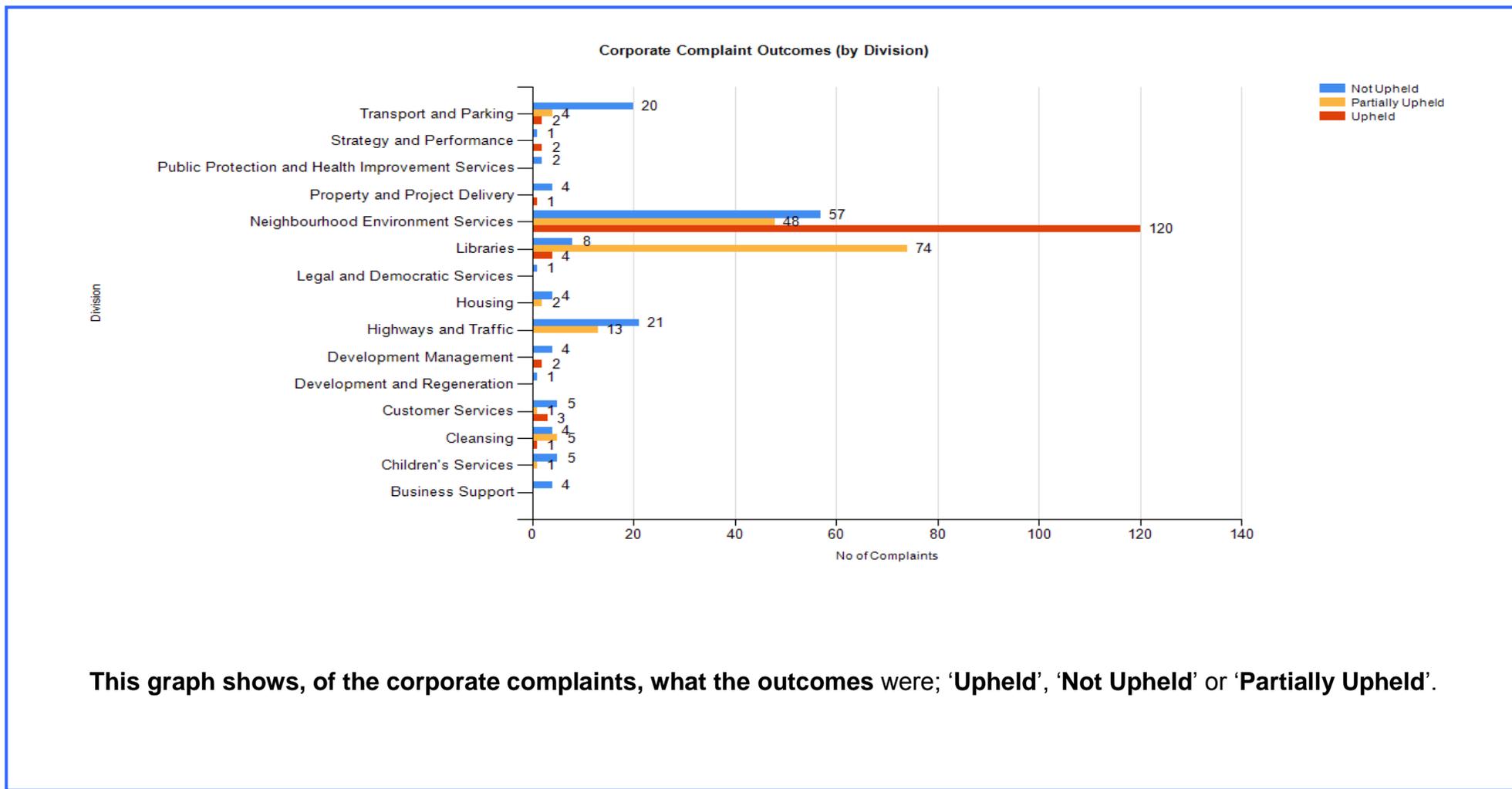
‘Appeal or Statutory’ is used where a formal right of appeal or statutory complaints process exists, and the complaint is therefore outside of the Council’s corporate process.

‘Corporate’ is used where the complaint does fall within the remit of the Council’s complaints process.

