

9 March 2021

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

Venue Teams Virtual 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

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Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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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 meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record.]
- 4 **Matters arising**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5 **Policing Through the Pandemic and Community Safety Update**
[To receive a presentation from Superintendent Simon Inglis, Wolverhampton NPU and Hannah Pawley, Community Safety Manager.]
- 6 **Adult Education Strategy, Offer and Outcomes** (Pages 9 - 20)
[To receive a report on the Adult Education Strategy from the Head of Adult Education.]
- 7 **Quarter 2 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report 2020/21**
(Pages 21 - 42)
[To receive a report from the Customer Engagement Manager.]

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

In Attendance

Councillor Louise Miles, Cabinet Member for Resources
David Pattison, Director of Governance
Claire Nye, Director of Finance
Alison Shannon, Chief Accountant
Sarah Campbell, Customer Engagement Manager
Julia Cleary, Scrutiny and Systems Manager
Earl Piggott Smith, Scrutiny Officer
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 **Minutes of the previous meetings**
Resolved:
 - a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

 - b) That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

4 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

5 **Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-2022 to 2023-2024**

The Chair welcomed Cllr Louise Miles, Cabinet Member for Resources and Alison Shannon, Chief Accountant to the meeting. Cllr Miles introduced the Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report for 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. It was confirmed that the draft report had already been considered by the other scrutiny panels and comments from the panels were included with the paperwork.

Section two of the report provided an overview of the Council's financial position and showed that the Council had set a balanced budget for 2020-2021 without the use of general reserves and was reported to Council in March. However, it was projected that the Council would be faced with finding further estimated budget reductions totalling £15.5 million in 2021-2022 rising to around £20 million over the medium term to 2023-2024.

It was important to note that the budget was prepared prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of reporting to Council, the full impact of Covid-19 was not known and the impact on both the finances and operating environment could not have been foreseen. The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant international, national and regional impact, and would continue to have, significant financial implications for the Council.

Work had been ongoing across the Council to review corporate resources assumptions, growth and inflation assumptions and income generation opportunities in line with the Five-Year Financial Strategy to support the budget strategy for 2021-2022 and future years, whilst also detailing the emerging pressures that the Council currently faced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

On the 11 November an update was provided to Cabinet on the financial strategy, progress against the deficit and how the Council had responded to the pandemic including the projected financial implications of the pandemic against the one-off grants that had been awarded to the Council. However, following announcements made by Government it has been assumed that sufficient grant funding would be provided to cover the cost pressures arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Taking this into account, the 2021-2022 projected budget deficit stood at £4.5 million rising to £19.6 million over the medium term. In the event that the Government did not provide sufficient grant funding to meet the cost pressures arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2021-2022 projected budget deficit would be in the region of £23.2 million rising to £40 million over the medium term. This would have a significant impact on the Council and result in the Council undertaking a fundamental review of all services in order to identify budget reductions sufficient enough to set a balanced budget.

The Chair thanked the Chief Accountant and the Cabinet Member for the report.

The Board considered that this was a difficult situation and hoped that the Government would be able to cover the costs associated with the pandemic.

The Board requested information in relation to the current rate of Council tax and business rate collection and any impact that this may have on the Council's current assumptions. It was stated that these could be circulated by email after the meeting but that there was a reduction to the normal levels of income generated and that at this stage there was a forecast of around a £15 million reduction which the Government had indicated could be spread across three years and that grants of up to 75% of the irrecoverable loss would be available and that work was continuing to review this forecast. This was a very hard area to forecast as businesses and residents were struggling and the full impact of the pandemic was as yet unknown.

The Council was keen to support as many of its residents and businesses as it could and a lot of work was being carried out in relation to this. An update would be brought before the Cabinet in January on the matter. The Cabinet Member confirmed that many ongoing conversations were happening with local businesses and citizens though a number of avenues including the recently launched Talk to Us campaign. The number of welfare support officers had been increased and the voluntary sector were also playing an important part in reaching and advising citizens and businesses. The Council remained under a statutory obligation to bring in business rates and Council tax but were also aware of the increase in applications for universal credit and wanted to help wherever possible.

The Board thanked all of the officers and front-line staff who were working to keep citizens safe and requested to know what additional updates would be made available to ensure that all of this work was kept on track and monitored.

It was stated that there were already good controls in place in relation to finances which had been embedded into the ongoing Covid work. Good work was being carried out with budget holders across the Council, working together to understand where the pressures were. The biggest challenge was forecasting going forward as so much was still unknown. Monthly returns were being sent to the Government to further try to understand the situation as a collective whole. When compiling budgets, officers were also aiming to separate out the base budgets and the budgets associated with the pandemic whilst also remaining aware of how these interacted. There was also work to be carried out to monitor and report on all of the different grants and the criteria associated with them. The Cabinet Member confirmed that she would be happy to bring a report on any of the above areas to Scrutiny Board should it be requested.

The Board praised the work that had been and continued to be carried out by Public Health in the City but there were some concerns raised as to the impact of the cost of all of the work that had been carried out and requested assurance that support to vulnerable individuals were not lost sight of.

The Cabinet Member assured the Board that if there were vulnerable residents already known to the Council and if they fell into arrears with areas such as Council tax then the Council would reach out to them through their existing support workers to help and support them.

The Board expressed some concern that not all of these people would be previously known to the Council and that due to the pandemic may be experiencing issues for the first time and would not know how to access the necessary services.

The Cabinet Member offered to provide copies of the new materials to the Board including leaflets about the Talk to Me campaign.

The Board thanked the Council staff who had been managing the grants from the Government and getting them out to the businesses.

The question was raised as to whether there were any staff shortages due to Covid that were impacting on services. It was stated that careful management of service delivery was crucial to manage this and that there would certainly be staff self-isolating or unable to work due to the pandemic.

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel informed the Board that there would be an item in relation to mental health at the next Health Scrutiny Panel meeting on 14 January 2021 which was a public meeting.

Resolved: That the report be agreed and all comments noted.

6 **Quarter 1 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report**
The Customer Engagement Manager provided an overview of the quarter one social care, public health and corporate complaints report for the following areas:

Children's
Adults and Public Health
Corporate

In relation to children's complaints the Council had received 8 stage one children's services complaints which was a decrease of 18 cases in comparison to quarter one in 2019/20 and was outlined in Appendix 1.

There were no stage two or three complaints received and out of the 10 complaints closed and resolved during this period, no cases were upheld (at fault), 7 cases were partially upheld (partially at fault) and 3 cases were not upheld (not at fault).

In relation to adult's and public health Complaints, the Council had received 12 stage one adult services complaints which represented a decrease of 8 cases in comparison to quarter one in 2019/20 and was outlined in Appendix 1.

The Council had received no public health complaints. Out of the 5 cases closed and resolved during this period no cases were upheld, 2 cases were partially upheld and 3 cases were not upheld.

In relation to corporate stage one complaints, the Council had received 74 stage one corporate complaints which represented an increase of 19 cases in comparison to 2019/20, details of which were outlined in Appendix 2. Out of the 74 cases received, 22 were upheld (at fault). The highest figure of 54 complaints referred to Waste Management where out of 54 received, 20 complaints were upheld which was in comparison to 15 stage one complaints received during quarter one 2019/20. Waste management complaints and service requests increased during this period.

