

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Scrutiny Board

22 June 2021

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

Venue Council Chamber - 4th Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Paul Sweet (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Simon Bennett (Con)

Labour

Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Asha Mattu
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Zee Russell

Conservative

Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Ellis Turrell

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:

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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.]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 4 **Quarter 3 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report 2020/21**
(Pages 9 - 30)
[To consider the Quarter 3 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report 2020/21]
- 5 **Work Planning and Work Programmes**
[To consider and discuss work planning and the work programme for future meetings.] [Presentation will be sent to follow]

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 Bhupinder Gakhal

In Attendance

Cllr Beverley Momenabadi
Charlotte Johns, Director of Strategy
Sarah Middleton, Chief executive, Black Country Consortium Limited
Ravi Kumar, Digital Lead Black Country Consortium Limited
Heather Clarke, Head of External Funding and Digital Projects / Digital Co-ordinator
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**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Kaur, Cllr Singh and David Pattison.
- 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 and signed by the Chair.
- 4 **Matters arising**
A Board Member referred to page 3 of the minutes and confirmed that he had not yet met with the relevant inspector for his area. The Scrutiny and Systems Manager agreed that she would follow this up with Superintendent Inglis.

A Board Member asked if there had been any feedback following the concerns he had raised in relation to the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership website. The Scrutiny and Systems Manager agreed to follow this up with the Community Safety Manager.

5 **Economic snapshot of the Black Country and City of Wolverhampton and an insight into digital activities across the Black Country**

The Board welcomed Sarah Middleton, Chief Executive, Black Country Consortium Limited and Ravi Kumar, Digital Lead, Black Country Consortium Limited.

The Chief Executive provided an overview of digital Activities in the Black Country including:

Superfast and Ultrafast Broadband
Outside In, Full Fibre and LFFN
5G and Beyond
Black Country Digital Strategy and Network
Looking ahead – future opportunities

The Chief Executive explained how the Black Country Consortium (BCC) had adopted an evidenced based approach and had been working very closely with the City of Wolverhampton Council in relation to the digital activities under discussion. There was an underpinning spatial plan along with the Economic Review Report which set out the key measures of success in the Black Country Performance Management Framework. To help deliver the ambitions, there were 12 strategic programmes covering 3 themes:

- People
- Place
- Business

There was a thematic and sectoral approach with 6 priority areas for propositional development and a spatial approach which included in depth analysis of pipeline opportunities in 11 identified spatial zones.

An overview was provided of the Black Country economy and direction of travel and the Wolverhampton economy and direction of travel. There were a few red areas such as the number of apprenticeship starts which had decreased to 8,160 in the Black County in 2019/20 (-20.8% compared to 18.0% nationally) and to 1,640 in Wolverhampton (25.5%). Data showed that Wolverhampton had a good and strong growth rate in employment data for 2020 which was very positive news to build on and the new qualifications data for the City was also showing fantastic growth about the national level.

The Board were shown a slide highlighting the impact of the pandemic on workers of the who had been furloughed. As of February, there were around 15000 Wolverhampton employees furloughed. This highlighted the need to ensure that as employees started to return to work, that they had the full range of digital skills to allow them to succeed.

It was stated that one impact of furlough was to disguise to some extent the claimant count and that this was something that we all needed to be aware of as it showed an almost doubling of claimants and there was concern as to the impact of this on the

younger generations and in February Wolverhampton had just over 3000 claimants in the 16 to 25 year old bracket. Digital was a really positive way to broaden their skill sets.

In relation to digital there had been significant investment in Broadband infrastructure including 5G and full fibre. The Board were shown a map of the west and east midlands highlighting Next Generation Access (NGA) and internet connectivity. The map showed 4 metropolitan areas including Wolverhampton, the map showed that for high internet speeds, the fibre to the cabinet connectivity across the region looked good. The City had applied for a specific programme but that was not successful which had unfortunately excluded the City from applying to the following programme but there was good news in relation to City Fibre rolling out infrastructure fibre in the City centre. There was good coverage across the Black Country due to historical investment.