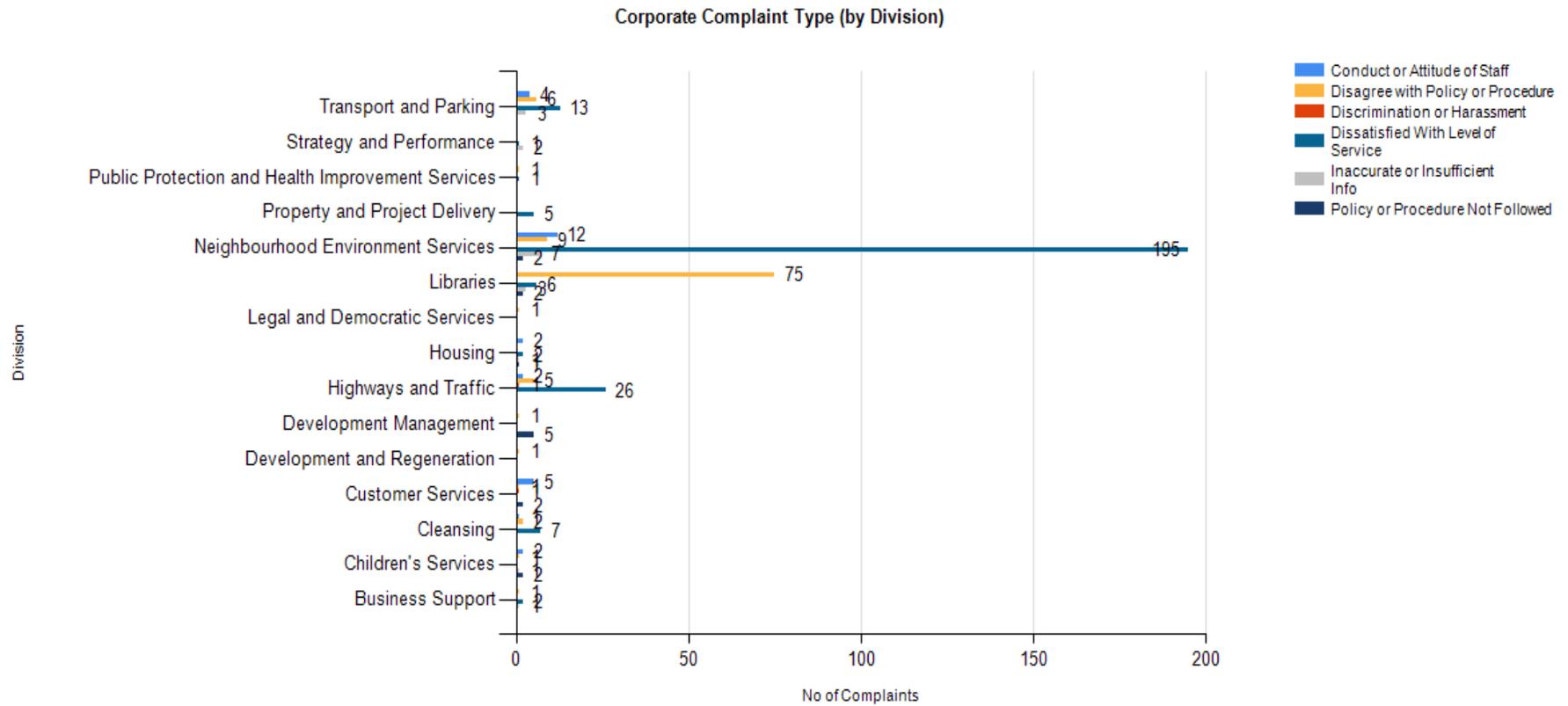
‘Service’ is used where a customer has made a request for service and their intention was not to make a complaint.



