



Embracing Complaints Seminar

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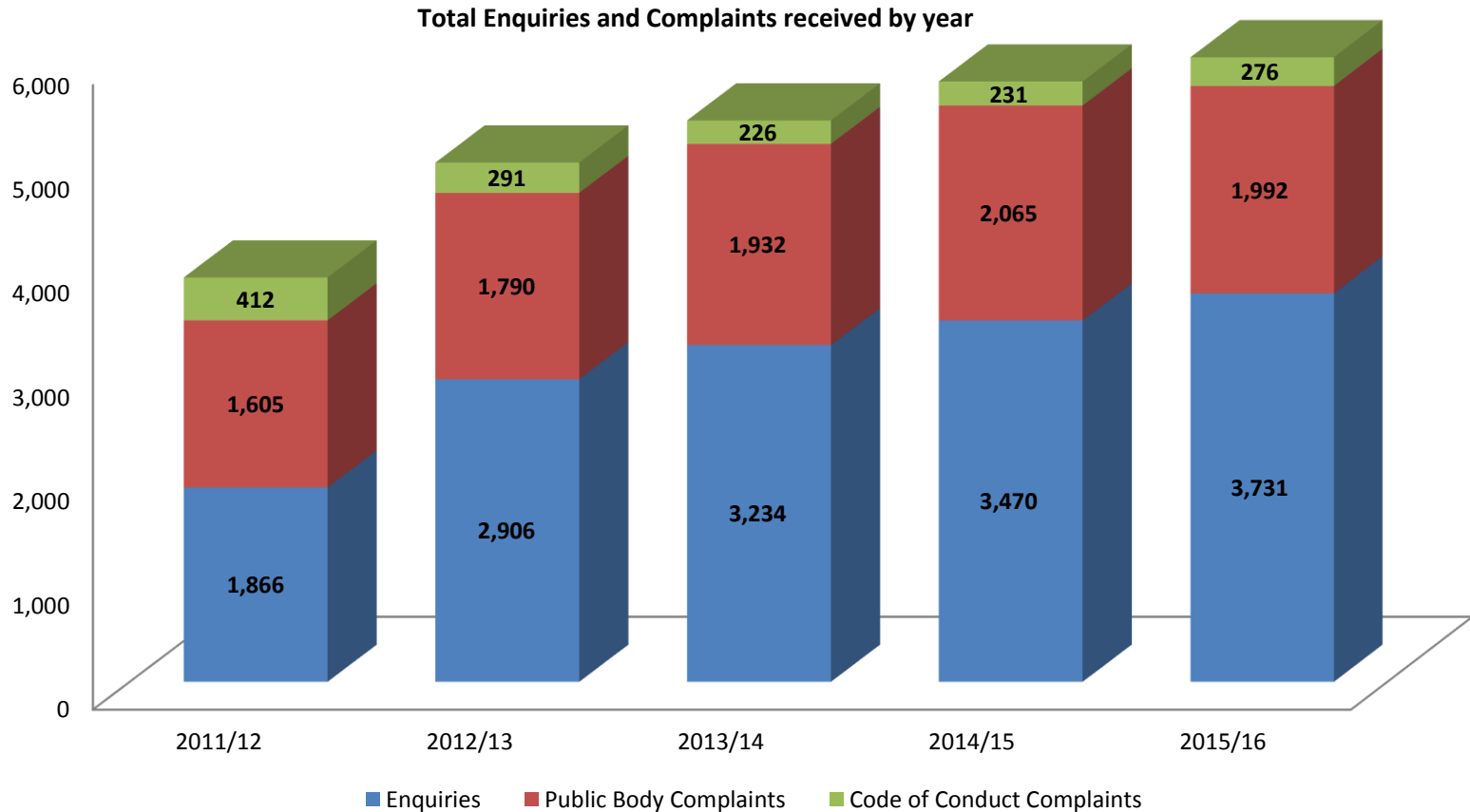
Who I am & what I do

- The office was established in April 2006 by the PSOW Act 2005
- Two specific roles:
 - Complaints about public services providers in Wales;
 - Complaints that members of local authorities have broken the Code of Conduct.