The Complaints Team had worked closely with the Waste Management Team to ensure responses were issued in a timely manner and that appropriate remedies

were put in place to achieve the best outcomes for customers. It was noted that Covid 19 pandemic restrictions and revised working procedures had impacted on service delivery during this period.

In relation to stage two complaints, if a customer remained dissatisfied they could escalate to stage two of the complaints procedure. In this period the council received 5 stage two cases and out of these, two cases were upheld (at fault) and three cases were not upheld (not at fault).

The council had received two Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) enquiries; one case for Children's Services and one case for Regeneration, the outcomes were as follows:

- Children's complaint - outcome, not upheld, no maladministration.
- Regeneration complaint – outcome awaiting final report.

The council had also received three enquiries from the Housing Ombudsman (HO) for Wolverhampton Homes and one assessment enquiry from the LGSCO and two assessment enquiries from HO.

The Board considered the impact that the pandemic had on the complaints procedure. It was noted that customers were notified that the Council was focusing its attention on addressing the challenges of the pandemic and that confirmation had been given that the Council 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 LGSCO and HO paused casework during this period to allow local authorities to focus on Covid19 and customers were sign posted to their guidance via the Council's website.

Waste management complaints and service requests increased during this period due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions including health & Safety matters and the need to protect staff and customers. Revised working procedures had impacted on waste service delivery and resources.

It was noted that the Complaints Team had worked closely with the Waste Team to ensure complaints were logged and responded to accordingly, with the focus of achieving the best outcome for the customer.

The Board were shown a compliment that had been received in relation to the Waste Team and the service that was being provided.

The Board thanked the Customer Engagement Manager for the report and in particular for sharing the compliment with them.

A Board member stated that he was uplifted by the report and stated that where there had been increases that was to be expected during the pandemic. Clarification was sought as to the regulations and how the informal complaints were different from the formal complaints and who made that differentiation. It was stated that the decisions were made as a Team when a complaint was received and where

appropriate logged as a service request in the first instance and work carried out with the service area to resolve the issue if possible.

A Board member stated that residents were very pleased when a service worked well and that this seemed to be doing so. There were however issues with the stickers and getting them out to people, payment for the green bins did not appear to be flexible enough and there had been complaints as to the quality of the purple bins and timeframes to get them replaced.

The Customer Engagement Manager stated that she would feed these concerns back to the relevant service area and confirmed that these areas were representative of complaints received and work was being done with the service area in relation to them.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be received and noted.

7 **Work programme**

The Scrutiny and Systems Manager provided an update on the Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Scrutiny Chairs and Scrutiny Officers provided updates on the work that had been carried out by the panels they covered and upcoming items for consideration.

A Board member provided comments in relation to types and rates of crime in his ward and across the City and stated that it was vital to scrutinise areas around crime and disorder in the right way.

A Board member requested that levels of educational achievement be added to the list of possible items for the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel.

It was also requested that consideration be given to scrutinising strategic partners of the Council.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be agreed.

Scrutiny Board

09 March 2021

Report title	Adult Education Strategy, Offer and Outcomes 2019-20	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre Education and Skills	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Richard Lawrence, Director of Regeneration	
Originating service	Adult Education	
Accountable employee(s)	Joanne Keatley	Head of Adult Education
	Tel	01922 558173
	Email	Joanne.keatley@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Regeneration Leadership Team	16 February 2021

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

1. Provide feedback and challenge on the suitability of the Adult Education strategy, learning offer and outcomes for residents.
2. Comment and advise on how Adult Education can contribute further to reducing the digital divide.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the scrutiny panel with an overview of the Adult Education strategy, offer and outcomes for residents, highlighting digital inclusion strategies.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Further Education sector is divided into FE Colleges, Adult and Community Learning Providers and Training Providers. Adult Education Wolverhampton (AEW) is an Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provider. The ACL sector has a distinct focus and purpose enshrined in lifelong learning and the wider benefits of learning. Most ACL providers have a mixed portfolio of funding for skills and funding for community learning. This positions them to make a valuable contribution to agendas such as health and well-being, digital inclusion, qualifications and skills, employment and community cohesion.
- 2.2 The City of Wolverhampton Council receives just over £3m annually from the Department for Education via the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to provide the Adult Education Service. The funding is split equally between funding for qualifications and skills and funding for Community Learning, which tends to be non-qualification based and supports widening participation, digital inclusion and health and well-being.
- 2.3 The service has an Advanced Learner Loans facility for learners aged 24+ undertaking an eligible level 3 qualification. The service receives a small amount of funding from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for learners aged 16 to 18 years.
- 2.4 AEW's funding is for adults aged 19 and over. AEW's unique position as an ACL provider affords it the opportunity to attract adults who are returning to learning and seeking a safe, discrete learning environment with other adult learners. AEW's offer allows adults to be the primary focus and caters specifically for their needs rather than those of young people. Adults who enrol with the service are well supported, often overcoming health and specific learning barriers that they have had since school or developed in early adulthood.
- 2.5 The Service received an Ofsted inspection, under the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF), in November 2019, it received an overall effectiveness grade of Good and graded good in all areas. The service was graded Outstanding for Personal Development. The Service continues to focus on improvements from the Ofsted inspection alongside improvements identified by the Service from its annual self-assessment report. A single Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) exists to capture all improvement work.
- 2.6 The 2019-20 academic year was significantly impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. From March 2020 all face to face learning ceased and moved to a remote form of delivery. Therefore, participation, achievements and outcomes were adversely affected. For example, participation was 9% lower than planned on qualifications courses, achievements were 18% lower than planned and outcome reporting was significantly impeded with only 280 students completing the Next Steps survey, compared to almost 1,000 in previous years, giving less validity to the results.
- 2.7 The City Learning Quarter (CLQ) will be developed around the Old Hall Street area of the city centre once funding is secured. It will include a City of Wolverhampton College campus, the council's Adult Education Service, and the Central Library. The aim is to

improve the offer to all users of the library, college and adult education provision. The City Learning Quarter will also see investment in the public realm as part of Wolverhampton's regeneration programme.

3.0 Adult Education Strategy

3.1 **The mission of the service is ‘to make a positive difference to the lives of individuals and communities through high quality learning that inspires, challenges and leads to further learning and employment’.**

3.2 In realising this mission, the service aims to impact on three of the Council’s strategic outcomes:

- well skilled people working in an inclusive economy;
- strong resilient and healthy communities and children
- young people get the best possible start in life.

Going forwards the Service’s work will be intrinsically linked to the Relighting the City plans and particularly Generate more Jobs and Learning Opportunities.

The West Midlands Combined Authority’s Covid-Recovery plans, its Strategic Economic Plan and the Council’s Strategic Economic Plan provide a backdrop to the service aims, particularly the need to contribute to inclusive growth and provide residents opportunities to position themselves to take advantage of a more prosperous city.

