

**Time** 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny  
**Venue** Teams Live Meeting

## Membership

**Chair** Cllr Paul Sweet (Lab)  
**Vice-chair** Cllr Jonathan Crofts (Con)

### Labour

Cllr Philip Bateman MBE  
Cllr Alan Bolshaw  
Cllr Greg Brackenridge  
Cllr Val Evans  
Cllr Phil Page  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr Mak Singh  
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur  
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal

### Conservative

Cllr Wendy Thompson

Quorum for this meeting is four Councillors.

## Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

**Contact** Julia Cleary  
**Tel/Email** [julia.cleary@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:julia.cleary@wolverhampton.gov.uk)  
**Address** Democratic Services, Civic Centre, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, St Peter's Square,  
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

**Website** <http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/>  
**Email** [democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk)  
**Tel** 01902 555046

Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

# Agenda

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1            **Apologies for absence**
- 2            **Declarations of interest**
- 3            **Minutes of the previous meetings** (Pages 3 - 12)  
[To approve the minutes of the previous meetings as correct records.]
- 4            **Matters arising**

### PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY ITEMS

- 5            **Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-2022 to 2023-2024**  
[Alison Shannon, Chief Accountant to present report.]  
  
[Report will be sent to follow.]

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 6            **Quarter 1 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report** (Pages 13 - 34)  
[Sarah Campbell, Customer Engagement Manager to present report.]
- 7            **Work programme**  
[To consider the Board's work programme for future meetings.]

### Attendance

#### Members of the Scrutiny Board

Cllr Paul Sweet (Chair)  
Cllr Jonathan Crofts (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE  
Cllr Alan Bolshaw  
Cllr Greg Brackenridge  
Cllr Val Evans  
Cllr Phil Page  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr Mak Singh  
Cllr Wendy Thompson  
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur  
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal

#### Also In Attendance

Cllr Stephen Simkins, Cabinet Member for City Economy  
David Pattison, Director of Governance  
Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration  
Michele Ross, Lead Planning Manager (Sub - Regional Strategy)  
Julia Cleary, Scrutiny and Systems Manager  
Martin Stevens, Scrutiny Officer

### Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*      *Title*

- 1            **Apologies for absence**  
There were no apologies for absence.
  
- 2            **Declarations of interest**  
There were no declarations of interest.
  
- 3            **Wolverhampton Response to Government Planning Consultations**  
Scrutiny Board received a report requesting comments on the proposed principles for a City of Wolverhampton Council response to the current Government Planning consultations.

Scrutiny Board provided general support for the proposed consultation responses, subject to the points highlighted below:

a) The 2nd bullet point of para 4.8 provides support for streamlined approval processes for minor / simple proposals. It is not clear what types of proposal this refers to, and it is felt that streamlined approval processes are inappropriate for all scales of development as minor proposals can be of great significance to local people.

Proposed Response: Re-word 2nd bullet point of para 4.8 of the Cabinet Report to read:

‘Streamlined and simplified approval processes are inappropriate for all scales of development proposal, as local planning authorities need to retain the power to control poorly designed development and it is important that the public retain the ability to comment. ...’

b) The 2nd bullet point of para 4.8 puts too much emphasis on requesting more resources for planning departments to speed up the planning process.

Proposed Response: Re-word 2nd bullet point of para 4.8 of the Cabinet Report to read:

‘... There are more effective ways of speeding up the planning application process, including greater use of delegated authority powers and enhanced resourcing of local authority planning functions, for example...’

c) There are key links between Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire in terms of Local Plan preparation. It is important to be aware of the views of South Staffordshire Council on the consultation proposals.

Proposed Response: South Staffordshire have not published a response therefore it is not possible to take their views into account. Re-word 7th bullet point of para 4.8 of the Cabinet Report to read:

‘Strongly oppose the removal of the Duty to Cooperate, unless it is replaced by a similar or stronger mechanism to ensure that local authorities work together across appropriate geographies to deliver strategic planning of growth and infrastructure. In particular, removal of the Duty to Cooperate would undermine the significant progress made by City of Wolverhampton Council (CoWC) through the Black Country Plan review to move towards agreement with neighbouring authorities, including South Staffordshire Council, on cross-boundary matters.’

d) The response should emphasise the support of City of Wolverhampton Council for a ‘brownfield first’ approach, the robust nature of existing evidence on urban land supply, and the importance of protecting the Wolverhampton green belt and valuable green spaces across the City from development. This is particularly important given the small proportion (11%) of Wolverhampton which is green belt and the densely developed nature of the urban area.

Proposed Response: Amend 2nd bullet point of para 3.6 of the Cabinet Report to read:

‘Concern that other proposed changes to the method would increase the national target to a potentially unsustainable level, with particularly severe impacts on authorities, such as Wolverhampton, which may not reflect local environmental and delivery constraints. Wolverhampton is a densely

developed urban area with a constrained boundary and limited areas of green belt, most of which are in operational use. The Council is actively pursuing a 'brownfield first' approach to development, however robust evidence shows that, even making maximum use of land in the urban area to provide around 10,500 homes, the proposed changes to the standard method would result in a significant gap between housing need and supply of around 5,500 homes, putting unsustainable pressure on the Wolverhampton Green Belt and green spaces and undermining the Council's plans to secure a well-designed and sustainable City for future generations.'

e) There are two Neighbourhood Plans in Wolverhampton, covering Tettenhall and Heathfield Park. Local communities in Tettenhall felt strongly that the character of the area should be protected. It is not clear how the consultation proposals would affect these Plans.

Proposed Response: Add to the end of para 4.5 of the Cabinet Report:

'There are two Neighbourhood Plans covering parts of Wolverhampton, which were prepared by local communities. The proposals do not explain the role of Neighbourhood Plans in the new Local Plan system.'

Add bullet point to para 4.8 of the Cabinet Report:

'Support the retention of the key role of Neighbourhood Plans in the new Local Plan system.'

f) It is also important that the standard and quality of buildings is improved, including access for people with disabilities.

Proposed Response: Add bullet point to para 4.15 of the Cabinet Report:

'Alongside a consideration of design quality, it is important that the standard and quality of buildings, including access for people with disabilities, is also improved. The Government is urged to move forward quickly to implement proposed changes to Building Regulations following consultation in early 2020.'

g) Good quality, affordable housing is needed in the right places, including more social housing.

Proposed Response: Add bullet point to para 4.12 of the Cabinet Report to read:

'The proposals place too much emphasis on delivering a certain number of homes, rather than building enough good quality, genuinely affordable housing – including more social housing – in the right places.'

**Resolved:**

That the above comments be fed back to Cabinet for consideration.