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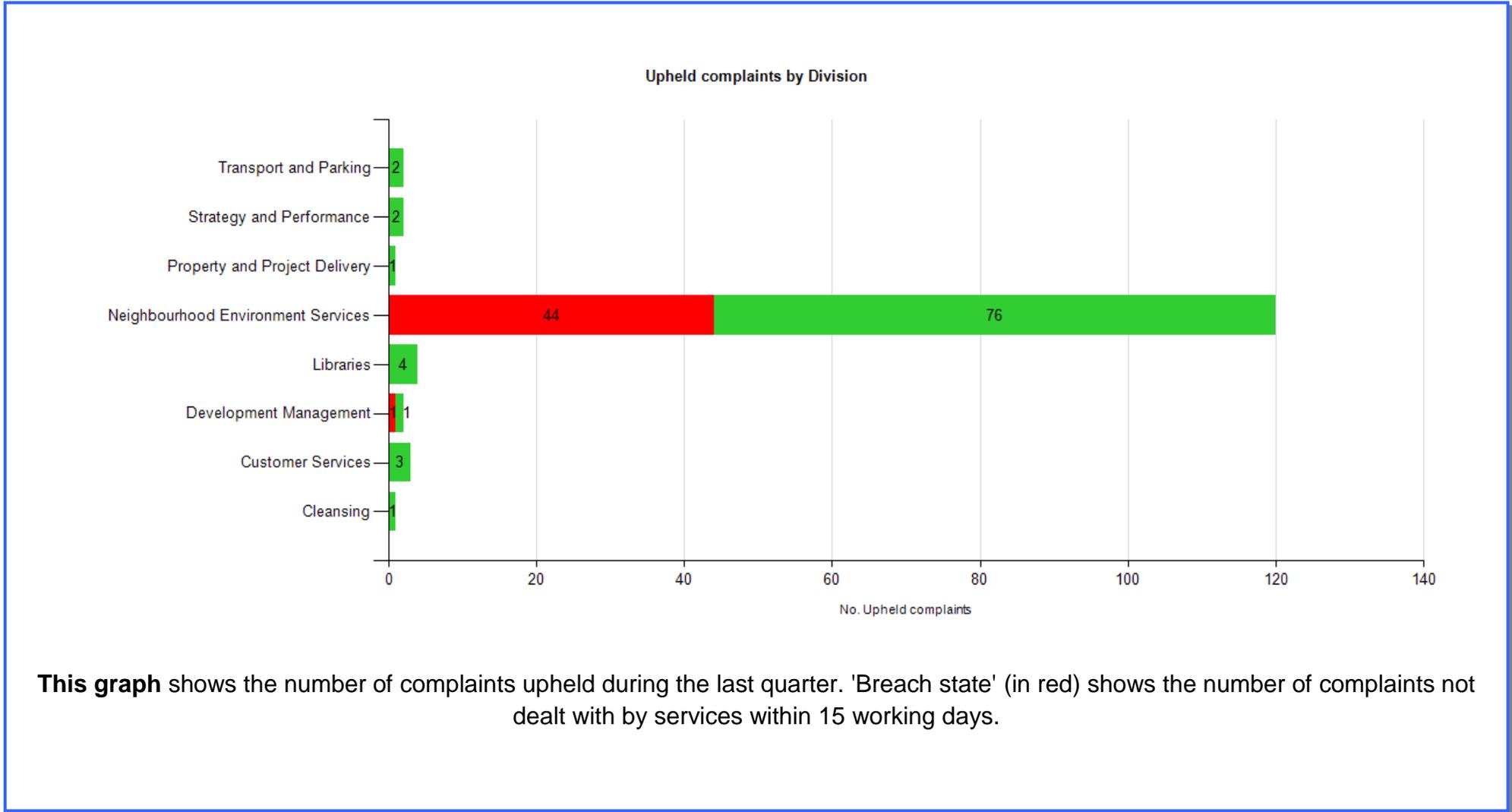


This graph shows what the complaint type was (whatever the outcome of the complaint).