In relation to digital exclusion, it was stated that this was a key issue and the main area that needed to be addresses.

Superfast Broadband was a critical platform for the full fibre rollout. The Black Country benefited from a funded Broadband project which connected 61,493 premises in the Black Country to Superfast Broadband between 2014 and 2018. Approximately 9,000 premises across Wolverhampton were connected as part of the project. Wolverhampton City Centre specifically was not included due to a previous application to a Government voucher scheme. Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) infrastructure was being upgraded to full fibre by Openreach (replacing the copper network), which put the Black Country in a great position considering that 99.4% of the Black Country was connected to Superfast Broadband via FTTC. However, Full Fibre coverage across the Black Country remained desperately low with Wolverhampton showing only 1.87% full fibre coverage. Full Fibre coverage would improve in Wolverhampton with the City Fibre project.

As the Governments focus moved to Full Fibre, it offered an opportunity for the Black Country to utilise its current infrastructure to help accelerate the deployment of full fibre across the region. Outside In related to the roll out of Full Fibre and there was a growth in confidence in the private sector now wanting to invest in Full Fibre.

One initiate through the West Midlands Combined Authority was the 5G programme. The LEP and BC partners input during the bid, which helped the region in winning this opportunity to provide testbeds including manufacturing 5G testbeds with AE Aerospace and a Potential National Tele-comms training Centre. There would also be an accelerator in Wolverhampton. The technology would test how machines talked to machines and how technology could talk to technology and this was critical for the aerospace sector and vital for the local economy.

The Board heard about the benefit of the voucher schemes and it was thought that through the growth hub previous investment and schemes could be built on and the scheme had been effective in targeting not-spots, and SME's in need of broadband connectivity. The Black Country was in the process of updating its Digital Strategy and how it was implemented.

The BCC had also been working with other sectors such as Health and Social Care partners. This included:

- Health pilots in the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, with Babylon Health, and Sensyne Health.
- WM5G Health / Citizen wellbeing testbed – Care homes project in Newlyn Court, Bilston
- WM5G Health testbed - Capsule Endoscopy pilot at the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust
- AI to help health and social care providers to predict future demand for services
- NHS Digital Social Care Digital Pathfinder Programme

The Board considered the Smart Energy project and drive to net zero. This included:

- Delivering a roadmap to decarbonise the Black Country – with focus on smart
- Identifying locations for zero carbon power hubs
- A business plan for a large-scale energy efficiency programme designed to support manufacturers

There was also an opportunity in relation to autonomous vehicles and Westfield Autonomous POD, this was a Dudley based company but could have national implications.

A question was raised in relation to critical infrastructure and as to what risk assessment had been carried out in relation to this. It was stated that information could be provided in relation to these if required. From a cyber perspective there was a focused piece of work being carried out by the University of Wolverhampton. It was stated that some of the providers would have secure buildings that the public were not able to access. It was noted that at times the cabinets in the streets could be damaged but there were, in most cases backups in place should something happen to these. The Director for Strategy at the City of Wolverhampton Council stated that cyber security was something that the Council took very seriously and it was included on the Council's strategic risk register. The Council had achieved the Cyber Security Plus standard.

A Board Member stated that the Emergency Services communications were extremely important as when things did go down, they needed to operate and it was confirmed that plans were in place across all of the emergency services and contingency plans ready to go into operation should there be any attack on the digital infrastructure. It was also noted that these plans needed to be kept up to date and up to speed as digital considerations grew and expanded.

It was stated that an important area was to enhance visibility of what was happening and being done as a way to start to grow confidence, very often a lot of work was done but perhaps not made as visible as they could be to partners, neighbouring authorities and influencers. A Board Members stated that whilst this was vital, in relation to the Digital Super Towns report from Vodaphone, the top 10 satellite cities were listed and Wolverhampton did not feature, if Wolverhampton wanted to be amongst the best, we appeared to have been missed out. It was vital for us to be out there and in the lead. It was agreed that the report could be taken away to understand why that analysis was as it was to enable better or more focused approaches in the future. It was agreed that as a City it was important to be very honest as to where we were at the moment but to also be ambitious as to our future

plans. It was also noted that the Vodaphone report referred to was dated 2018 and perhaps no longer reflected the position of the Council and its partners in 2021.