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### Attendance

#### Members of the Scrutiny Board

Cllr Paul Sweet (Chair)  
Cllr Jonathan Crofts (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE  
Cllr Alan Bolshaw  
Cllr Greg Brackenridge  
Cllr Val Evans  
Cllr Phil Page  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr Wendy Thompson  
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur  
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal

#### In Attendance

David Pattison, Director of Governance  
Luke Dove, Strategic Asset Manager  
Sarah Campbell, Customer Engagement Manager  
Julia Cleary, Scrutiny and Systems Manager  
Earl Piggott Smith, Scrutiny Officer  
Martin Stevens, Scrutiny Officer

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## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*     *Title*

- 1        **Apologies for absence**  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Singh.
- 2        **Declarations of interest**  
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3        **Minutes of the previous meeting**  
Resolved:  
          That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.
- 4        **Matters arising**  
Members referred to page 7 of the minutes where the Board commented on Microsoft Teams and printing facilities. This was in relation to Cllrs struggling to print paperwork at home.

Members referred to page 6 of the minutes and the use of food banks. It was confirmed that information had been sent out following the previous meeting and would be re-circulated for information. The Director for Governance stated that a further update could be provided in relation to the use of foodbanks in the City.

It was also noted that some Cllrs who had iPhone 6 devices were unable to download and use the Covid alert app. The Scrutiny and Systems Manager agreed to take this up with the ICT department.

**Resolved:**

1. That an update be provided to members in relation to the printing of paperwork.
2. That updated information on the use of foodbanks be distributed to members of the Board.
3. That the issue regarding the use of iPhone 6 devices and the Covid alert app be looked into.

5 **Annual Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report**

The Board welcomed Sarah Campbell, Customer Engagement Manager to the meeting.

An overview was provided of the Annual Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints report. The Board considered Appendix 2, which highlighted Stage 1 Annual Corporate Complaints. There had been a 36% decrease in stage 1 corporate complaints compared to the same time the previous year and out of the 185 received at stage 1, 54 were upheld. A customer could then escalate to stage 2 if they remained dissatisfied and there had been 19 stage 2 complaints of which 4 had been upheld.

The Board considered Appendix 1 to the report which dealt with Childrens' Services. There was a 17% decrease in stage 1 complaints. There were 58 stage 1 complaints and 8 were upheld and 26 partially upheld. No stage 2 or 3 statutory cases had been received.

In relation to Adults and Public Health there was again a decrease of 28%, there were 53 stage 1 complaints of which 3 were upheld and 27 partially upheld.

The Board considered the Ombudsman enquiries that had been received. During 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 the council received 10 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries, this was in comparison to 26 the previous year. The Ombudsman published annual complaint statistics for each local authority in England. The Ombudsman received 61 complaints and enquiries in 2019/20 in relation to the City of Wolverhampton Council, this was in comparison to 71 complaints and enquiries received during 2018/19. From the 61 enquiries received from the Ombudsman, 12 detailed investigations were carried out in comparison to 19 detailed investigations received for 2018/19. Out of the 12 detailed investigations carried out, the Ombudsman had recorded seven (58%) findings of fault (upheld) for the council during 2019/20 (this compared to an average of 67% in similar authorities).

The annual report confirmed that the council was 100% compliant with carrying out the Ombudsman's upheld recommendations. The report also highlighted where



things had gone wrong and heads of service, managers and the customer feedback team were required to identify these areas, implement remedies and review processes/procedures where necessary.

When a complaint was upheld (council at fault) and the findings of a subsequent investigation was for a financial remedy, change to policy or service delivery, the Customer Feedback Team produced an action plan report. Recommendations within these reports were agreed with appropriate Heads of Service and shared with the relevant Service Manager/Director to ensure appropriate remedies and changes to policy/service delivery were implemented.

The Board welcomed the information in the report and the fact that the figures were reducing but considered that targets during a pandemic could be challenging and that it was vital that complaints regarding childrens' services, adults' services and public health were acted on with haste and requested assurance that this was the case. It was confirmed that this was the case and that all enquires were being dealt with as would normally be the case.

The Board noted The Council's statistics in relation to other local authorities but queried whether there was any duplication in complaints from previous years. It was confirmed that if there were any trends or concerns then these were addressed. It was stated that the data was interrogated for any such trends. At the moment there were not any identified duplicated complaints.

The Board queried the context for some of the information such as the number of staff who had received training and any trends associated with the outcomes of the complaints that were being discussed.

The Board queried where the greatest number of complaints came from. It was noted that the top trends for corporate complaints were waste services, council tax and waste services. There had been no increase in tree enquiries.

The Board also noted that a number of compliments had also been received.

The Panel thanked the Customer Engagement Manager for the report.

**Resolved:** That the report be received and noted.

## 6 **Community Asset Transfer Policy and Strategy Review**

The Board welcomed Luke Dove, Strategic Asset Manager to the meeting.

The Board considered a report highlighting the most significant changes to the revised Community Asset Transfer Strategy.

A Community Asset Transfer (CAT) was where a public body transferred the management and/or ownership of an asset, sometimes including associated services to a voluntary community organisation (VCO). The CAT Strategy provided guidance for both the public body transferring the asset and VCO taking on the same in line with relevant legislation and policies.

In the current climate a CAT supported community empowerment and offered an opportunity for assets and/or services to be retained in areas where the Council

might not be able to develop or continue to fund itself. It also allowed for a more innovative approach to be explored through community lead initiatives with the support of the Council.

The Council currently had an existing CAT Strategy, however given the fluid nature of both the economic and social environments, an updated version was required to ensure all applicable outcomes were addressed in line with current Council policies and met the needs of both the public body and VCO's.

The new CAT Strategy was customer focused and was intended as a guidance document to inform its users. The new Strategy provided clear direction on what a CAT involved for all parties including highlighting associated benefits and risks so that there was complete transparency from the outset. There was a clear timeline for the CAT process which was also supported by the Council's governance and recently updated asset management and disposal process to allow management of stakeholder expectation and appropriate forward planning. The new Strategy was Flexible to allow for differentiating circumstances as no two Community Asset Transfers were the same. The new Strategy allowed for a more innovative approach to be explored through community lead initiatives with the support of the Council.

The Board referred to 3.2 of the report and queried whether the previous Strategy had not been fit for purpose. Officers stated that the previous strategy was fit for purpose at the time that it was in force but given contextual changes, it needed to be adaptable and more flexible to the ever-changing environment that we now experienced.

The Board queried how the Council monitored any areas where there had been a CAT and ensured that the VCO was managing the asset in line with the agreement and Council policies. It was noted that all applications were considered in a robust manner and that there were teams in the Council that provided ongoing support. It was acknowledged that the actual transfer was only the start of the process and that ongoing management support was provided with any key changes to stakeholders on both sides being updated accordingly. Areas such as building compliance and management were constantly monitored and updated where appropriate.

**Resolved:**

That the revised Community Asset Transfer Strategy be endorsed and progressed to Cabinet for approval.