Who I am & what I do

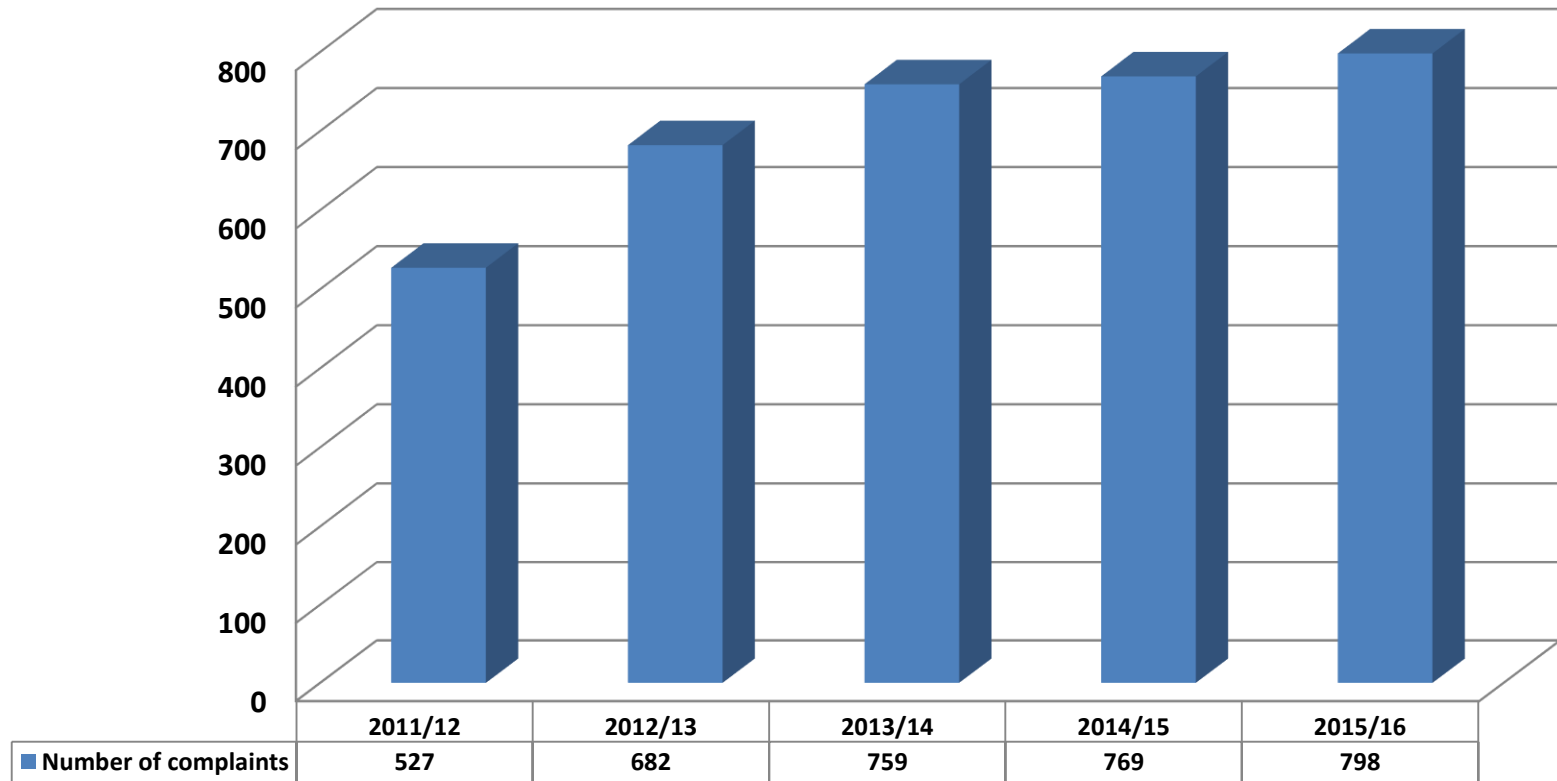
- In general terms, consider complaints about services devolved to Wales:
 - Local Government (both county & community councils);
 - The National Health Service (including GPs & Dentists);
 - Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations); and
 - The Welsh Government, together with its sponsored bodies.
- Since 1 November 2014, also privately arranged or funded social care & palliative care services.
- New powers on their way?