3.3 To impact on the strategic outcomes of the Council and aims of the WMCA the Service uses key demographic data along with information on the labour market trends to inform the planning and delivery of the offer to residents. Wolverhampton is an area of extreme and multiple deprivations. Key facts for Wolverhampton from the Black Country Consortium, Economic Intelligence Unit, April 2020 include:

% of Residents with No Qualifications			
	2004	2014	2020
Wolverhampton	23.8	19.6	17.3
National Average	14.9	8.5	7.5

% of Residents with Level 4 and above Qualification			
	2004	2014	2020
Wolverhampton	16	23.6	24.9
National Average	26	40	40

- The Experian Literacy Score mapping project (2016), within the 533 Parliamentary constituencies in England, ranked Wolverhampton South East and Wolverhampton North East as being 9th and 14th respectively in having the greatest literacy need.
- Numeracy skill levels reported in 2011 showed 58.6% of Wolverhampton residents as being below level 1, as compared against 49.1% in England. Having numeracy skills below level 1 means a person may not be able to understand price labels or pay household bills.

Unemployment rates have been significantly adversely affected as a result of the pandemic:

- 10.3% of the working age population claimed unemployment benefit in December 2020, with 16,795 claimants and a 73% increase over 12 months. **Wolverhampton has the seventh highest claimant count in the country.** The national average is 6.4%.
- Youth unemployment (18 – 24 age group) for Wolverhampton in December 2020 is 15.2%. It is ranked third highest in the country. In England it is 9.0%.
- For those aged fifty plus (50-64 age group) in Wolverhampton in December 2020 the claimant rate was 8.03%. In England it is 5%.
- Other groups with higher unemployment rates than the Wolverhampton average include working aged disabled people and ethnic minorities of working age.

3.4 The curriculum strategy focuses on attracting residents from deprived communities, with low levels of skills and qualifications and high levels of unemployment. The curriculum is designed to widen participation in learning particularly for those furthest from the labour market; offer opportunities to improve health and well-being, putting people in a better position to move towards employment and provide people with the qualifications, skills and attitudes needed by employers today.

3.5 To support the Service to deliver against its strategy, the Service has a 'Plan on a Page', agreed with its Advisory Board, to steer its key performance indicators. In 2019-20 these included:

- % of residents from the 9 most deprived wards
- % of residents living in the top 10% of Lower Super Output Areas
- % unemployed and looking for work
- % who are in work and on a low wage
- % with low and no qualifications

- 3.6 In 2019-20, the service has tried a new strategy to widen participation further in deprived communities by subcontracting some provision to third sector providers who are directly delivering to residents in their communities. The aim is for these learners to progress into AEW learning opportunities in the City centre.
- 3.7 The curriculum strategy ensures AEW works hard and purposefully to provide an inclusive learning environment to support its impact on individuals and their communities. Its endeavours to be inclusive are supported by well-developed, productive partnerships internally within the Council, and externally with a range of public, private and third sector organisations, including City of Wolverhampton College, the City of Wolverhampton University, Schools, Strengthening Families Hubs, Job Centre Plus, the Refugee and Migrant Centre and the Learning Platform. A new partnership with Wolverhampton Homes is developing and a bespoke package of learning is being designed to engage their most vulnerable pre-tenants and tenants.
- 3.8 The curriculum strategy includes managing efficiency and value for money through effective and integrated use of all funding streams, income from student fees, income from small projects and income from work with employers. Annual curriculum planning includes scrutinising efficiency indicators such as class size, teaching hours utilised, room and building usage.
- 3.9 The curriculum strategy aims to support those in low paid work who are aiming to improve their skills to access higher paid work. The service provides core qualifications such as English, maths and ESOL in the evening to enable those in daytime work to study in the evening. And in ESOL we have a project to test a more flexible offer for shift workers, who struggle to attend regularly and miss too much content to achieve their qualifications.
- 3.10 To support the lifelong learning agenda and the concept that learning throughout life is good for health and well-being, but to remain within funding priorities, the Service offers a suite of 'Club Classes'. These classes are not funded by Government; the tutors are self-employed, and the students all pay. Adult Education's role is to support with aspects such as marketing and facilities.

4.0 The Curriculum Offer

- 4.1 In line with the need in the City, the service has developed strengths in areas such as English, maths and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) alongside vocational provision at level 2 and below and provision specifically designed for those with mental health issues and learning disabilities. The service also provides opportunities for adults to enter higher education after following an Access to Higher Education programme or other Level 3 courses.
- 4.2 To ensure we attract residents with low and no skills the curriculum offer provides multiple entry points from community engagement activity, which is likely to be non-qualification based, through entry level and up to level 2, 3 and above.

- 4.3 Following engagement the curriculum is designed to offer linear and non-linear pathways to take adults through to meaningful outcomes including employment and further learning with AEW or other FE and HE providers. Examples of linear pathways would include progression from entry level, in a subject such as maths or English, up through the levels to GCSE in the same subject. Non-linear progression would be a student starting their journey studying, for example, a basic skill such as English or Maths but then moving sideways to a vocational subject such as Health and Social Care or Supporting Teaching and Learning in school.
- 4.4 Given the low levels of literacy and numeracy skills for adults in the City and the importance of these skills to function well in work, community and society, the AEW curriculum concentrates on improving these skills from many angles. It is designed to provide English and maths development discretely, as part of a learning package, embedded in vocational/employability packages and in targeted support workshops.
- 4.5 Typically, following Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), adult learners interested in re-entering the labour market, or looking to change/improve their earning power, follow multiple courses. These are packaged as a 'Programme of Study', taken concurrently or sequentially and inclusive of English, maths and ICT. The vocational areas of study would include health and social care, supporting teaching and learning in schools, business administration and customer service. The package would also aim to improve their employability with additional relevant qualifications in areas such as food hygiene, paediatric first aid and first aid at work.
- 4.6 AEW offers provision designed for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are two key pathways one designed to maintain skills and gain independent living skills and the other designed to progress skills sufficiently to gain greater independence, maintain for gain voluntary work or move towards paid employment.
- 4.7 The AEW 'Like Minds' programme supports individuals with mental health difficulties. They are referred to the programme by their GP or other health professional. The programme concentrates on practical creative and craft-based activities, whilst building self-confidence, self-esteem, friendships and resilience.
- 4.8 In partnership with schools and children's centres, the service offers family learning opportunities targeted at those parents whose children are at risk of low attainment. The aim is to support adults to engage with their children's education but also to encourage adults to take-up further learning for themselves.
- 4.9 In partnership with the University AEW offers five Access to Higher Education pathways. These include Access to Health Studies, Access to Music Technology and Access to Social Science. A pre-access course has been designed to provide a pathway and support those not ready to take the full Access programme.