Resolved: That the report and update from the Black Country Consortium be noted and received.

6 **Update on Digital**

The Board welcomed Cllr Beverley Momenabadi, Digital Champion, Charlotte Johns, Director of Strategy and Heather Clarke, Digital Co-ordinator.

Cllr Momenabadi explained how the pandemic had changed the Council's approach to digital with the sole aim being ensuring that nobody was left behind. The digital inclusion work had started prior to lockdown. In the first wave it was recognised that there was a need for digital devices and connectivity so that children didn't miss out on their education. The Council worked closely with the Department for Education (DfE) to reduce the digital divide by distributing over 1000 4G devices and routers to schools across the City but gaps were already starting to be identified where the scheme wasn't meeting the needs of all of our school children. In some cases, the DfE devices were taking too long to reach children in schools, many schools then gave work on paper to the children, but this was not ideal. In some other cases children did not qualify under the Government's scheme. In some other cases the Children had the devices but not the WIFI or the connectivity to be able to use them. Some parents also lack the digital awareness or competency to help their children with the online access and learning. Due to this the Council launched the WV online project to tackle some of these issues. The project achieved the following:

- 520 digital devices distributed to children and young people during the pandemic
- 60 care homes supported to request iPads to enable residents to connect with family and friends.
- 195 devices lent via a network of trusted partners helping residents get online to access learning, employment support, services and reduce isolation.
- Upskilling residents to enhance digital literacy - including the launch of a family literacy training designed to improve digital literacy skills of parents to support children access remote learning
- Providing support to schools to deliver remote learning to pupils.

Master classes and CPD courses were also provided for teachers as it was recognised how important it was to not only support the children and parents but the teachers as well. There were also a number of sessions and courses for parents so ensure that they had the skills to support their children through home learning.

The WV online lending scheme was considered a great success and devices were loaned to trusted partners in the City to enable their customers and service users to access online services such as online bereavement counselling and applying for jobs. The Panel watched a video of the work done in some schools.

The board noted the dashboard that was available to show where and how many devices had been provided to schools.

Other achievements included:

- Supporting the commercial rollout of full fibre broadband to residents and businesses across the city filling the gap in connectivity in the City Centre, a former not spot.
- 5G being rolled out across the city. A proactive approach has accelerated rollout by 6 months.
- 7703 streetlights upgraded to Smart LED
- WM5G's Citizen Wellbeing use cases around prevention, early diagnosis, emergency response and managing long-term conditions including:
 - 5G Care Home Project: connecting GP's and care homes to offer both video consultation, diagnostic tools & capturing vital sign information to allow for early identification of issues.
 - Pilot capsule endoscopy pilot at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

The Board noted the use of the Digital Wolves Website and the Wolves Tech Aid Scheme which also linked into the Council's Green Agenda.

Wolves Tech Aid supported the digital inclusion agenda whilst reducing waste, it sought to provide equipment (desktop computers, laptops & tablets) and connectivity to school children having to learn at home to stop children losing out on education. Wolves Tech Aid sought donations from individuals and businesses of unused devices to be recycled and distributed to children.

The Council supported this through the provision of drop off points.

Next steps included:

- To continue with the implementation of the Wolverhampton Digital Partnership, bringing together the Council, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and University of Wolverhampton to provide an oversight of the digital agenda.
- A revised digital strategy was under development building on Wolverhampton Digital Infrastructure Strategy to encompass innovation, inclusion, economy and skills.
- Further development of the digital inclusion approach including scaling up Wolves Online in terms of number of devices and trusted partners targeting areas with greatest levels of exclusion through place-based approach.
- To continue to build on opportunities such as recently the launched 5prinG Application Accelerator in Wolverhampton to help facilitate collaboration between businesses, entrepreneurs and local authorities in helping to solve problems and explore exciting, commercially scalable opportunities using 5G.