7 **Work programme**

The Scrutiny and Systems Manager introduced the scrutiny work programme and the individual work plans set by the separate scrutiny panels.

The topic of E-scooters was considered and how the City would react to a possible increase in E-scooters. It was noted that there was a pilot being carried out by the West Midlands Combined Authority and it was agreed that an item in relation to this could be considered by the Vibrant and Sustainable Cities Scrutiny Panel in the autumn and an update on the pilot provided.

**Resolved:**

1. That an item be added to the work plan of the Vibrant and Sustainable Cities Scrutiny Panel in relation to E-scooters.

2. That the work programme and individual work plans be agreed.

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# Scrutiny Board

8 December 2020

<b>Report title</b>	Quarter 1 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report 2020/21	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Cllr Paula Brookfield, Cabinet Member for Governance	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	David Pattison, Director of Governance	
<b>Originating service</b>	Information Governance, Customer Feedback	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Sarah Campbell	Customer Engagement Manager
	Tel	01902 551090
	Email	sarah.campbell@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Leadership Teams - Finance, Governance, Regeneration, Adult, Children's, Public Health, City Environment, City Asset/Housing	November 2020

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## Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

1. Review complaints management and performance for the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

## Recommendations for noting:

The Scrutiny Board is asked to note:

1. The Statutory Complaints Activity for Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health, as detailed in Appendix 3 (Section 1).
2. All the other complaints activity governed by the Corporate Complaints Procedures as detailed in Appendix 3 (Section 2).

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Council's Customer Feedback Team handles complaints, compliments and service enquiries from members of the public. Those relating to social care and public health matters fall under a statutory framework, while the remainder are handled under the council's corporate policy and procedures.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the complaints, including Local Government and Social Care/Housing Ombudsman enquiries received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

## **2.0 Attachments**

- 2.1 Appended to this covering report are the following documents:

Appendix 1 – Statutory Customer Feedback Dashboard

Appendix 2 – Corporate Customer Feedback Dashboard

Appendix 3 – Notes to the dashboard – Statutory (Section 1); Corporate (Section 2), Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman (HO)

Appendix 4 – Learning from stage one complaints (corporate, adults, children's and public health)

## **3.0 Complaint Training**

- 3.1 The Customer Feedback Team has compiled online corporate and children's complaint procedure training for council officers, which is available via the council's learning hub. These online training courses are essential for officers to learn more about the corporate complaints and children's statutory complaints process and procedure within the council.

## **4.0 Monitoring Information**

- 4.1 There are no concerns with the data analysis or evidence of any groups being disproportionately affected. The Council, being under the Public-Sector Equality Duty must, on an on-going basis, consider how its policies are working for the diverse communities a Council serves.

## **5.0 Managing Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Procedure**

- 5.1 The unreasonable customer behaviour procedure manages challenging customers and behaviours that they may exhibit. During this period the customer feedback team has managed a total of three cases in line with this procedure.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report. [GE/0511202/N]

## **7.0 Legal Implications**

7.1 The statutory complaints procedure must comply with various statutes. These include:

- Children and Family Services - The Children Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. The Local Authority functions covered include services provided under Parts III, IV and V of the Children Act 1989
- Adult Social Care – The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009; which came into force on 1 April 2009.
- Public Health - The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities (Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health and Local Healthwatch) Regulations 2012.

Legal Code: [Legal Code: TS/04112020/Q]

## **8.0 Equalities Implications**

8.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

## **9.0 Climate change and environmental implications**

9.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

## **10.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

10.1 The complaints element of the social care and corporate procedure is part of a wider assurance process supporting quality in service delivery standards. This can then be a positive experience for customers and contribute to their health and well-being. For those occasions where the experience which has led to a complaint is a less positive one, then there is an opportunity for appropriate action or redress so that the health and well-being of the complainant and/or relevant others is secured. The compliments process allows customers to note great practice by the Council; positive experience of officers working in many different settings will support improved experience of health and well-being for individuals as well as for staff who can be satisfied that their work is appreciated.

## **11.0 Human Resources Implications**

11.1 There are no human resource implications associated with this report.

## **12.0 Corporate Landlord Implications**

12.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this report.

## **13.0 Covid Implications**

- 13.1. Customers who contacted the customer feedback team during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 were notified that the Council was focusing its attention on addressing the challenges of the pandemic and therefore may not be able to meet the corporate complaint deadline of a reply within 21 calendar days or statutory complaint deadline of a reply within 10 working days. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman (HO) also confirmed the need for flexibility and paused casework during this period to allow local authorities to focus on Covid19; customers were sign posted to their guidance. The team also confirmed that the Council may only be able to send out a response in electronic format, so where feasible customers were asked to provide an email address along with their request. If this was not feasible the team ensured information was provided in a physical manner.

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the customer feedback team received a decrease in complaint enquiries apart from waste management complaints and service requests which received an increase. Covid 19 pandemic restrictions, which were put in place to protect staff and customers and revised working procedures, impacted on waste service delivery and resources. All changes to service delivery for waste were implemented across the service and outlined on the council's website. Response timescales have also been impacted across the complaints function; this is due to complexities of cases and Covid19 influences on service delivery. It should be noted, however, that all concerns and enquiries received by the customer feedback team were logged, actioned and responded to accordingly, with the focus of achieving the best outcome for the customer.

#### **14.0 Schedule of Background Papers**

- 14.1 None for consideration.



# Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Children's Services

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 - 30 June 2020)

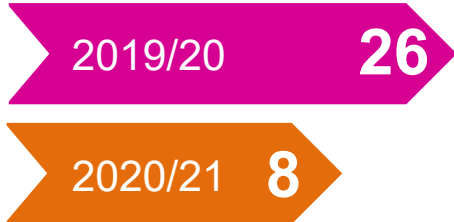
**Stage 1 Complaints Received**  
See Appendix 3 (1.2)



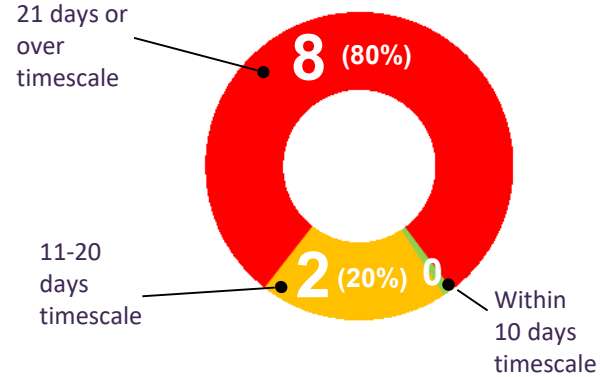
*This represents a decrease compared to Q1 (2019/20)*



**Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q1** See Appendix 3 (1.2)



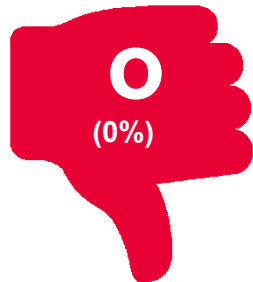
**Response Timescales (for complaints closed in Q1)** See Appendix 3 (1.3 and 1.4)



**Average Complaint Response Time** See Appendix 3 (1.3 and 1.4)



**Complaints where the Council is at fault (Upheld)**  
Cases closed during Q1  
See Learning Appendix 4



**Complaints where the Council is partially at fault**  
Cases closed during Q1



Issues have been identified from upheld complaints and have been addressed; remedies have been provided to the customers by apologising and informing them of the improvements that have been made.