5.0 Outcomes for Students

Participation

- 5.1 As a result of the service's strategy and curriculum offer it is important to measure success by looking at whether the service has attracted the students it intended to and to evaluate if those students were successful in achieving a positive progression to further learning or a positive destination if appropriate.
- 5.2 In 2019-20, the service attracted 2483 students, which was an 15% decrease on the previous academic year. The decrease was a direct result of the pandemic with fewer opportunities for students to enrol on new programmes from March 2020, when schools, colleges and adult education providers closed provision for face to face learning and moved to remote delivery. Widening participation in learning was particularly impacted by Covid with schools and community venues closed.
- 5.3 In 2019-20, of the students it attracted, 34% were unemployed and looking for work, which was a 3% increase on the previous academic year. And of the 36% who were employed, 21% were earning a low wage of below £17,004 per annum. These students qualified to learn without fees due to their low wage.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of Students	2598	2833	2483
% unemployed and looking for work	36%	31%	34%
% employed	38%	43%	36%
% of employed on low wage	n/a	n/a	21%

- 5.4 In 2019-20, **62% of students had no or low qualifications (below level 2)**, which was a 4% increase on the previous academic year.
- 5.5 In 2019-20, **60% of students lived in the 9 most deprived wards**, which was an increase of 5% on the previous year and 30% lived in the top 10% of Lower Super Output Areas in the City, 2% lower than the previous academic year. The offer will be further refined to continue to increase the proportion of residents engaging in learning from Lower Super Output Areas.
- 5.6 In 2019- 20, **27% of students declared a learning difficulty or disability** and of these 114 declared a mental health issue. This is an increase of 5% from the previous academic year.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of students	2598	2833	2483
% declared disability including mental health	21%	23%	27%
Of which % had a mental health issue	4%	11%	17%

- 5.7 In 2019-20 the service delivered 260 qualification courses and 159 community learning courses. 49% of these were at entry level, 18% at level 1 (pre-GCSE), 13% at level 2 (GCSE A-C equivalent), 13% at level 3 and above and 7% on mixed levels.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of students	2598	2833	2483
Entry Level	51%	49%	52%
Level 1 (pre-GCSE)	23%	18%	21%
Level 2 (GCSE Equiv.)	17%	13%	19%
Level 3 and above	8%	13%	7%
Other and mixed	1%	7%	1%

- 5.8 In 2019-20, of the 2278 enrolments onto qualification courses, 25% were for students studying English as their second language, 30% were studying vocational qualifications including health and social care, supporting teaching and learning in schools, business administration, British Sign Language and creative subjects, 20% were studying English, 15% were studying maths.

Achievements

- 5.9 In 2019-20 overall achievement for students on qualification and skills courses was 72% against a 2018-19 benchmark for similar providers of 85%. For Community Learning the achievement was 96% against a benchmark of 90% for 2018-19. There was no benchmarking data for 2019-20 due to the impact of Covid. 6 out of 10 subject sector areas achievement rates were above provider benchmark and 4 were below. Again, this was against 2018-19 benchmarking data due to Covid.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of students	2598	2833	2483
Achievement Rate	91%	90%	72%
Relevant Benchmark	85.1%	85%	n/a

- 5.10 There were no discernible gaps in achievement between those students from the 9 most deprived wards or for those living in the 10% most deprived wards.

- 5.11 There were no discernible gaps in achievement between gender, ethnic groups or those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Destinations and benefits of learning

- 5.12 In 2019-20, based on 280 responses to the Next Steps survey, 51% of students reported a positive employment outcome with 8% gaining full-time employment, 10% part-time, 5% became self-employed, 15% gained a promotion or better job and 13% securing a job interview. However, there was 0% gaining volunteering.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Next Steps Completed	993	892	280
% into full-time work	9%	5%	8%
% into part-time work	9%	10%	10%
% into self-employment	4%	5%	5%
% gaining promotion	11%	13%	15%
% gaining an interview	13%	12%	13%
% into voluntary work	18%	15%	0%

- 5.13 In addition to the employment outcomes, the Next Steps survey also showed that because of engaging in learning: 88% of students improved their personal confidence, 37% improved their physical and mental health and well-being. Also, 40% reported their ability to live independently had improved and 76% felt their ability to parent and support their child with education had improved.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Next Steps Completed	993	892	280
Improved personal confidence	70%	79%	88%
Improved physical and mental well-being	35%	39%	37%
Improved skills to live independently	13%	13%	40%
Improved parenting skills and supporting child's education	53%	48%	76%

The Digital Divide

- 5.14 In line with Government guidance the Service ceased face to face teaching and learning in March 2020. The guidance was to move learning to remote delivery. There are many ways to deliver learning remotely and the right mode depends on several factors. However, having access to a device, having digital connectivity and skills to use ICT are needed for most remote delivery.

- 5.15 The Service conducted a survey during lockdown to help understand the digital barriers faced by students. Key outcomes of the survey were:
- 506 students completed the survey
 - 88% said their learning did continue after lockdown
 - 54% of those felt they learned less than when they attended class
 - 22% did not feel they had the right equipment to learn at home
 - 25% did not have either a laptop or PC to work on
 - 35% did not have Wi-Fi at home.
- 5.16 When asked what would help them to learn at home, students responded as follows:
- 26% said a PC/or laptop would help
 - 24% said Wi-Fi/internet connection would help
 - 12% said more digital skills would help.
- 5.17 In response to the survey results, and the on-going disruption from the pandemic, the service has implemented the following:
- Intensive digital skills development frontloaded at the beginning of learning
 - An enhanced loan service with over 100 laptops available to loan to students
 - A 'dongle/MiFi' service providing internet cards to students with enough connectivity at home.
- 5.18 To date 64 laptops have been loaned and 6 MiFi 30GB 'dongles' have been provided to students.
- 5.19 The Service has devised a digital transformation plan to implement changes that will enhance its service to staff and students. It will enable the Service to continue to make rapid progress in this area and position it well for the future.

6.0 Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications to this report, however for information purposes the financial impact of COVID-19 on the Adult Education service is provided.

In 2019-20 the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Education and Skills Funding Agency provided assurance that there would not be any clawback of grant funding for under-delivery due to Covid. However, the Service did receive less fees for courses from students in 2019-20 and incurred additional costs relating to ICT equipment expenditure.
[VS/24022021/R]

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

[Legal Code: TS/20022021/Q]

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment, part A, has been completed.

9.0 All other implications

9.0 There are no wider implications

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.0 There are no background papers

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Scrutiny Board

9 March 2021

Report title	Quarter 2 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report 2020/21	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Cabinet Member for Governance	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Director of Governance	
Originating service	Information Governance, Customer Feedback	
Accountable employee(s)	Sarah Campbell, Customer Engagement Manager Tel 01902 551090 Email sarah.campbell@wolverhampton.gov.uk	
Report to be/has been considered by	Leadership Teams - Finance, Governance, Regeneration, Adult, Children's, Public Health, City Environment, City Asset/Housing	February 2021

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

1. Review complaints management and performance for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 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.
- a. This report provides an overview of the complaints, including Local Government and Social Care/Housing Ombudsman enquiries received during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 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 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 two 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/26012021/B]

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: [TS/27012021/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 July 2020 to 30 September 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 also confirmed the need for flexibility and customers were sign posted to their guidance. During this period the LGSCO resumed existing casework via its website as they had paused all casework which needed input from councils and care providers at the end of March 2020.

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 July 2020 to 30 September 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. 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 resolution and outcome for the customer.

14.0 Schedule of Background Papers

- 14.1 None for consideration.

Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Children's Services

Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Received
See Appendix 3 (1.2)



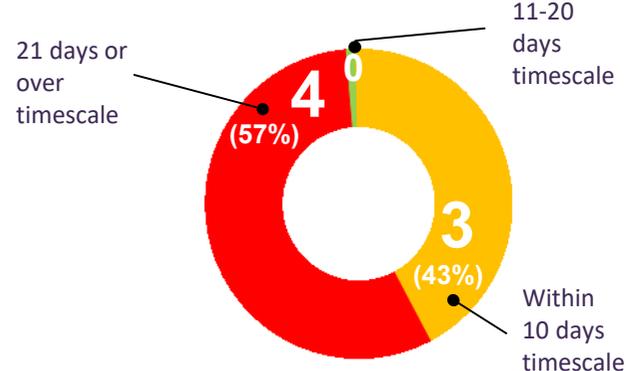
This represents a decrease compared to Q2 (2019/20)



Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q2 See Appendix 3 (1.2)



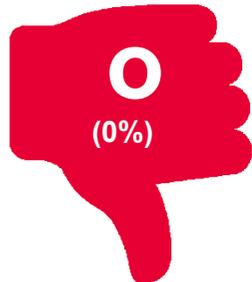
Response Timescales (for complaints closed in Q2) See Appendix 3 (1.3 and 1.4)



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



Complaints where the Council is at fault (Upheld)
Cases closed during Q2
See Learning Appendix 4



Complaints where the Council is partially at fault
Cases closed during Q2



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.

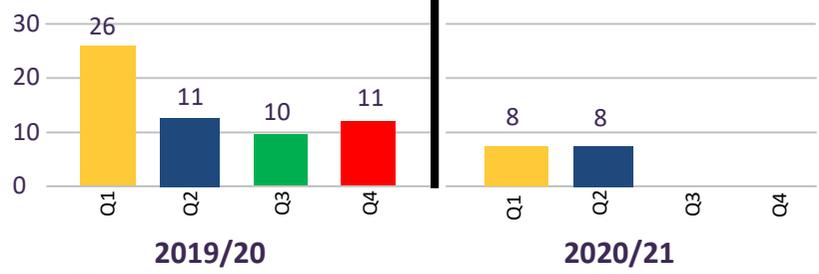
Complaints where the Council is not at fault
Cases closed during Q2



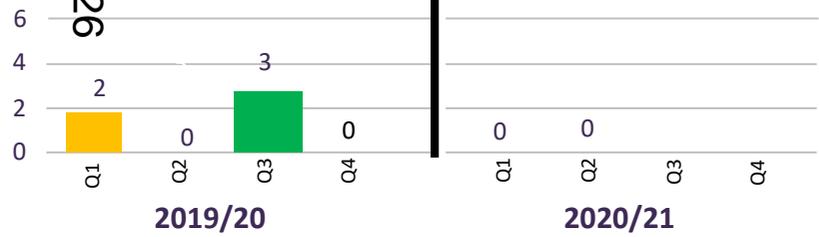
Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Children's Services

Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2020)

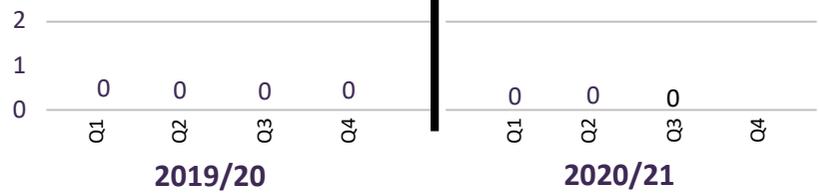
Stage 1 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.2)
Breakdown by Quarter



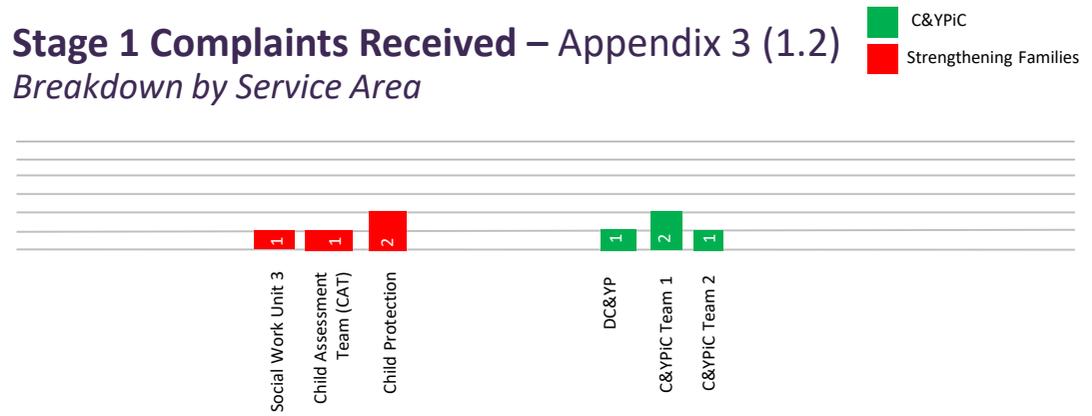
Stage 2 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.5)
Breakdown by Quarter



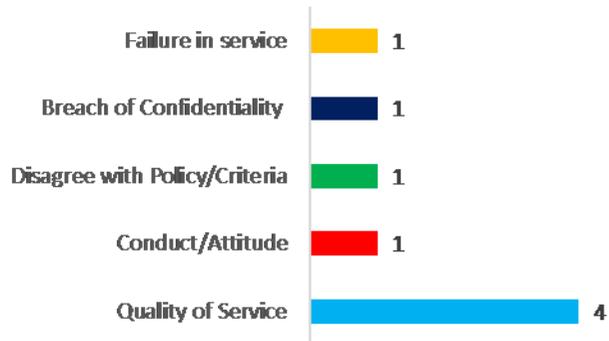
Stage 3 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.6)
Breakdown by Quarter



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



Stage 1 Complaints Received



4

Compliments
Appendix 3 (1.8)

9

Informal
Complaints
Appendix 3 (1.1)

Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Adult Services and Public Health

Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 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 Q2 2019/20



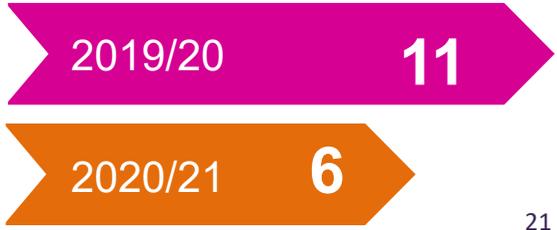
5

Complaints where the Council is at fault (Upheld)
Cases closed during Q2
See Learning Appendix 4

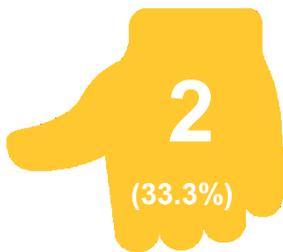


Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q2

See Appendix 3 (2.1 and 3.2)

