

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
COMMITTEE – 18 March 2010**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Noise Complaints Customer Survey

Report by Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services

SUMMARY

This report advises Members of the outcome of a Customer Satisfaction Survey carried out by TEC's Environmental Health Service in connection with Noise Complaints.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Environmental Health Service within Transport, Environmental and Community Services (TEC Services) deals with noise pollution complaints.
- 1.2 Noise complaints are received in connection with construction and industrial works, commercial entertainment, barking dogs and domestic noise including music and party noise. Environmental Health receives in the region of 200 noise complaints a year.
- 1.3 To assess and improve the Noise Service function a Customer Satisfaction Survey was carried out in respect of complaints received from the beginning of August through to the end of October 2009. Officers dealing with noise complaints were unaware that this Survey was to be undertaken, and responses were anonymous.

2. Customer Satisfaction Results

- 2.1 54 complainants were sent the questionnaire. The total number of forms returned was 21, giving a 39% response.
- 2.2 Satisfaction with the service -

18 of the 21 complainants were either very satisfied or satisfied with the service provided.
- 2.3 Dissatisfaction with the service arose in 3 instances:-
 - the complainant was not satisfied with the noise levels achieved by noise reduction measures carried out following our investigations (although these levels met the legislative requirements),
 - a noisy neighbour who was subsequently arrested by the Police.
 - time taken to deal with the complaint.

3. Improvements to Service

- 3.1 The instance where dissatisfaction related to the time taken to deal with the complaint related to noise from a barking dog. Barking dog complaints can be problematic to deal with due to the intermittent nature of the noise, and the availability of officers to witness barking, particularly outside office hours.
- 3.2 In the case of barking dogs the complainant can also take action on their own behalf under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. Section 49 of this Act allows individuals to apply to the District Court to make an order requiring the owner of the dog causing annoyance to take steps to prevent this occurrence. Complainants will be given comprehensive guidance on how to take action on their own behalf.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Customer Satisfaction Survey indicates that Environmental Health is carrying out the noise service in a professional manner and to the satisfaction of the majority of customers who make a complaint.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from the report.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Members are invited to note the contents of the report and to comment on its contents.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services

Date: 5 March 2010

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