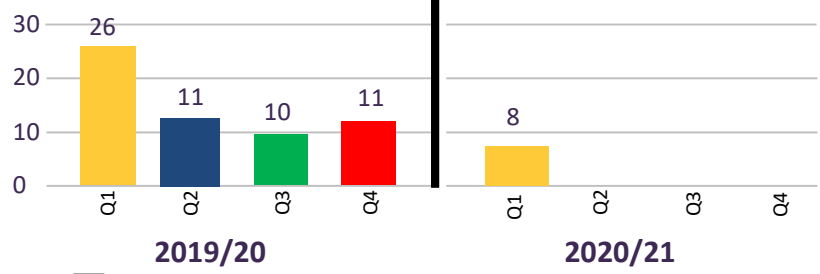
**Complaints where the Council is not at fault**  
Cases closed during Q1



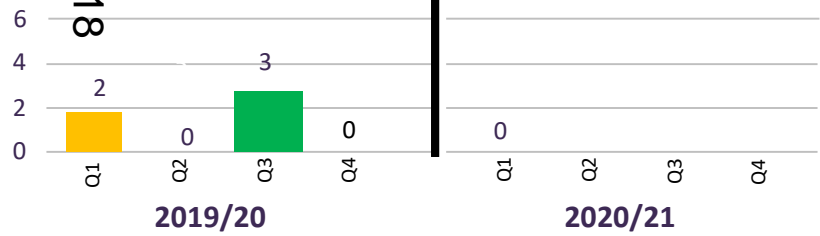
# Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Children's Services

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 - 30 June 2020)

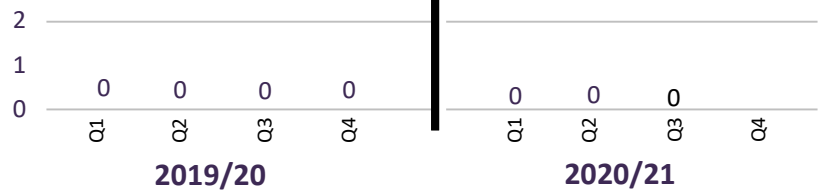
**Stage 1 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.2)**  
Breakdown by Quarter



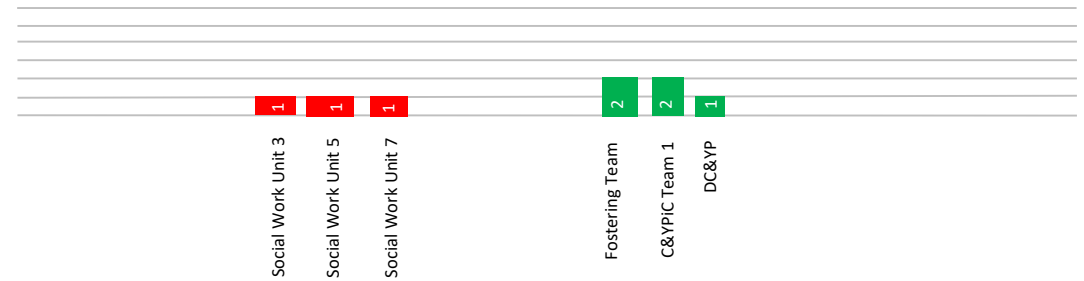
**Stage 2 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.5)**  
Breakdown by Quarter



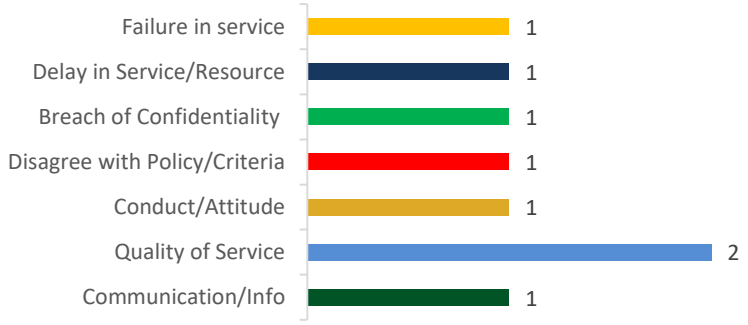
**Stage 3 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.6)**  
Breakdown by Quarter



**Stage 1 Complaints Received – Appendix 3 (1.2)**  
Breakdown by Service Area



**Stage 1 Complaints Received**  
Breakdown by Category



13

Compliments  
Appendix 3 (1.8)

4

Informal  
Complaints  
Appendix 3 (1.1)

# Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Adult Services and Public Health

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 - 30 June 2020)

### Stage 1 Complaints (Formal) Received

See Appendix 3 (2.1 and 3.2)



Average Complaint Response Time  
See Appendix 3 (3.4)

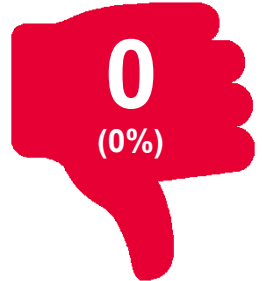


*This represents a decrease compared to from Q1 2020/21*



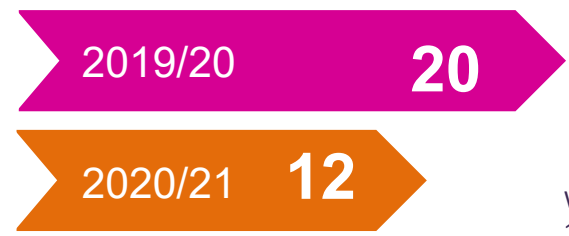
8

Complaints where the Council is at fault (Upheld)  
Cases closed during Q1  
See Learning Appendix 4



### Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q1

See Appendix 3 (2.1 and 3.2)

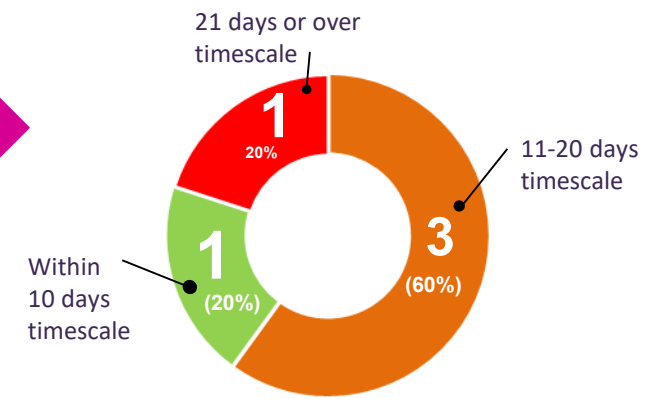


Complaints Where The Council Is Partially At Fault  
Cases closed during Q1



Issues have been identified from these partially upheld complaints and have been addressed; remedies have been provided to the customers by apologising and informing them of the improvements that have been made.