Trends



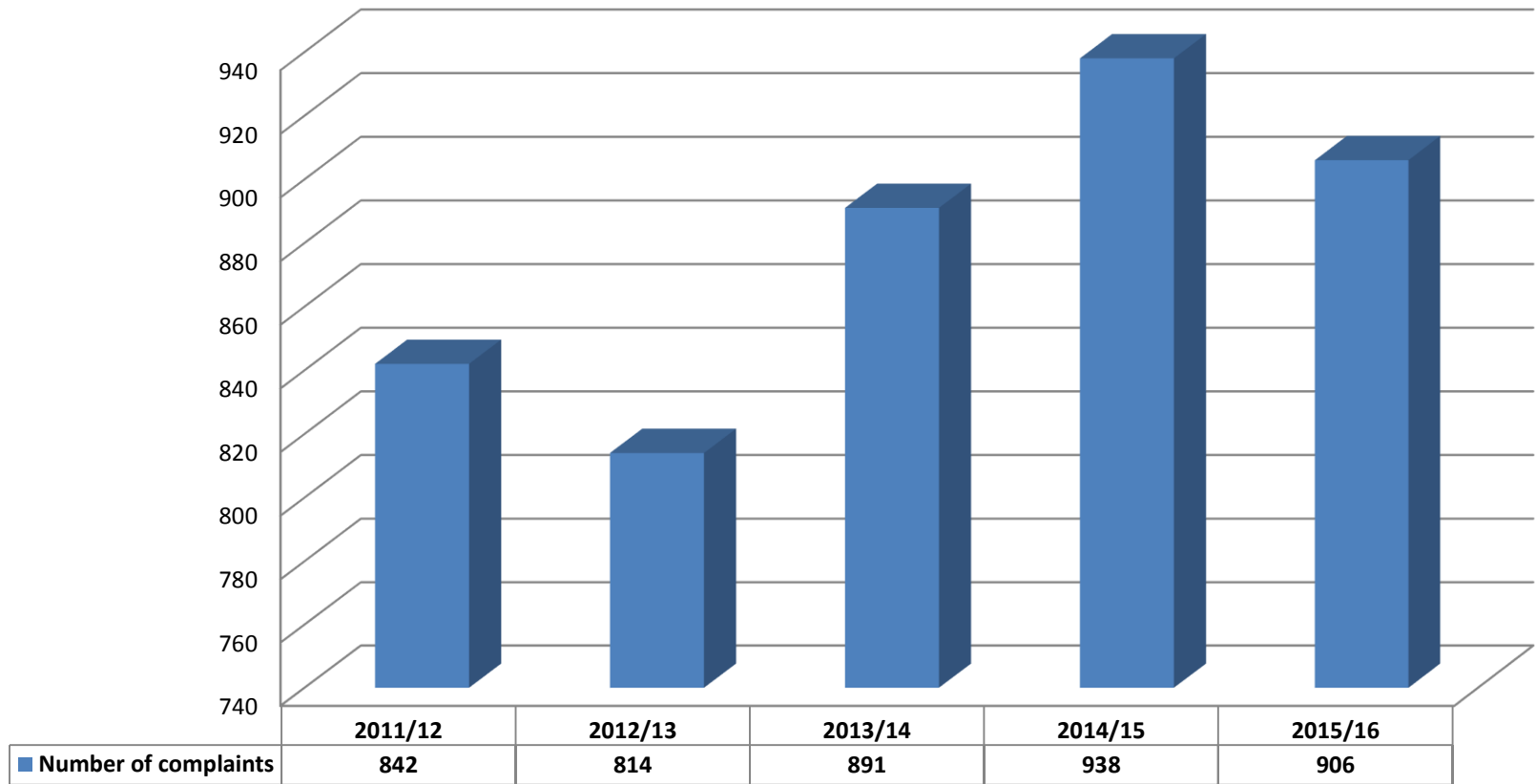
Trends

Complaints by sector - NHS bodies

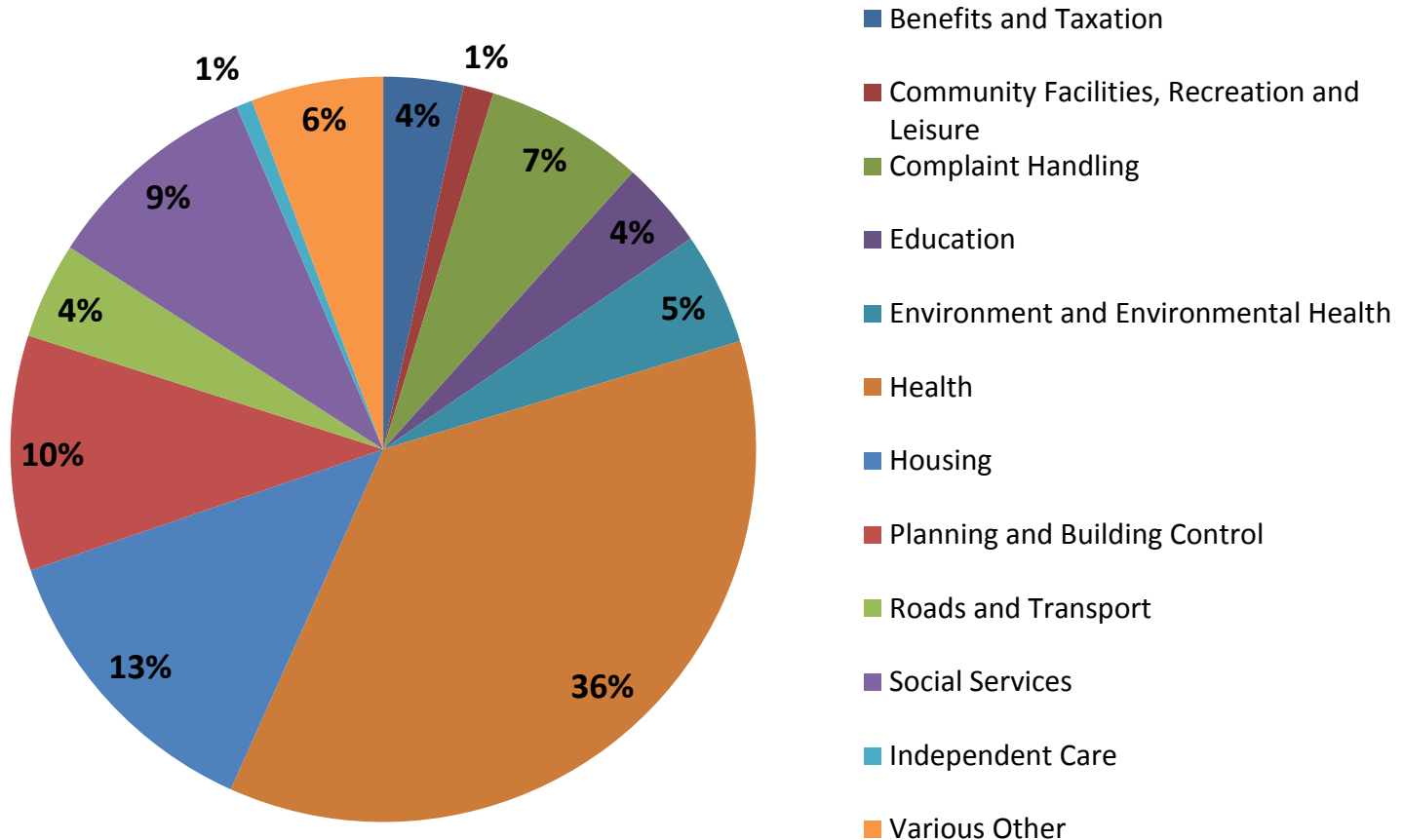


Trends

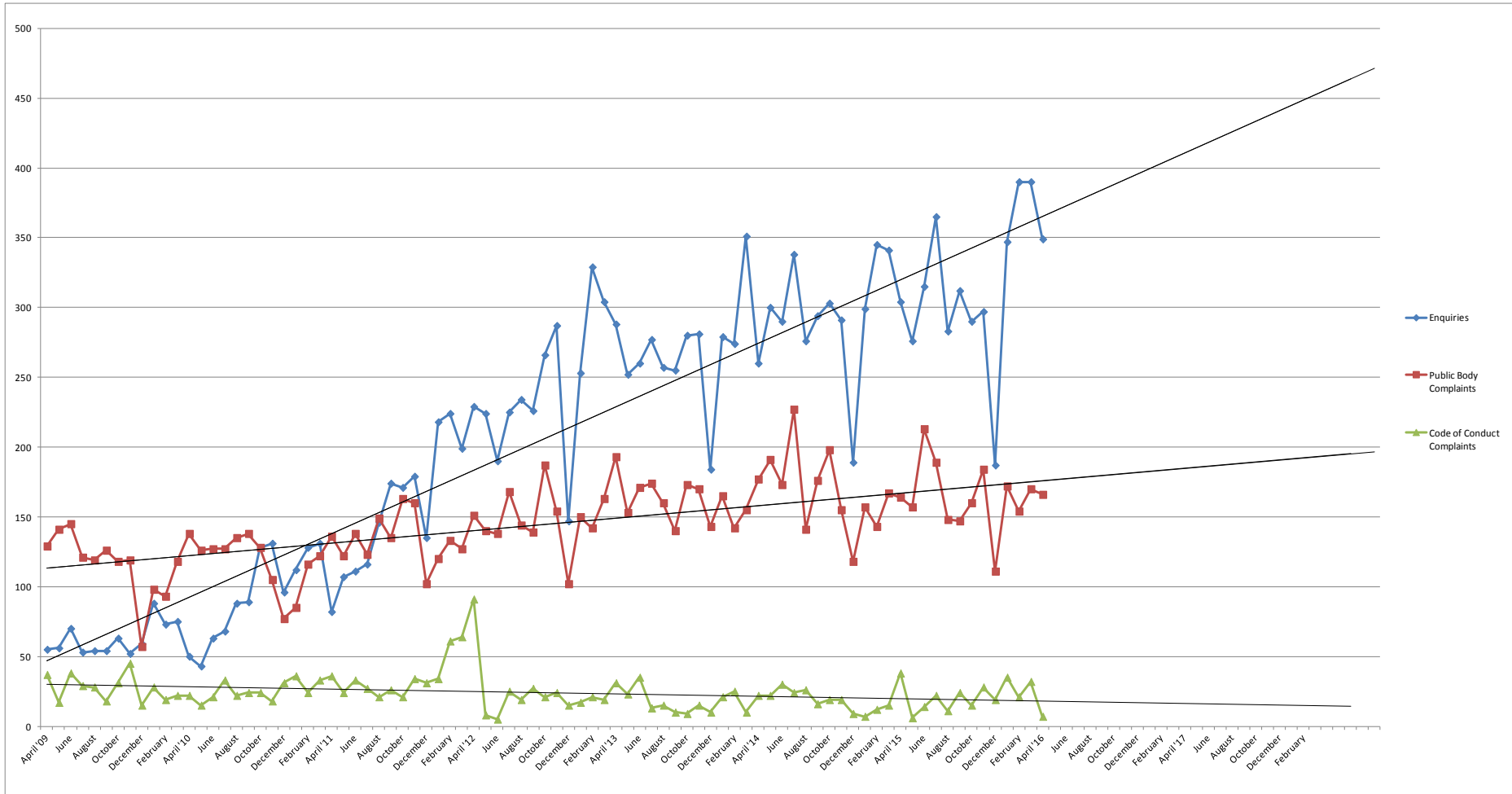
Complaints by sector - County/County borough councils



Subject Areas



Projections to the future



Complaints Procedures in Wales

- Three Schemes: One common approach
 - NHS Putting Things Right: April 2011
 - Model Concerns & Complaints Policy: July 2011
 - Social Services: Making Things Better: 2014

Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast

- “A balanced blend of human psychology, attitudes, actions and beliefs that combined create either pleasure or pain, serious momentum or miserable stagnation.”
- “Culture is the environment in which your strategy and your brand thrives or dies a slow death.” Shawn Parr, Guvner & CEO of Bulldog Drummond

Influencing Corporate Behaviour

- Regulation has its limits
- Porter/Kramer – Creating Shared Value
- Ethical regulation –
people/culture/values/ethics/bottom up