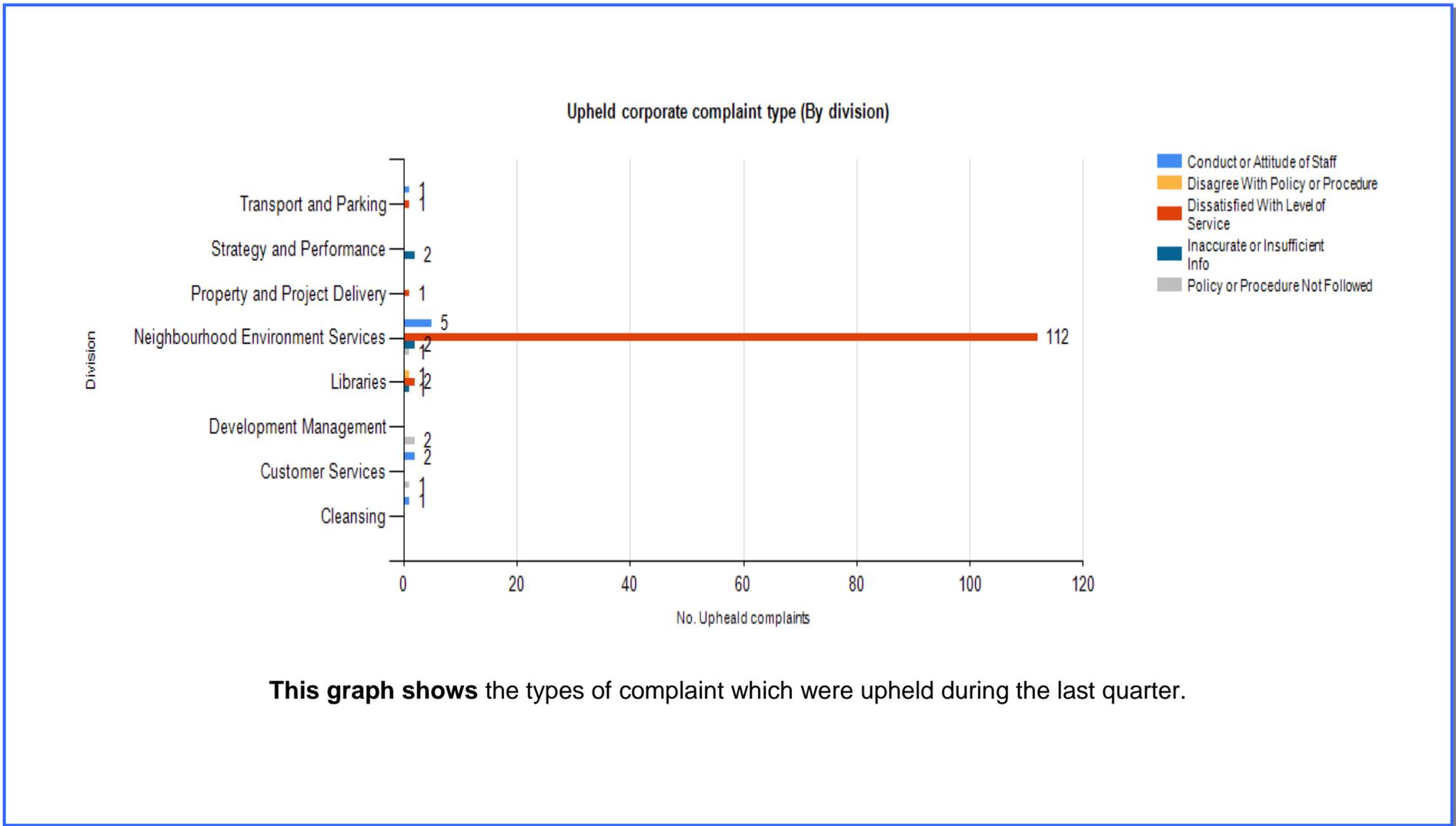


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The following two graphs relate to Upheld complaints only