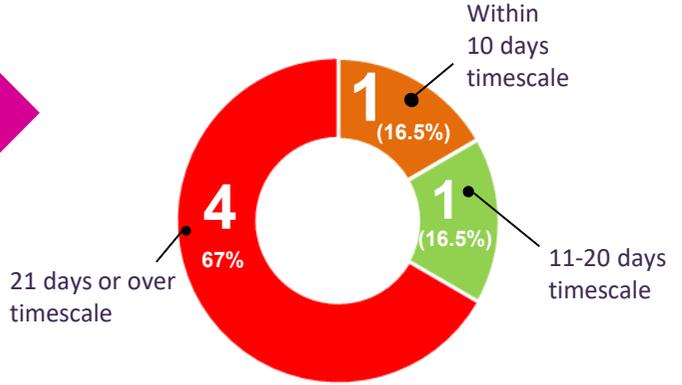


Complaints Where The Council Is Partially At Fault
Cases closed during Q2



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 Q2) – See Appendix 3 (3.4)



Complaints Where The Council Is Not At Fault
Cases closed during Q2

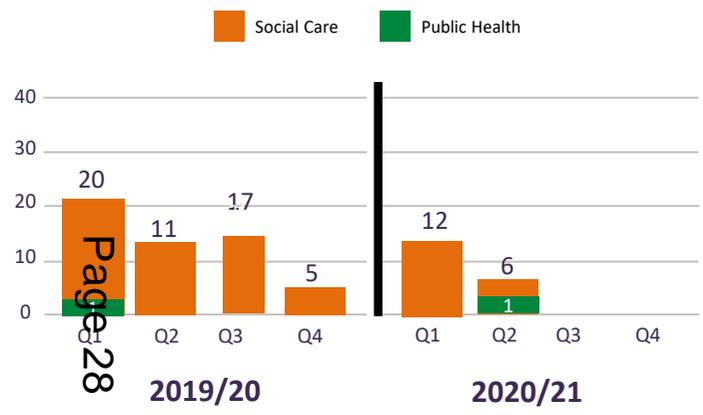


Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Adult Services and Public Health

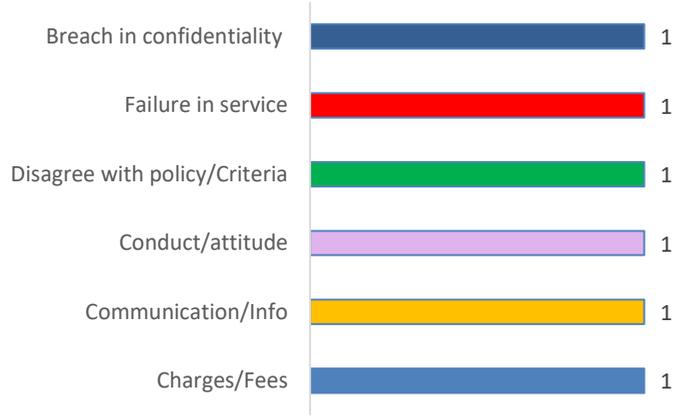
Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Comparison

Breakdown by Quarter - See Appendix 3 (3.2)



Stage 1 Complaints Received - Breakdown by Category



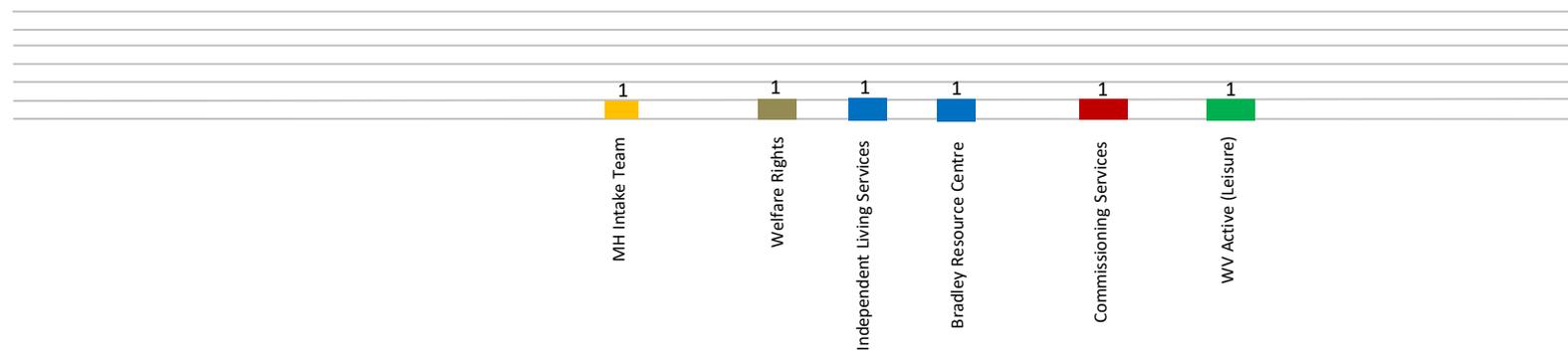
47

Compliments - Appendix 3 (3.5)

12

Informal Complaints Appendix 3 (3.1)

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



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

Appendix 2 Customer Feedback Corporate Complaints

Quarter 2 (1 July 2020 to 30 September 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)



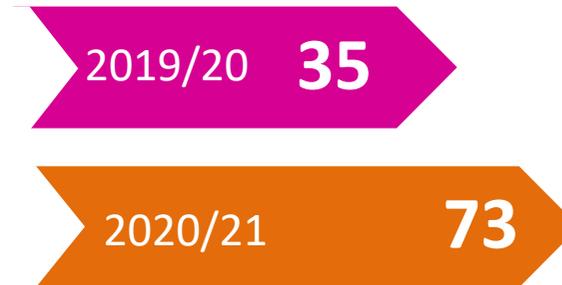
Stage 1 Average Complaint Response Time

See Appendix 3 (4.4)



Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q2

See Appendix 3 (4.2)



Stage 1 Complaints decreased by



Increase of 38 complaints compared to Q2 2019/20

Appendix 2

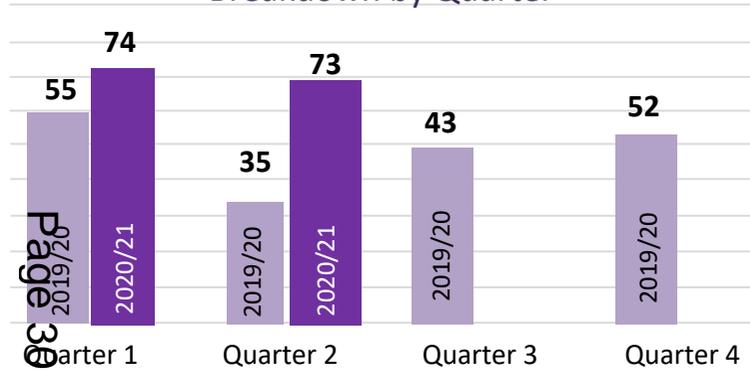
Customer Feedback Corporate Complaints

Quarter 2 (1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Comparison

See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)

