Justice Committee

Inquiry into the effectiveness of the provisions in the Title Conditions (Scotland) Act 2003

Supplementary written submission from Ethical Maintenance CIC

1. You asked for:
   a) the number of complaints received in relation to the services you provide;
   b) the number of cases of non-payment for services provided;
   c) how this information is recorded.

2. We consider a complaint to be a communication (phone call, e-mail, letter or conversation) about dissatisfaction in something that we are supposed to be doing. From our 400 properties we have received 11 complaints of the last five years, five of which were from last spring and relating to poor weeding in shrub beds due to the wet weather.

3. We consider enquiries about our services to include:
   a) a request for information about the services we provide, e.g. how much do I have to pay or when will the hedge next be cut;
   b) a request for action about something that is not currently covered by the work programme paid for by the service charge e.g. will you cut the grass shorter in the woodland area although at residents meetings they have opted for it to be long grass;
   c) an expression of dissatisfaction about something over which we have no responsibility, e.g. why do we not cut down the weeds in an area that we are not managing; or
   d) a rejection of the service e.g. I don’t want to pay or payment of the service charge is withheld as the council tax should pay for the service.

4. We would normally expect to receive of the order of 3-5 enquiries each month; except after a request for payment of the service charge when it doubles. The bulk of these are in the categories outlined in paragraph 3.b.-d. above and from residents that do not attend their community meetings, do not engage with their residents' association and do not refer to the literature we send them.

5. We have a 72% collection rate of the service charge within one month of asking for payment and this rises to 92% by the end of the year.

6. You asked how these are recorded. With regards to complaints and enquiries, a log is kept of all incoming phone calls, e-mails, and letters. Similarly copies of all written (e-mail or letter) responses are kept and these also record conversations with residents. We do not keep a record of when we call somebody back, though the matter is monitored through the incoming enquiry/complaint log. With regards to the collection rates of the service charge, our credit control processes do this.

7. I hope this adequately answers your questions. If you need anything more, let me know.