



**COMMUNITY FORUM GROUP**

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS, FEEDBACK AND ACTION PLAN**

**JANUARY 2010**

A Community Group Forum was held by Lisburn Building Control Services on 3 December 2009, at the Island Civic Centre, Lisburn City Council.

The purpose of the Forum was:

- To form a closer partnership between the Building Control Service and Community Groups throughout the city;
- To advise Community Groups who we are, what we do, how we can improve communication with them;
- To tell Community Groups how we are performing;
- To ask how we can improve our service in partnership with them.

**INTRODUCTION:**

The evening was opened by the Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor Allan Ewart, along with Council officers from Building Control Services, the event was supported by the Community Development Officer, Rhonda Frew and the Equality Officer, Stephen Malcolm.

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS : SATISFACTION LEVELS**

A copy of the questionnaire results has been attached to this feedback report.

The results were very favourable with 95% of the respondent giving an overall satisfaction with the service as good or very good.

Service quality, staff attitude, helpfulness and professionalism and fairness of treatment received similar high ratings.

Timeliness of communication and overall value for money were the only categories where the satisfaction of good/very good was below 90% value for money was the only category where the satisfaction level was classed as poor by 3% of the respondents.

## **RESULTS ANALYSIS**

The results identify a highly pleasing satisfaction level for the service with the emphasis of the questions relating to the quality issues of staff attitude, helpfulness and professionalism. These are indicators we need from people perspectives as we are able to gather quantitative information from our Management Information System.

The overall value for money is the only area questioned for which we (Building Control Services) do not have the control to change the fee structure for the Building Control Service is legislative and we explained to the Forum that we were not empowered to set our own fees. This does however prove a level of fairness and consistency across the 26 Local Authority Building Control Services.

## **OUR PERFORMANCE**

The information provided to the Community Forum identified our performance for our key indicators as returned against the DOE targets. This showed our high performance output for 2007/08 and 2008/09 with an indicator that we continue to improve.

We identified a slight dip in performance noted in the DOE Best Value indicators 2007/08 in the number of completion/number of commencements per annum of 72%. This was less than the NI average of 81% and was due to a reduction of Two Operational Surveyors who had left the service for promotion to other Council Building Control Services.

We identified that this indicator for the period 2008/09 now stands at 96% following an initiative of correspondences being issued to applications that were not yet complete to have completion inspections carried out.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Customers were given 'open forum' to question the Building Control staff on any areas of concern or interest they had with regard to improving a working partnership between their group and the Council.

The following topics/questions were raised:

- The thanks of the attendees to Building Control for embarking on this initiative;
- The congratulations for the high level of performance highlighted;
- How to develop closer links/contacts between community groups and the Building Control Service;
- What the difference was between local authority Building Control and the Planning Service (NI);
- The connection between the DDA and Part R of the Building Regulations, Access and Facilities to Buildings;
- Environmental impact statements and drainage infrastructure;
- Tree Preservation Orders and their uses;
- Minimum standards as an application to the Building Regulations;
- Energy conservation and the role of advice offered by Building Control;
- Unauthorised Building Works and the Regularisation process;
- Street Naming and Numbering Process;

- The replacement and maintenance of street signage;
- The Dangerous Structures policy and ability of the Council to take action on vacant derelict property;
- The benefit of the forum and opportunities to improve its impact to Community Groups for the next forum.

## **FORUM ACTION PLAN**

1. Review the forum questionnaire results and publish results.
2. Collate the themes from the Question and Answer Session and feedback to community groups.
3. Develop closer contact between community groups, the Building Control Service and the Community Development Officer.
4. Promote and continue with current successful community partnerships such as that with the Lisburn Access Group.
5. Offer to attend community group meetings in their community meeting places was extended to improve communication to rural based groups.
6. Distribute service CD ROM to community groups via the Community Development Officer.
7. Develop career presentation talk for local schools and colleges.
8. Promote the customer focus ethos of the Building Control Service staff for groups with an elderly profile to remove fear potential from a technical and legislative function.
9. Consider holding awareness clinics in rural community halls to engage and inform a wide range of customers.
10. Promote the function of street nameplate maintenance and replacement undertaken by the service and promote use of Community Group Secretary as a contact between local area need and the Building Control Service.

This Feedback Action Plan is to be distributed back to the Community Groups through the Community Development Officer, Ms Rhonda Frew.