Breakdown by Quarter



Stage 1 Complaints – Breakdown by Service

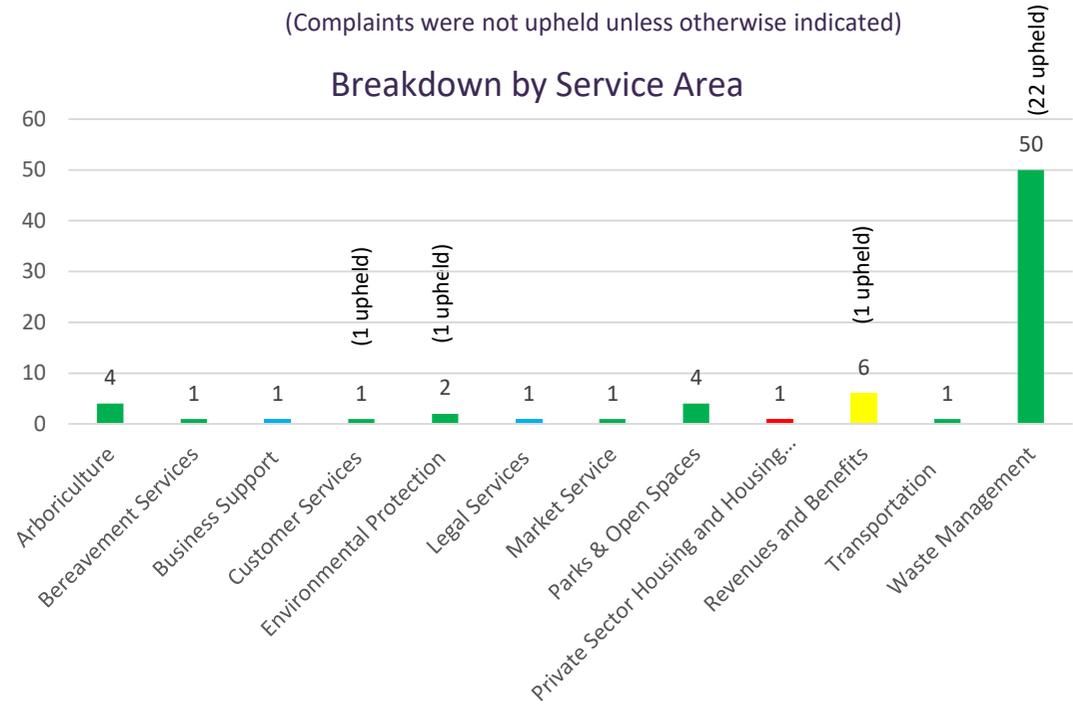


Stage 1 Complaints Received

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)

36

Service Requests

Quarter 1
See Appendix 3 (4.1)

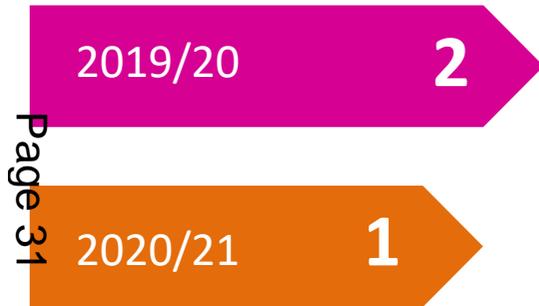
287

Appendix 2

Quarter 2 (1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020)

HO enquiries for Quarter 2

See Appendix 3 (5.2 and 5.4)

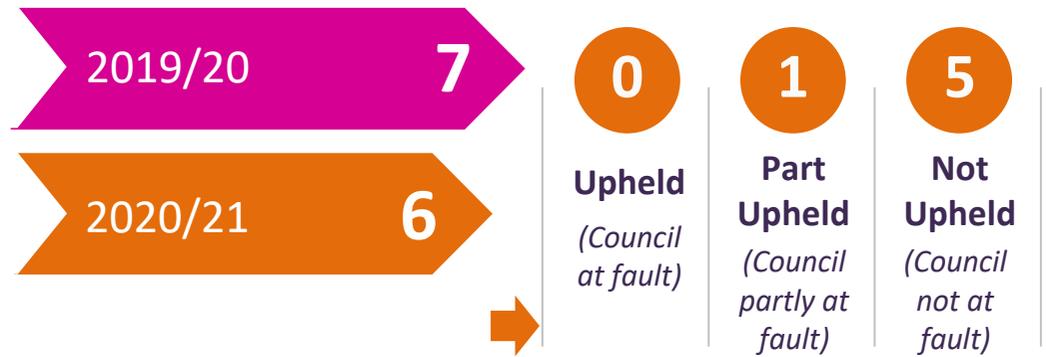


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Figures decreased for 2020/21 Q2 compared to 2019/20 Q2. Customer Feedback team has also received 2 initial HO assessment enquiries for Q2 2020/21.

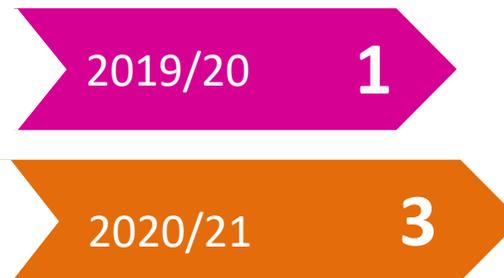
Stage 2 Corporate Complaints Comparison for Quarter 2

See Appendix 3 (4.5)



LGSCO enquiries for Quarter 2

See Appendix 3 (5.1 and 5.3)



Figures increased for 2020/21 Q2 compared to 2019/20 Q2. Customer Feedback team has also received 7 initial LGSCO assessment enquiry for Q2 2020/21.

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APPENDIX 3

SECTION 1:

Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health Complaints Activity 1 July 2020 to 30 September 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; nine informal complaints were received during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 compared to 14 received during 2019/20; a decrease of five cases.

1.2 Stage One Complaints

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received eight stage one Children's Services complaints compared to 11 during 2019/20, a decrease of three 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 Child Protection Team. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally.

1.3 Timescales

Overall, seven complaints were responded to and concluded during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020. Three complaints were responded to within 10 working days, nil within 11-20 working days, and the remaining four 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 seven complaints closed and resolved during this period two were dealt with in accordance with the Children's Act, with an average timescale of 18.5 working days and five 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 15.5 calendar days. Average timescales for children's statutory and corporate have improved in comparison to quarter 1 during this period. Out of the seven complaints closed and resolved, zero cases were upheld (at fault), four cases were partially upheld (partially at fault) and three cases not upheld (not at fault).

1.5 Stage Two Complaints

During this period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 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 are dealt with in accordance with our Corporate Complaints policy and procedure. This is in comparison to no cases received for 2019/20 for this same period. Several other complaints that could have proceeded down this route were resolved after significant intervention,

APPENDIX 3

mediation and problem solving with the complainant, relevant service and customer feedback team.

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 July 2020 to 30 September 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, four compliments were received for Children's Services, compared to 33 during 2019/20. Children and Young People in Care Team 2, Fostering Team, Social Work Unit 8 and the IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) team all received one compliment.

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 one complaint received for this period regarding WV Active membership fee. This is in comparison to no cases received for 19/20 for the same period.

3.0 Adult Social Care Complaints

3.1 Informal Complaints

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received 12 informal complaints which were resolved at service level without going through the formal route. This was compared to eight informal complaints received during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2019, a decrease of four cases.