The Board thanked Cllr Momenabadi for an excellent presentation.

Resolved: That the update be received and noted.

7 **Work programme and future work planning**

The Scrutiny and Systems Manager stated that work was underway in relation to planning some work planning meetings for the new municipal year. As yet it was unknown how meetings would be held moving forward and whether they would be face to face or virtual. The Scrutiny and Systems Manager thanked Councillors and officers for all of the work throughout the year in what had been unprecedented circumstances.

Scrutiny Board

22 June 2021

Report title	Quarter 3 Social Care, Public Health and Corporate Complaints Report 2020/21	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield 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, Education	April/May/June 2021

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

1. Review complaints management and performance for the period 1 October to 31 December 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, service enquiries/informal complaints and compliments 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 complaints policy and procedure.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the complaints, including Local Government and Social Care/Housing Ombudsman enquiries received during 1 October to 31 December 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/16042021/E]

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: [SZ/19042021/P]

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 October to 31 December 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 customers were sign posted to their guidance. It should be noted 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. 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.

14.0 Schedule of Background Papers

14.1 None for consideration.

Appendix 2

Customer Feedback Corporate Complaints

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Received

See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)



Page 13

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)



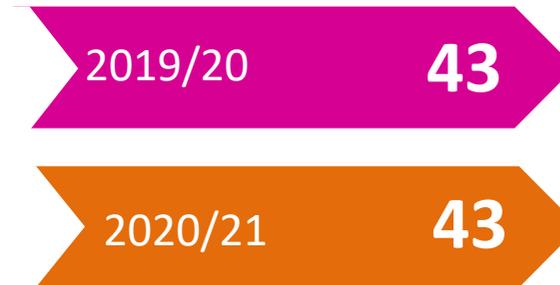
Stage 1 Average Complaint Response Time

See Appendix 3 (4.4)



Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q3

See Appendix 3 (4.2)



Stage 1 Complaints decreased by



Figures remain consistent compared to Q3 2019/20

Appendix 2

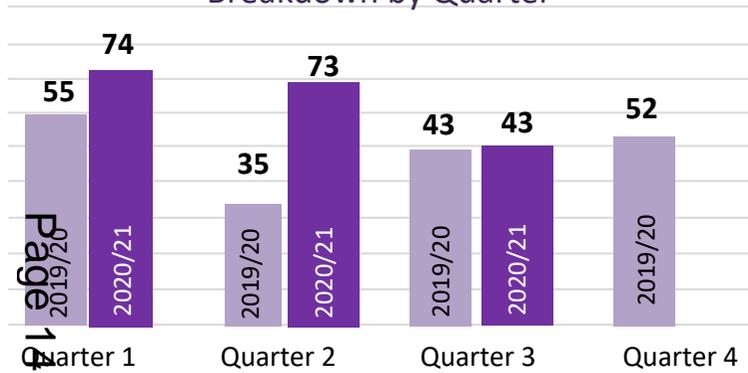
Customer Feedback Corporate Complaints

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Comparison

See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)