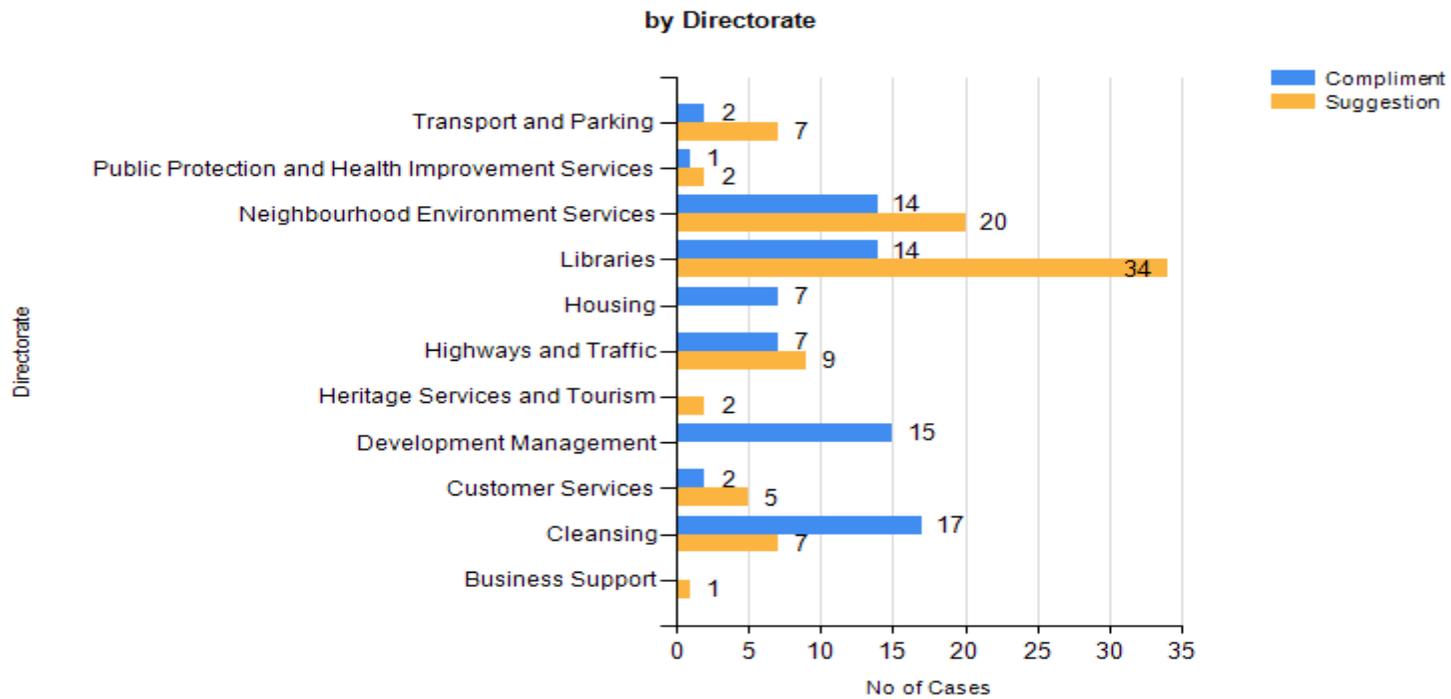


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The following graphs concentrate on feedback cases which were compliments or suggestions.



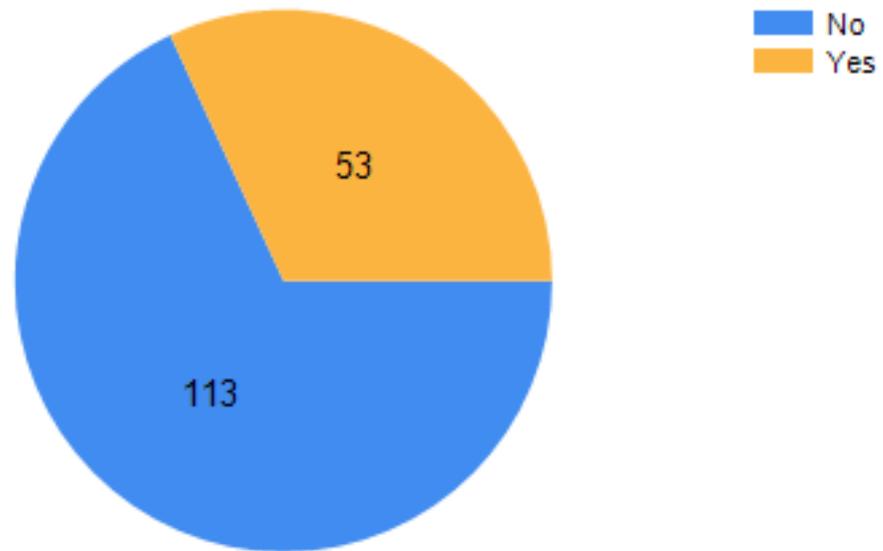
This graph shows all compliments and suggestions recorded on CRM during this quarter....

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...and whether a response was required by the customer.