### Response Timescales (complaints closed during Q1) – See Appendix 3 (3.4)



Complaints Where The Council Is Not At Fault  
Cases closed during Q1

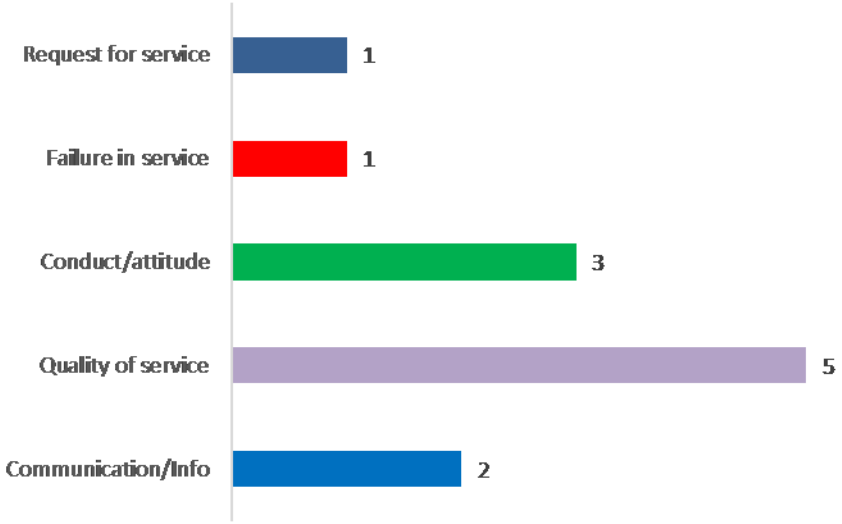
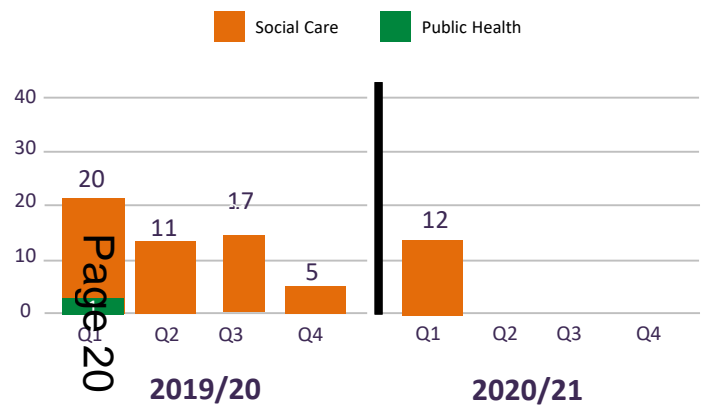


# Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Adult Services and Public Health

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 - 30 June 2020)

## Stage 1 Complaints Comparison

Breakdown by Quarter - See Appendix 3 (3.2)



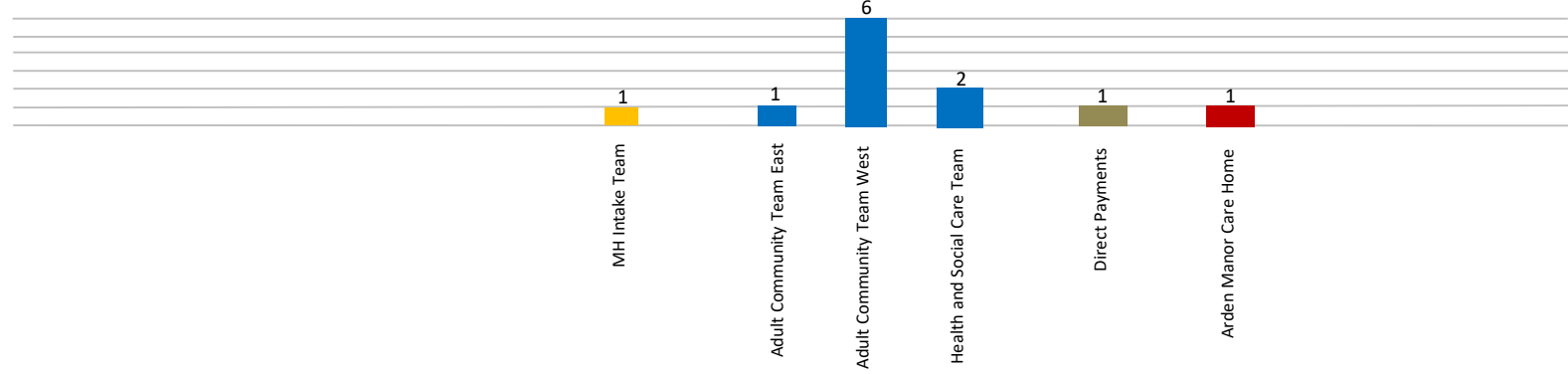
35

Compliments - Appendix 3 (3.5)

5

Informal Complaints Appendix 3 (3.1)

## Stage 1 Complaints Received – Appendix 3 (3.2) - Breakdown by Service Area



- Contracted/Independent
- Older People/Reablement
- Community Financial Support
- Disability and Mental Health

# Appendix 2

## Customer Feedback Corporate Complaints

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020)

### Stage 1 Complaints Received

See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)



### Stage 1 Complaints where the Council is at fault

(upheld) See Learning Appendix 4



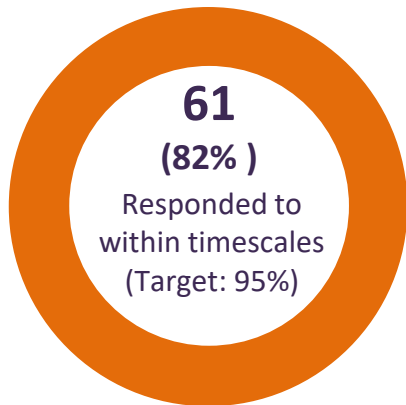
Issues have been identified from upheld complaints and have been addressed; remedies have been provided to the customers by apologising and informing them of the improvements that have been made.