Breakdown by Quarter

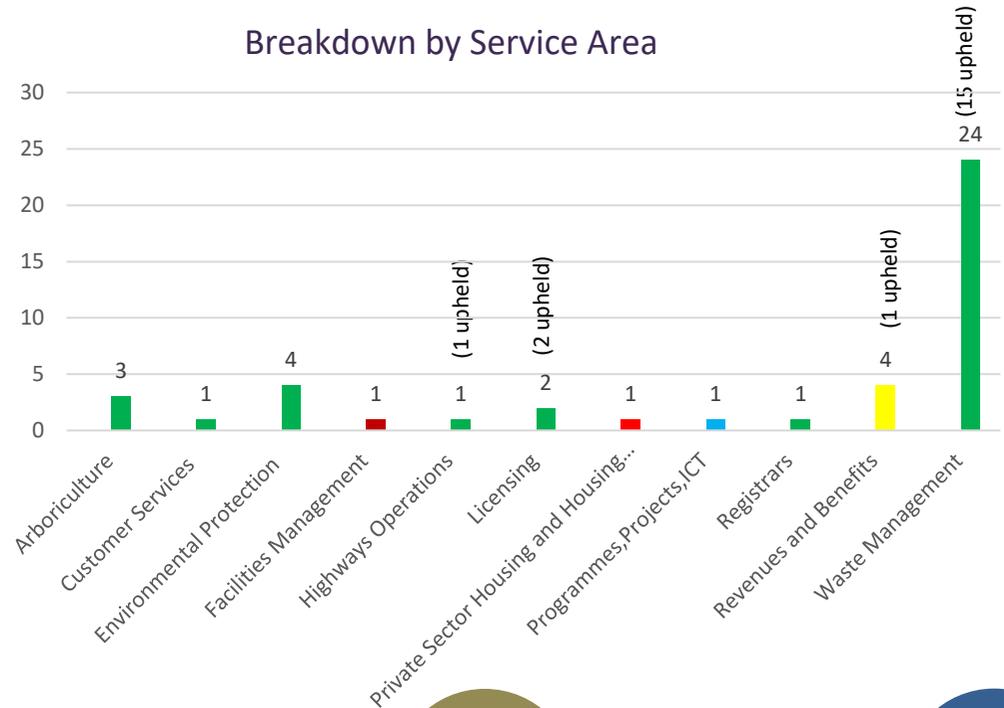


Stage 1 Complaints Received

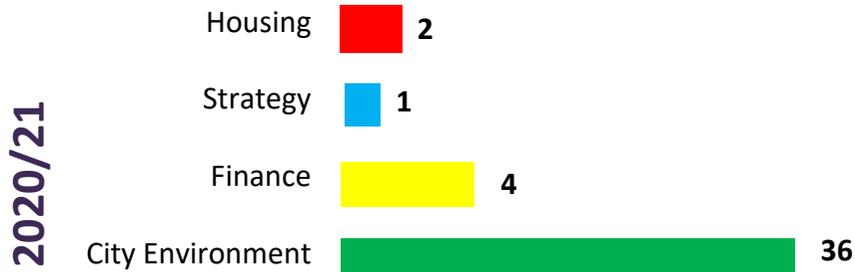
See Appendix 3 (4.2 and 4.3)

(Complaints were not upheld unless otherwise indicated)

Breakdown by Service Area



Stage 1 Complaints – Breakdown by Service



Compliments Received

See Appendix 3 (4.6)

71

Service Requests

Quarter 3
See Appendix 3 (4.1)

214

2020/21

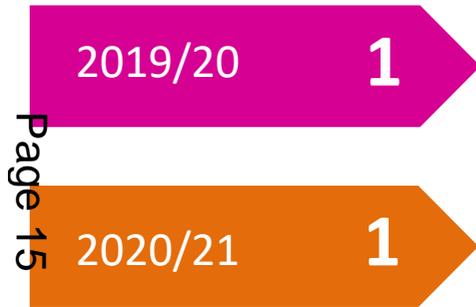
Page 14
2019/20

Appendix 2

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2020)

HO enquiries for Quarter 3

See Appendix 3 (5.2 and 5.4)