Response Required Count



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Stage 2 requests during the period

For escalating complaints, Stage 2 provides the opportunity of another Service investigating the complaint by undertaking an independent review. However, before a Stage 2 review is agreed, Customer Services assesses the Stage 1 investigation to ensure that all matters raised in the original complaint have been comprehensively and accurately addressed, and if not, may refer it back to the Service to ensure this now happens. In so doing we aim to determine:

- if the complaint may be resolved by further Stage 1 consideration by the Service, or;
- if a Stage 2 investigation is appropriate, or;
- whether the customer would be better served by referring their complaint direct to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO), for example if the Service has fully sought to resolve the issue and a Stage 2 review is unlikely to change the position, such that effectively the Council complaints process has been fully exhausted and any further review by the Council would cause unnecessary delay.

Division	Number received during quarter	Outcome		
		Complaint Fully Exhausted	Stage 1 Incomplete	Stage 2 Granted
Development Management (Planning)	5	5	0	0
Highways	1	1	0	0
Policy and Partnerships	1	1	0	0
Waste Services	2	1	1	0
Parking Services	2	1	1	0
Children's Services	3	3	0	0
Transport Development	2	1	1	0
Housing	1	1	0	0
Grand Total	17	14	3	0

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Feedback from Service Customer Feedback Officers

Customer Feedback Officers are asked to provide the following information:

- Have you identified any trends / recurring themes in the feedback cases you've been picking up over the last quarter?
- Please summarise key examples of customer feedback, and outline any changes your service has implemented (or plans to implement) as a result of the feedback you've received. Our customers said... and what we did about it...

Service	Trends / recurring themes	You said...	We did...
Legal & Democratic Services	This was a resolved complaint about electoral registration, of which the Electoral team receive a large amount of queries, the majority of which are resolved as received.		
People & Communities Directorate			
Children & Young People	<p>There is no identifiable trend from the customer feedback cases during this quarter.</p> <p>We have seen more complaints surrounding the SEN team and Education Inclusion</p> <p>The nature of these complaints have been particular to the individuals involved and the responses to the customers have reflected this</p>		
Adult Social Care	No feedback received during this quarter via the corporate process.		

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Service	Trends / recurring themes	<i>You said...</i>	We did...
Place Directorate			
Development & Regeneration			
Housing Services	There is no identifiable trend from customer feedback during this quarter.	<p>3 complaints about Housing Options and Homelessness service:</p> <p>3 complaints about Housing Standards and Improvements service</p> <p>'In January I was informed by my landlord that he needed vacant possession of my ended property. Although he gave me a good period of notice to vacate, I was terrified of ending up homeless. After an unscheduled meeting with David Merritt I felt much better about my prospects and received useful advice on how to proceed and apply for properties. He advised how the housing lists worked and encouraged me to present myself at any opportunity to property I might be shortlisted for. I am now safely domiciled in a stunning flat in Larkhall that far exceeded my expectations and am overjoyed with the outcome.'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 not upheld • 2 partially upheld (1 dissatisfied with service, 1 staff attitude/conduct) • 3 not upheld (3 dissatisfied with improvement works and advice)

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Service	Trends / recurring themes	<i>You said...</i>	We did...
Heritage Services & Tourism	No feedback received during this quarter via the corporate process.	<p>Told us of a broken link on the Art Development web page (not part of Heritage Services)</p> <p>Complaint regarding Arts Funding cuts (not part of Heritage Services)</p> <p>Complaint of damage to a watch by the Heritage Services van</p>	<p>Ensured it was rectified and notified the customer</p> <p>Passed the complaint to Cllr Anketell-Jones, who responded that with reduced Government funding Council cuts needed to be made in several areas.</p> <p>An investigation is underway, insurance forms have been sent to the complainant.</p>
Highways & Traffic	<p>The main themes this quarter relate to slippery footpaths and complaints about resurfacing works that have been carried out over February and March.</p> <p>There were also a few comments regarding the proposed new Park and Ride, however these were not considered under the Corporate Feedback Policy.</p>	<p>We have explained the resurfacing process fully as this seemed to cause some confusion and have advised, where possible, specific days where work would be carried out on their street to avoid blocking access to properties.</p> <p>All reports of slippery or unsafe footpaths were investigated by inspectors. Rain and ice during January and February contributed to these conditions.</p> <p>We received several compliments thanking us for prompt responses to requests for repairs or double yellow</p>	<p>We advertised ahead of time where work would take place and gave a two day period over which the work would be completed.</p> <p>Footpaths were inspected and gritted or repaired as necessary.</p>