### Stage 1 Complaints where the Council is not at fault



### Stage 1 Response Timescales

See Appendix 3 (4.4)



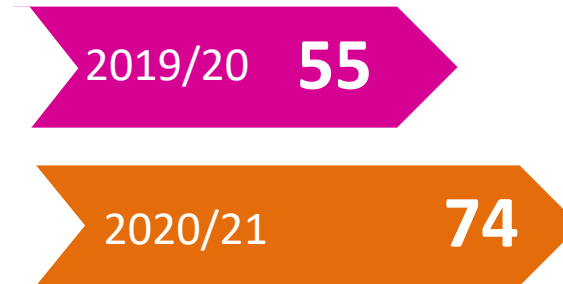
### Stage 1 Average Complaint Response Time

See Appendix 3 (4.4)



### Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q1

See Appendix 3 (4.2)



### Stage 1 Complaints decreased by



Increase of 19 complaints compared to Q1 2019/20

# Appendix 2

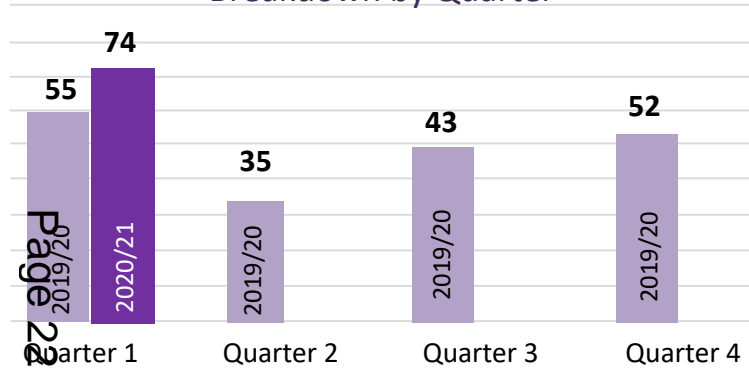
## Customer Feedback Corporate Complaints

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020)

### Stage 1 Complaints Comparison

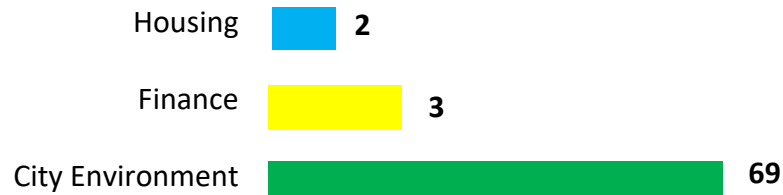
See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)

Breakdown by Quarter



### Stage 1 Complaints – Breakdown by Service

2020/21

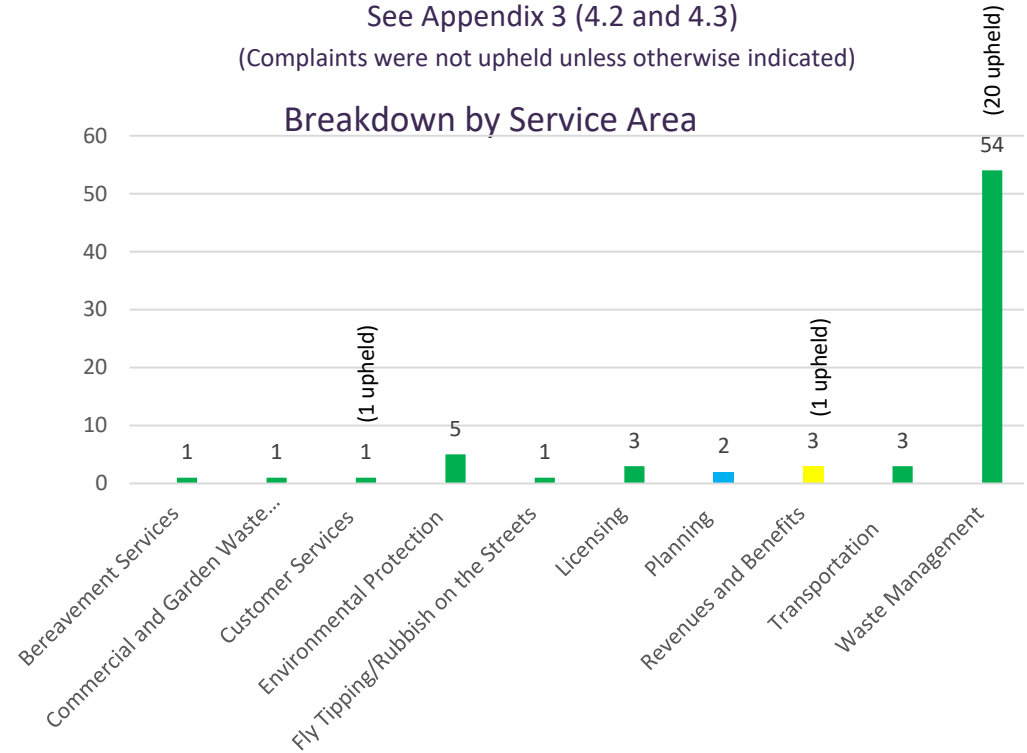


### Stage 1 Complaints Received

See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)

(Complaints were not upheld unless otherwise indicated)

Breakdown by Service Area



### Compliments Received

See Appendix 3 (4.6)

56

### Service Requests

Quarter 1  
See Appendix 3 (4.1)

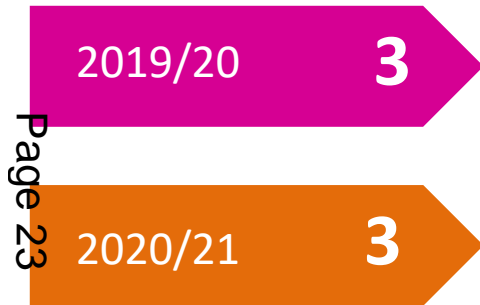
310

# Appendix 2

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020)

## HO enquiries for Quarter 1

See Appendix 3 (5.2 and 5.4)

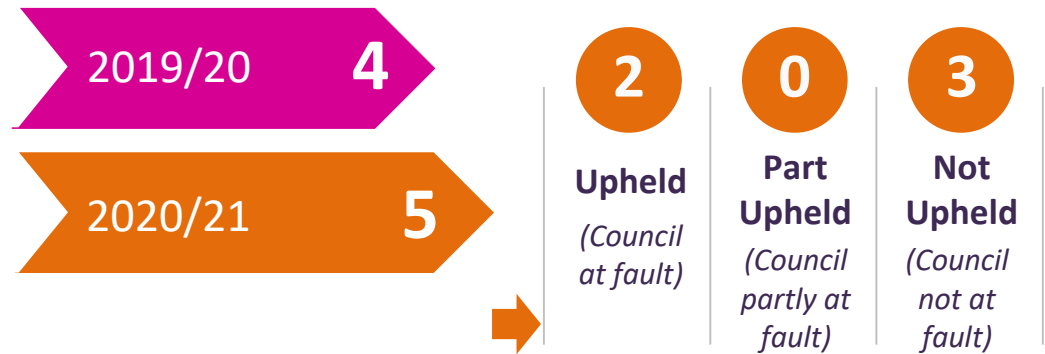


Page 23

Figures consistent for 2020/21 Q1 compared to 2019/20 Q1. Customer Feedback team has also received 2 initial HO assessment enquiries for Q1 2020/21.