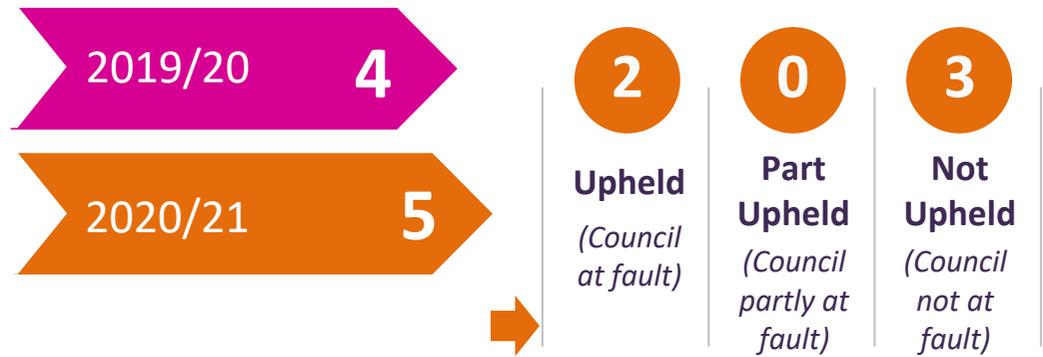


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Figures remain consistent for 2020/21 Q3 compared to 2019/20 Q3. Customer Feedback team has also received 2 initial HO assessment enquiries for Q3 2020/21.

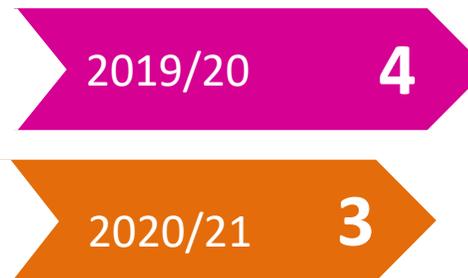
Stage 2 Corporate Complaints Comparison for Quarter 3

See Appendix 3 (4.5)



LGSCO enquiries for Quarter 3

See Appendix 3 (5.1 and 5.3)



Figures decreased for 2020/21 Q3 compared to 2019/20 Q3. Customer Feedback team has also received 14 initial LGSCO assessment enquiries for Q3 2020/21.

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Appendix 4

Customer Feedback Learning from Complaints

Quarter 3 (1 October 2020 to 31 December 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 individual unhappy with the section 37 report; does not reflect context of conversations that took place; report contained grammatical and spelling errors; unhappy with actions of social worker; **Learning** – Social worker has been advised about grammatical errors and we will continue to communicate effectively with complainant to ensure he/she feels part of the children's care planning.*
- *Complaint in relation to delays in submitting correspondence from parent to children; **Learning** -To ensure that plans around family time are clear to all involved and where there are periods of letter box contact whilst looking to progress to telephone/face to face and that a clear plan including timescales/expectations are in place ensuring this is understood by all those involved. The service will ensure that family time is progressed in a safe and timely way in line with the age and wishes and feelings of the children.*

Adult Services – Stage one complaint learning

- *Complaint in relation to family not being informed why individual could not be moved; feel this is gross negligence and has been a factor in individual's distress; family have been left in limbo by the social worker; social worker has not provided a plan of what is going to happen next; **Learning** – Acknowledgement that the Council needs to set realistic targets even when under pressure to act quickly. Acknowledgement of the need for early identification of unachievable timescales and swift communication of this to relevant parties.*
- *Complaint in relation to service received and issues with specialist equipment; **Learning** – The service will continue to liaise with professionals to ensure that we are providing the best support possible.*

Appendix 4

Customer Feedback Learning from Complaints

Quarter 3 (1 October 2020 to 31 December 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 18
- *Complaint in relation to water collecting on pavement from school land and freezing in cold weather conditions causing a hazard; **Learning** - This site was inspected and unfortunately the defect was raised on the incorrect priority code; this was due to human error and has been rectified; apology was issued to the customer and a new barrier will be ordered and installed as soon as possible.*
 - *Complaint in relation to not receiving a response from Licensing Compliance; **Learning** - Officer advised to seek further advice from line manager to ensure enquiries are fully responded to.*
 - *Complaint in relation to Housing Benefit suspension; **Learning** - The award was suspended to allow further enquiries to be made; this issue has now been resolved, apology issued to the customer and payments reinstated.*
 - *Complaint in relation to special arrangements at recycling centres for relatives; **Learning** - Apology issued to customer and process and procedure to be reviewed.*

APPENDIX 3

SECTION 1:

Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health Complaints Activity 1 October to 31 December 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; 11 informal complaints were received during 1 October to 31 December 2020 compared to 12 received during 2019/20; a decrease of one case.