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Service	Trends / recurring themes	<i>You said...</i>	We did...
		lines.	
Neighbourhood Environment (Waste Services)	Container delivery	There has been a slight increase in delivery time for container coinciding with letters sent out advising of the service change	Our Contractor Kier are working to clear the back log
Neighbourhood Environment (Recycling)			
Neighbourhood Environment (Cleansing)			
Parks & Green Spaces	<p>The main themes are seasonal matters: grass growing which requires cutting and trees fallen down after strong winds.</p> <p>Customers regularly Tweet and we receive several compliments per month regarding the good work that the Parks and Grounds staff does around the district.</p>	<p>We're not cutting the grass as frequently as previous years.</p> <p>The playground in Hedgemoad Park is taking a long time to be re-opened after</p>	<p>We have reviewed the grass-cutting regimes in line with resources and will be planting more spring flowering bulbs and successional flowers. We have publicised this on social media and will be revising our information on the webpage(s).</p> <p>We have be publicising, consulting and liaising with the local communities to help them understand why this work needs to be carried out.</p> <p>We aim to keep local communities and residents informed throughout</p>

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Service	Trends / recurring themes	You said...	We did...
		sewage leak (burst main of Wessex Water).	intended works. We aim to listen and resolve complaints and address concerns.
Public Protection & Health Improvement Services	There is no identifiable trend from customer feedback during this quarter.	6 issues were raised in total. None related to the service received or to council activities. All were dealt with by the teams as part of business as usual, as responses to requests for service from customers.	<p>The 6 issues raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 separate noise complaints • A food complaint • A complaint about the state of a garden. • A Health & Safety complaint • A complaint about signage during a private event.
Transport & Parking	<p>In Passenger Transport we receive very low levels of feedback.</p> <p>In Parking Services most feedback relates to individual issues or concerns. Some feedback relates to the issue of penalty charge notices which is replied to in accordance with the Parking statutory process rather than the Feedback and Complaint policy.</p>	<p>Passenger Transport:- Service comment - The level of feedback about Passenger Services is very low</p> <p>Parking Services:- Service comment - The vast majority of feedback this quarter has related to individual issues</p> <p>The new information provided on our website about parking for larger vehicles has been helpful</p>	<p>No formal complaint was made this quarter. Most feedback for the service is positive and viewed as a useful service to help people access services and facilities</p> <p>We are pleased that as a result of adding some information to our website in response to feedback last quarter, we have now had a number of contacts to say this has been useful</p>

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Service	Trends / recurring themes	<i>You said...</i>	We did...
		<p>We continue to receive positive feedback about the level of customer service we provide</p> <p>“I had a very pleasant conversation with a Civil Enforcement Officer today. I wanted to thank you for his kindness and assistance. In response to the question I posed, he provided me with helpful guidance regarding local parking protocol, was very friendly and generous with his time. He is a very thoughtful ambassador for the City and Council. We look forward to visiting Bath again in the future”</p> <p>“Thank you so much for your extremely prompt and responsive response”</p>	<p>We are pleased to receive positive feedback and always pass this on to our colleagues</p> <p>Customer Service is a key priority for us. We continue to support and develop our teams to uphold the highest of standards as Ambassadors of the Council</p>
Public Transport	<p>In Public Transport most feedback relates to individual issues or concerns. We also receive feedback regarding services provided and managed by commercial bus operators and liaise with them as appropriate.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You reported damage at a bus shelter in Larkhall due to vandalism 2. You reported that the ‘real time’ information board at a local bus stop wasn’t showing information about the number 5 service 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We contacted the contractor and repairs were made 2. We contacted the contractor and ensured that this service is now included
Development Management (Planning)	<p>The main reason for complaint continues to be disagreement with planning application decisions and officer handling of planning applications,</p>	<p>The Building Control Service had incorrectly issued a building regulations completion certificate as the extension had not been built in accordance with the plans.</p>	<p>We agreed that we should have picked up the shallow pitch of the roof during the inspections the officer involved has been reminded about the importance of checking the pitch</p>