- Fairness/proportionality

Culture

- **Front Line Staff**
 - Informal engagement at point of service delivery – avoid escalation!
 - Empowerment – deal with complaints as they arise – aim to resolve ‘on the spot’.
- **Governance – Top Down & Bottom Up**
 - Ownership by, and leadership from, the Board & Executive.
 - Ensure that a complaints culture exists.

Intelligence – Front Line Staff

- Recognising seriousness of complaint and when it should be referred to more senior staff member.
- How to progress complaint to formal investigation stage.
- Signposting (passing on the complaint not the complainant).
- Importance of informal complaints too. A pattern can indicate systemic problems.
- Data capture – wider learning points recorded.

Accountability – the Board/Cabinet

- Complaints central to citizen centred public service delivery & ensuring standards.
- Regular reports: (i) data; (ii) investigation recommendations.
- What are the trends?
- Any systemic problems? Any lessons?
- What action is being taken to improve?
- Assure that identified actions have been implemented and are effective.

People

- People are the key.
- Staff perceptions.
- Investing in Human Resources.
- Staff need appropriate training from the very start – at the time of their induction to their new post.
- No blame games.

A Future Complaints Standards Authority?

- Although relevant statutory/model complaints procedures adopted by public service providers in Wales, queries over to what degree they are being implemented effectively.
- Data: ensuring common approach to data gathering allows insight in relation to trends and patterns across public service delivery in Wales.

A Supportive Complaint Handling Culture

- The Model Policy addresses the fact that there should be a supportive culture in relation to dealing with complaints.
- “The organisational culture should be that reporting a complaint and action taken is seen as a positive act in that it assists organisational learning” and can “contribute to better public services”.