3.2 Stage One Complaints

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received six formal complaints compared with 11 during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2019; representing a decrease of five complaints during this period. Out of the six formal complaints received, one complaint was received in relation to Commissioning Services; CRG Homecare. This is where Adult Social Care commission an independent agency to deliver a service on its

APPENDIX 3

behalf. The six complaints received covered six separate service areas; each of these areas received one complaint. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally.

3.3 Complaint Category

These are the headings under which we register the complaint against, based on the complaint details received – see Appendix 1.

3.4 Timescales

Overall, six complaints were responded to and concluded during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020. One complaint was responded to within 10 working days, one within 11-20 working days and four complaints was responded to over 21 working days. The average number of days to respond and close all complaints over the term was 26 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 six cases closed and resolved, two cases were upheld, two cases partially upheld and two 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. 47 compliments were received during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 relating to Adult Services compared to 69 during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2019. Welfare Rights received 12 compliments followed by Health and Social Care team who received nine compliments and Adult Locality West Team received eight 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 July 2020 to 30 September 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 287 service request enquiries were logged with the customer feedback team during 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, compared to 270 received during 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019. These types of enquiries are varied, for example, litter, parking, missed bin collection, 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 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received 73 stage one corporate complaints compared to 35 during 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019 an increase of 38 cases. Out of the 73 cases received, 25 were upheld (at fault). The 73 complaints covered 12 separate service areas, the highest figure of 50 complaints received referred to Waste Management; this is in comparison to seven stage one complaints received during quarter two 2019/20.

4.3 Corporate Complaint Category

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the main issue of complaint involved failure to provide a service (50), followed by dissatisfaction of council policies (14), conduct of employees (4), failure to consider relevant matters (3), bias/unfair discrimination (1), failure to achieve standards/quality (1).

4.4 Corporate Timescales

The average response time for responding to each complaint is 13 days for this period; this is in comparison to 13 days for 2019/20. The response timescale for stage 1 complaints responding within 21 calendar days is 97%; 71 cases were responded to within 21 calendar days and 2 cases responded outside of this timescale. The average response time has improved since quarter one 2020/21 and the target of 95% response time has therefore been achieved.

4.5 Stage 2 corporate complaints

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received six stage two corporate complaints compared to seven cases for 19/20, an increase of one case. Out of the six cases received, one case was partially upheld (at fault) and five cases were not upheld (not at fault).

APPENDIX 3

Stage two complaints received as follows:

City Environment received four cases as follows:

- One complaint received for Markets Service; outcome not upheld
- One complaint received for Transportation in relation to TRO highways plan; outcome not upheld
- One complaint received for Licensing in relation to conduct of officers and inspection; outcome not upheld
- One complaint received for Parks in relation to anti-social behaviour and request to remove bench; outcome not upheld

Regeneration received one case as follows:

- One complaint received in relation to planning application at a food superstore; outcome not upheld

Chief Executive's office received one case as follows:

- One complaint in relation to lack of action to correspondence submitted; 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 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, the council received 36 compliments, a decrease of 33 in comparison to the same period for 2019/20. Planning received 15, followed by Customer Services (3) and Waste Management (2).

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 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received three Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries as follows via each Directorate:

Children's Services received one complaint as follows:

- Adoption@Heart received one enquiry in relation to a request to register as a potential adopter; draft decision received, awaiting final report

Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint as follows:

APPENDIX 3

- Adaptions Team received one enquiry in relation to disabled adaptations to a property; outcome upheld, maladministration and injustice; the appropriate remedies and recommendations as outlined in the final report have been put in place

City Environment received one complaint as follows:

- Environmental Crime received one enquiry in relation reports of rat infestations; outcome upheld, maladministration and injustice; the appropriate remedies and recommendations as outlined in the final report have been put in place

5.2 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received one enquiry from the Housing Ombudsman for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- One complaint received in relation to landlord's handling of energy billing problems and a heating/hot water outage; awaiting final outcome

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

During 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 the council received seven Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman assessment enquiries as follows:

Governance received two enquiries as follows:

- Legal Services received one complaint in relation court witness expenses; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction
- Legal Services received one complaint in relation to officer conduct; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

Children's Services received two enquiries as follows:

- Strengthening Families received one complaint in relation to a child protection plan and actions of Children's Services; outcome premature complaint
- Children and Young People in Care received on complaint in relation to consistent delays and issues with assessment; outcome premature complaint

Adult Services received one enquiry as follows:

- Adult Services received one complaint in relation to care provided and safeguarding investigation; outcome premature complaint

Environmental Services received one enquiry as follows:

- Waste Management received one enquiry in relation to council's failure to collect industrial sized bin; outcome awaiting decision

Revenues and Benefits received one enquiry as follows:

- Finance received one complaint in relation to housing benefit/council tax and failure to carry out actions of an appeal; outcome premature complaint

APPENDIX 3

5.4 Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries

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

- Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint in relation the handling of the safety of the property; outcome awaiting final decision
- Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint in relation to the handling of boiler issues and financial loss/damaged possessions; outcome awaiting final 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. The Customer Feedback Team also attend regular quality assurance meetings with Children's Services to ensure learning is implemented on all upheld cases. See attached Appendix 4, Learning dashboard.

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Appendix 4

Customer Feedback Learning from Complaints

Quarter 2 (1 July 2020 to 30 September 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 not having any contact with my child. **Learning** – due to COVID-19 face to face contact was not able to take place. The Social Worker will contact mother in order to put in place a plan to see her child.*
- *Complaint in relation to failure to acknowledge the children's individual wants and needs and their differing requirements for help and support. **Learning** - a second Social Worker will be allocated to ensure that the children's needs will be assessed individually and their views will be shared more accurately.*
- *Complaint in relation to change of social worker. **Learning** - the change is necessary to enable the young people to progress to adulthood with a worker from the transition team. The current worker has agreed to support the transition to the new worker by completing a joint handover visit. The worker and the new social worker will visit together which will help the new worker understand the young people's needs, aspirations and future plans.*

Adult Services – Stage one complaint learning

- *Complaint in relation to failure to assess needs. **Learning** – During COVID restrictions the need for staff to be creative in communicating and establishing needs*
- *Complaint in relation to documentation error. **Learning** - a further checklist will be added to the 3C referral/connecting document and admissions will not go ahead until all correct information is received.*
- *Complaint in relation to the way I was spoken to by the worker. **Learning** - Staff practice will be addressed and formally recorded in supervision and the manager will discuss the standard expected with the whole team in the next team meeting*

Appendix 4

Customer Feedback Learning from Complaints

Quarter 2 (1 July 2020 to 30 September 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

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- Complaint in relation to missed bins. **Learning** – Operations team will deliver a black bin this week and remove the brown bin. Crew have also been reminded of the waste collection and this will be monitored by the operations team.*
 - Complaint in relation to Council Tax holiday payment. **Learning**- Ensure that that correct information is given to customers when they are amending payment plans when paying by direct debit. Customer was advised to cancel a direct debit yet was set up a payment plan to pay by direct debt; direct debit just needed to be amended.*
 - Complaint in relation to noise from Tettenhall High Street. **Learning** – Council liaised with third party who were carrying out the works and advised to stop drilling past 10:30pm. This was carried out until the end of the phase of works on the road. Regular monitoring by the council of the works has also been carried out and completed*