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Service	Trends / recurring themes	You said...	We did...
	<p>there was one complaint against a building control inspection.</p> <p>Of the 6 corporate complaints the service dealt with, 2 were upheld. There were five stage 2 requests, but none of these warranted further investigation. There were 15 compliments received during this quarter.</p>	<p>Summary from two compliments received:</p> <p>“I just wanted to send a quick email to thank you for your help with my non-material amendment application. Your assistance was much appreciated and the process could not have gone smoother as a result. Thank you.”</p> <p>“I wanted to write in and extend my thanks to the case officer. All too often we moan and complain when things don’t go to plan but she has been extremely helpful in making this application run very smoothly. She has responded to calls and more importantly done what she has said she will do on time therefore making the whole process very simple, she is a good asset to the BANES planning department.”</p>	<p>of a roof particularly where they are shallow. The Council also contacted the builder to see if he would remedy the work but he has refused to do so.</p>

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Resources Directorate

Service	Trends / recurring themes	<i>You said...</i>	<i>We did...</i>
Business Support (Finance)	There is no identifiable trend from customer feedback during this quarter.	<p>One complaint re calculation of 2017-18 Council Tax with particular attention to Social Care charge.</p> <p>Complaint re accessing payment portal on the internet</p> <p>Complaint re credit card charges</p> <p>Complaint re lack of availability of FOI Team</p>	<p>Responded to by Giles Oliver who further clarified Council Tax calculation.</p> <p>Complainant advised to upgrade his browser to enable access.</p> <p>Provided information on components to be taken into account re calculation of card charges. Provided link to Payment System Regulator guidance.</p> <p>Clarification re response times given. Complainant has been provided with the appropriate assistance to submit an FOIA (which he has done) and this will be responded to, in line with statute</p>
Customer Services	Of the complaints received this quarter, 2 related to the Council connect service, 3 to Council Tax team, 2 about the One Stop Shops and 1 related to Revenues & Benefits. The diverse nature of the feedback means there is no identifiable trend.	Complaint regarding wording used in Recovery Notices for unpaid Council Tax	We explained to the customer that the Council is obliged to abide by legislation.

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		Complaint regarding certain documents not being returned promptly enough.	We explained to the customer that those documents are normally posted back on the same working day of receipt. Also advised that if urgent, the documents can be brought to the nearest One Stop Shop and copies taken.
Service	Trends / recurring themes	You said...	We did...
Business Continuity & emergency Planning	No feedback received during this quarter via the corporate process.		
Libraries	<p>This quarter we have seen a large number of comments and queries regarding the proposed library move. These have been processed as complaints in order to track them until the official consultation forms became available.</p> <p>Trends that can be seen across complaints and suggestions indicate requests for longer opening hours and easier access to reservations i.e. higher shelving for people who have difficulties bending to lower shelves. Other feedback varied with no identifiable trend.</p> <p>We continue to receive compliments from customers, such as:</p> <p>“Fantastic ordering system and staff”.</p>	<p>Concern over the proposed library move and combining of library and one-stop shop services.</p> <p>A lack of late night (until 7pm) opening. Particularly in the branch libraries which is not allowing people to access the libraries after work hours.</p> <p>Difficulty with Reservation location.</p>	<p>Council have provided consultation feedback forms and a Q&A booklet regarding proposed library changes.</p> <p>Promoting librarieswest 24 hour online library service.</p> <p>Have provided new opening hour leaflets which detail all BANES libraries opening hours along with librarieswest and CouncilConnect contact information.</p> <p>On a customer by customer basis we have been moving individual's reservations behind enquiry desk. This feedback can be passed on to layout planners should a new library be designed to make accessing reservations easier for all.</p>

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	<p>“You have a wonderful library in an excellent location and very helpful staff, keep it that way.”</p> <p>“Thanks very much for the help and assistance I have received from library staff”</p> <p>(In regard antiquarian displays) “It’s wonderful to see these carefully chosen and presented fragile, old texts. Which otherwise might remain tucked away and undiscovered except by determined scholars. It’s this kind of serendipity that I really value about the library.”</p>	Disruptions to mobile service.	This is due to lack of relief driver when primary driver is unavailable. We are continuing to look for a suitable relief driver.
Project Delivery, Property & Facilities			
Service	Trends / recurring themes	You said...	We did...
Strategy & Performance	3 complaints received in that time period. 1 for Energy at Home and 2 for Communications and Marketing. No reoccurring themes to report.	Inaccurate or misleading information has been the main cause, i.e. links not working in the residents magazine	Put steps in place to ensure information is more accurate and timely.