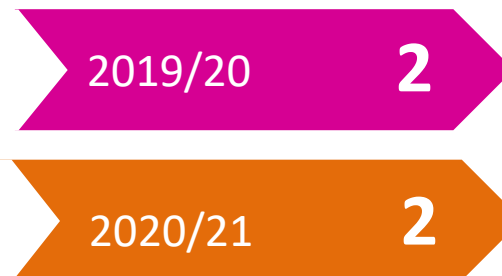
## Stage 2 Corporate Complaints Comparison for Quarter 1

See Appendix 3 (4.5)



## LGSCO enquiries for Quarter 1

See Appendix 3 (5.1 and 5.3)



Figures consistent for 2020/21 Q1 compared to 2019/20 Q1. Customer Feedback team has also received 1 initial LGSCO assessment enquiry for Q1 2020/21.

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## **APPENDIX 3**

### **SECTION 1:**

### **Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health Complaints Activity 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020**

#### **1.0 Children's Services – Complaint Activity**

##### **1.1 Informal Complaints**

The complaint regulations provide an opportunity for children/young people, parents and carers to raise issues of concern without those matters being treated as formal complaints as long as they are speedily and effectively addressed. These are referred to as informal complaints; four informal complaints were received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 compared to 16 received during 2019/20; a decrease of 12 cases.

##### **1.2 Stage One Complaints**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received eight stage one Children's Services complaints compared to 26 during 2019/20, a decrease of 18 cases. The eight complaints received during this period refer to six separate service areas. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints, the highest figure of two cases referred to Children and Young People in Care Team 1 and the Fostering Team. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally.

##### **1.3 Timescales**

Overall, 10 complaints were responded to and concluded during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. Zero complaints were responded to within 10 working days, two within 11-20 working days, and the remaining eight in just over 21 working days. Cases responded to 21 days or over timescale are due to various reasons for example, complex cases, availability of resources. In these circumstances, complainants are regularly updated on the progress of their complaint.

1.4 However, it should be noted that of the 10 complaints closed and resolved during this period three were dealt with in accordance with the Children's Act, with an average timescale of 26.5 working days and seven complaints were dealt with in accordance with the Corporate Complaints Policy (Non-Children's Act) which states complaints should be responded to within 21 calendar days; the average timescale was 38 calendar days. Out of the 10 complaints closed and resolved, no cases were upheld (at fault), seven cases were partially upheld (partially at fault) and three cases not upheld (not at fault).

##### **1.5 Stage Two Complaints**

During this period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, we have received no statutory stage two complaints which are investigated in accordance with the Children's Statutory complaints procedure and no children's stage two complaints which were dealt with in accordance with our Corporate Complaints policy and procedure. This is in comparison to two cases received for 2019/20 for this same period. Several other complaints that could have proceeded down this route were resolved after significant intervention, mediation and problem solving with the complainant, relevant service and customer feedback team.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **1.6 Stage Three Complaints**

Where a statutory children's stage two complaint investigation has been carried out and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to request matters proceed to the final stage of the statutory complaint procedure; a stage three Independent Complaint Review Panel. During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 no complaints escalated to a stage three panel during this period; this is in comparison to no stage three cases received for 2019/20 for the same period.

### **1.7 Complaint Category**

These are the headings under which we register the complaint against, based on the complaint details received – see attached Dashboard.

### **1.8 Compliments**

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's annual monitoring process. During this period, 13 compliments were received for Children's Services, compared to 26 during 1 April to 30 June 2019. Children and Young People in Care Team 2 and the Court Team received two compliments.

## **2.0 Public Health Complaints**

2.1 Regionally and nationally, councils receive very few complaints in relation to Public Health Services. A typical complaint would be where a council has commissioned a service for local people through a Clinic or GP practice for example mental health and well-being, weight management. Complaints in relation to Hospitals and GP's are dealt with through a separate complaint process managed by Health Services. In relation to Public Health services, there has been no complaints received for this period. This is in comparison to one case received for 19/20 for the same period.

## **3.0 Adult Social Care Complaints**

### **3.1 Informal Complaints**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received five informal complaints which were resolved at service level without going through the formal route. This was compared to nine informal complaints received during 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019, a decrease of four cases.

### **3.2 Stage One Complaints**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received 12 formal complaints compared with 20 during 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2020; representing a decrease of eight complaints during this period. Out of the 12 formal complaints received, one complaint was received in relation to Arden Manor Care Home. This is where Adult Social Care commission an independent agency to deliver a service on its behalf. The 12 complaints received covered six separate service areas; the highest figure of six complaints referred to the Adult Community Team West. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **3.3 Complaint Category**

These are the headings under which we register the complaint against, based on the complaint details received – see attached Dashboard.

### **3.4 Timescales**

Overall, five complaints were responded to and concluded during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. One complaint was responded to within 10 working days, three within 11-20 working days and one complaint was responded to over 21 working days. The average number of days to respond and close all complaints over the term was 14.5 days. Cases responded to 21 days or over timescale are due to various reasons for example, complex cases, availability of resources. In these circumstances, complainants are regularly updated on the progress of their complaint. Out of the five cases closed and resolved, zero cases were upheld, two cases partially upheld and three cases not upheld.

### **3.5 Compliments**

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's annual monitoring process. 35 compliments were received during 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2020 relating to Adult Services compared to 63 during 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019. Health and Social Care Team received eight compliments followed by Welfare Rights who received six compliments and Personalised Support Team received five compliments.

### **3.6 Areas of Learning from Complaints**

See Appendix 4 for stage 1 learning.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **SECTION 2: Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Complaints Activity 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020**

#### **4.0 Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman**

##### **4.1 Informal service requests/enquiries**

The customer feedback team works alongside the person complaining and the service involved, to resolve the complaint informally, preventing it becoming a formal complaint. It should be noted that 310 service request enquiries were logged with the customer feedback team during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, compared to 303 received during 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019. These types of enquiries are varied, for example, missed bin collection, parking, litter, appeals; all enquiries were logged and resolved informally, or sign posted to the correct process without going through the corporate complaints procedure, therefore providing a swift outcome and resolution for the customer.

##### **4.2 Corporate stage 1 complaints**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received 74 stage one corporate complaints compared to 55 during 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019 an increase of 19 cases. Out of the 74 cases received, 22 were upheld (at fault). The 74 complaints covered ten separate service areas, the highest figure of 54 complaints received referred to Waste Management; this is in comparison to 15 stage one complaints received during quarter one 2019/20.

##### **4.3 Corporate Complaint Category**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the main issue of complaint involved failure to provide a service (46), followed by dissatisfaction of council policies (11); failure to achieve standards/quality (8), conduct of employees (7), failure to consider relevant matters (2).