1.2 Stage One Complaints

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received ten stage one Children's Services complaints compared to ten during 2019/20; a consistent number of cases. Out of the ten cases received, one case was dealt with under our statutory complaints procedure and nine cases were dealt with under our corporate complaints procedure. The ten complaints received during this period refer to 9 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. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally.

1.3 Timescales

Overall, nine complaints were responded to and concluded during 1 October to 31 December 2020. No complaints were responded to within 10 days, four within 11-20 days, and the remaining five over 21 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 It should be noted that nine complaints closed and resolved during this period were dealt with in accordance with the corporate complaints policy and procedure (Non-Children's Act); in line with this policy, complaints should be responded to within 21 calendar days, the average timescale for this period has increased in comparison to quarter two. The customer feedback team has worked with Children's Services to improve these response times; improvement strategies have been implemented and are reviewed by the service on a regular basis. No complaints were dealt with in accordance with the Children's Act.

Out of the nine complaints closed and resolved, no cases were upheld (at fault), four cases were partially upheld (partially at fault) and five cases not upheld (not at fault).

1.5 Stage Two Complaints

During this period 1 October to 31 December 2020, we have received no statutory stage two complaints, which are investigated in accordance with the Children's Statutory complaints procedure. Three children's stage two complaints, which are dealt with in

APPENDIX 3

accordance with our corporate complaints policy and procedure, were received as follows:

- One complaint for Strengthening Families in relation to actions/process and procedure of Children's Services and child protection conference; outcome not upheld
- One complaint for Strengthening Families in relation to non-attendance at a child protection conference and actions of social worker; outcome upheld
- One complaint for Strengthening Families in relation to child protection conference process/procedure, inaccuracies in reports and conduct of social worker; outcome upheld

Several other complaints that could have proceeded down this route were resolved after significant intervention via meetings, mediation and problem solving with the complainant.

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 children's complaint procedure; a stage three Independent Complaint Review Panel. During 1 October to 31 December 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 Appendix 1.

1.8 Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's monitoring process. During this period, four compliments were received for Children's Services, compared to 26 during 2019/20. Children and Young People in Care Team 1 received three compliments and Children and Young People in Care Team 2 received one compliment.

1.9 Area of Learning for Children's Complaints

See Appendix 4 for stage one learning.

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 no cases received for 19/20 for the same period.

APPENDIX 3

3.0 Adult Social Care Complaints

3.1 Informal Complaints

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received six informal complaints which were resolved at service level without going through the formal route. This was compared to 11 informal complaints received during 1 October to 31 December 2019, a decrease of five cases.

3.2 Stage One Complaints

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received seven formal complaints compared with 17 during 1 October to 31 December 2019; representing a decrease of 10 complaints during this period. Out of the seven formal complaints received, two complaints were received for the Adult Locality East Team, one complaint for Adult Locality West Team, one complaint for Travel Unit, one complaint for Independent Living, one complaint for Welfare Rights and one complaint for Commissioning Services. The seven complaints received covered six separate service areas. 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, five complaints were responded to and concluded during 1 October to 31 December 2020. Three complaints were responded to within ten working days, one complaint within 11-20 working days and one complaint was responded to over 21 days working days and over. The average number of days to respond and close all complaints over the term was 14 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, two cases were upheld, one case 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 monitoring process. 19 compliments were received during 1 October to 31 December 2020 relating to Adult Services compared to 55 during 1 October to 31 December 2019. Welfare Rights Service received eight compliments, Health and Social Care Team (Hospital Team) received five compliments and Independent Living Services received two compliments

3.6 Area of Learning for Adult's Complaints

See Appendix 4 for stage one learning.

APPENDIX 3

SECTION 2: Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Complaints Activity 1 October to 31 December 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 service involved and the customer complaining to resolve the complaint informally, preventing it becoming a formal complaint. It should be noted that 214 service request enquiries were logged with the customer feedback team during 1 October to 31 December 2020, compared to 204 received during 1 October to 31 December 2019. These types of enquiries are varied, for example, missed bin collection, appeals, litter, parking; all enquiries are logged and resolved informally, or sign posted to the correct process without going through the corporate complaints policy and procedure; this provides a swift resolution and outcome for the customer.