##### **4.4 Corporate Timescales**

The average response time for responding to each complaint is 17 days for this period; this is in comparison to 16 days for 2019/20. The response timescale for stage 1 complaints responding within 21 calendar days is 82%; 61 cases were responded to within 21 calendar days and 13 cases responded outside of this timescale. The target of 95% response time has therefore not been achieved; the Customer Feedback Team will continue to monitor this response time and work with service groups to improve this timescale.

##### **4.5 Stage 2 corporate complaints**

During 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 the council received five stage two corporate complaints compared to four cases for 19/20, an increase of one case. Out of the five cases received, two cases upheld (at fault) and three cases not upheld (not at fault).

Stage two complaints received as follows:

## APPENDIX 3

### City Environment

- One complaint received for Registrars in relation to incorrect death certificate and officer conduct; outcome upheld; action plan compiled and appropriate remedies/ learning has been undertaken with the service
- One complaint received for Waste Services in relation to waste collection; outcome upheld; action plan compiled and appropriate remedies/ learning has been undertaken with the service
- One complaint received for Customer Services and Customer Feedback in relation to 'My Account' and providing date of birth; outcome not upheld
- One complaint received for Environmental Crime in relation to flying tipping issues and litter; outcome not upheld

### Finance

- One complaint received in relation to administration of council tax account; outcome not upheld

## 4.6 Corporate Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's annual monitoring process. During 1 April 2020 and 30 June 2020, the council received 56 compliments, a decrease in comparison to the same period for 2019/20. Planning received 27, followed by Waste Management 7 and Customer Services receiving 7.

## 4.7 Area of Learning for Corporate Compliments

See Appendix 4 for stage one learning.

## 5.0 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman

### 5.1 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Enquiries (LGSCO)

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received two Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries as follows via each Directorate:

Children's Services received one complaint as follows:

- Strengthening Families received one complaint in relation to the council gained entry to a property without permission, an inaccurate assessment report and actions of a social worker; outcome, not upheld, no maladministration

Regeneration received one complaint as follows:

- Planning Department received one complaint in relation a discharge of condition in relation to a planning application; outcome, draft decision received awaiting final report

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **5.2 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries**

During 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2020 the council received three enquiries from the Housing Ombudsman for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- One complaint received in relation to costs incurred by the complainant as a result of recharge works being carried out; outcome service failure by the landlord; action plan compiled and appropriate remedies/ learning has been undertaken with the service
- One complaint received in relation to landlord's response to the complainant's reports of noise coming from new cladding installed at her property; outcome no maladministration
- One complaint in relation to landlord's decision to add court costs to the complainant's rent account; outcome closed falls outside ombudsman jurisdiction

### **5.3 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) assessment enquiries**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received one Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman assessment enquiries as follows:

- Environmental Services received on complaint for the Arbor Team in relation to damage to property due to trees on land; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction

### **5.4 Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries**

During 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 the council received two Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint in relation to the landlord's handling of a communal rodent problem and the resulting damage caused; outcome premature complaint; complaint has now been logged and action accordingly
- Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint in relation to the way the landlord has dealt with her reports of mould and damp at a property; outcome complaint has been logged and actioned; currently awaiting the Housing Ombudsman's decision

## **6.0 Learning/Action Plans**

When a complaint is upheld (council at fault) and the findings of a subsequent investigation is for a financial remedy, change to policy or service delivery, the Customer Feedback Team produce an action plan report. Recommendations within these reports are agreed with appropriate Heads of Service and shared with the relevant Service Manager/Director to ensure appropriate remedies and changes to policy/service delivery are implemented. Customer Feedback Team and Directorates are committed to learning from customer feedback and require the completion of a tracking form/learning log from each complaint investigated at all stages. Where complaints highlight that things have gone wrong, heads of service, managers and the customer feedback team are required to identify these areas, implement remedies and review processes/procedures where necessary. See attached Appendix 4, Learning dashboard.



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# Appendix 4

## Customer Feedback Learning from Complaints

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020)

**Action Plans/Learning from complaints** - When a complaint is upheld (Council at fault) at stage two/Ombudsman investigation and if the findings of a subsequent investigation is for a change to policy or service delivery, the Customer Feedback Team produce an action plan report and follow up with the service any learning/action that needs to be carried out. Recommendations within these reports are agreed with appropriate Heads of Service and shared with the relevant Director. Please see below a few examples of stage 1 complaint learning where a learning log is compiled and agreed with the service:

### Children's Services – Stage one complaint learning

- *Complaint in relation to terms and conditions outlined in the policy not adhered to by Fostering Services. **Learning** – Agreements and arrangements made for future foster care placements to be recorded on carer record for reference and to avoid delay/confusion*
- *Complaint in relation to information provided to family member prior to security prompts. **Learning** – Further training to be provided to department to prevent future violation of data protection*
- *Complaint regarding concerns involving alleged discrimination resulting in inability to contact social worker during lockdown. **Learning** – Suitable alternative communication put into place to ensure fairness to all service users*

### Adult Services – Stage one complaint learning

- *Complaint in relation to concerns regarding lack of face to face assessments during lockdown resulting in loss of potentially significant information. **Learning** – More information to be gathered from varied sources to ensure assessments are completed thoroughly*
- *Complaint outlining confusion concerning procedure in place for Care Home Fees. **Learning** – Additional training to be provided to staff to ensure the correct process is applied by all going forward*
- *Complaint regarding questions concerning safeguarding asked during assessment for counselling. **Learning** – Appropriate phrasing and suitable questions about safeguarding discussed and reflected during practise group to be implemented at future assessments*

# Appendix 4

## Customer Feedback Learning from Complaints

Quarter 1 (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020)

**Action Plans/Learning from complaints** - When a complaint is upheld (Council at fault) at stage two/ Ombudsman investigation and if the findings of a subsequent investigation is for a change to policy or service delivery, the Customer Feedback Team produce an action plan report and follow up with the service any learning/action that needs to be carried out. Recommendations within these reports are agreed with appropriate Heads of Service and shared with the relevant Director. Please see below a few examples of stage 1 complaint learning where a learning log is compiled and agreed with the service:

### Corporate Complaints – Stage one complaint learning

- Page 34
- *Complaint regarding missed bin collection. **Learning** – Crew members will continue to be monitored and reminders will be sent to the team as required*
  - *Complaint regarding contents of bin not being emptied. **Learning** – Waste crew have been reminded of this issue and to ensure bins are correctly emptied*
  - *Complaint in relation to concerns of bin being left in incorrect location - **Learning** - Crew have been spoken to and a reminder to be put in crew folders ensuring bins are correctly placed back; any issues are to be monitored going forward*
  - *Complaint in relation to reoccurrence of non collection of refuse waste – **Learning** – Issues raised with operations manager in waste department to ensure crew are emptying bin. Conduct of actions to be addressed by waste manager*