4.2 Corporate stage 1 complaints

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received 43 stage one corporate complaints compared to 43, which is consistent in the number of cases received during 1 October to 31 December 2019. Out of the 43 cases received, 19 were upheld (at fault). The 43 complaints covered 11 separate service areas, the highest figure of 24 complaints received referred to Waste Management; this is in comparison to 13 stage one complaints received during quarter three 2019/20. However, it should be noted that Waste Management attend approximately 135,000 kerbside properties each week; an average of 585,000 collections each month. The Customer Feedback Team has worked closely with Waste Management to ensure the areas of concerns are addressed whilst providing the best outcome for the customer.

4.3 Corporate Complaint Category

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the main issue of complaint involved failure to provide a service (18), followed by failure to achieve standards/quality (10), dissatisfaction of council policies (7), delays in responding, or administrative (4) and conduct of employees (4).

4.4 Corporate Timescales

The average response time for responding to each complaint is 13 days for this period; this is in comparison to 12 days for 2019/20. The response timescale for stage 1 complaints responding within 21 calendar days is 95%; 36 (84%) of cases were responded to within 21 calendar days and 7 cases responded to outside of this timescale. The target of 95% response time has therefore not been achieved and the customer feedback team will be working with services to improve this timescale.

4.5 Stage 2 corporate complaints

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During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received five stage two corporate complaints compared to four cases for 2019/2020, an increase of one case. Out of the five cases received, two cases were upheld (at fault) and three cases were not upheld (not at fault). Stage two corporate complaints received as follows:

City Environment received three cases as follows:

- One complaint received for Bereavement Services in relation to parking at a cemetery; outcome not upheld
- One complaint received for Arbor Team in relation to a tree at the front of the customer's property and damage to driveway; outcome not upheld
- One complaint received for Waste Team in relation to non collection of purple bin; outcome upheld

Strategy received one case as follows:

- One complaint received for Projects and Programmes Team in relation to road work noise and disturbance; outcome upheld

Finance received one case as follows:

- One complaint received for Revenues and Benefits in relation to an appeal and investigation with DWP; outcome not upheld

4.6 Corporate Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's monitoring process. During 1 October to 31 December 2020, the council received 71 corporate compliments, an increase in comparison to the same period for 2019/20 where the council received 41. Planning received the highest number of compliments, followed by Waste Management.

4.7 Area of Learning for Corporate Complaints

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 October to 31 December 2020 the council received three Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) enquiries as follows via each Directorate:

Adult Services received two complaints as follows:

- Adults Services and Health Partnerships received one enquiry in relation to reduction in care package; outcome upheld, maladministration and no injustice; appropriate resolution and remedy has been put in place by the council and the Ombudsman is satisfied with the action that the council has proposed
- Adult Services and Communities received one enquiry in relation to domiciliary care provided and an outcome of a safeguarding investigation; outcome upheld maladministration and injustice; appropriate learning, resolution and remedies are

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being put in the place by the council within the specified timeframes as outlined by the Ombudsman

Regeneration received one complaint as follows:

- Planning Department received one enquiry in relation to a planning application for an extension to a supermarket; outcome not upheld, no maladministration

5.2 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries

During 1 October to 31 December 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 a repair to the boiler at a property and damage caused to possessions; outcome service failure; appropriate remedies and resolution have been recommended by the Housing Ombudsman and implemented accordingly

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

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received 14 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) assessment enquiries as follows:

City Environment received four enquiries as follows:

- Transportation received one complaint in relation to a dropped kerb; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action
- Licensing received one complaint in relation to issuing a licence and right to work in the UK; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction
- Environmental Protection received one complaint in relation to noise nuisance; outcome passed to investigation team for further consideration
- Markets received one complaint in relation to a market stall; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

Adult Services received three enquiries as follows:

- Adult Services and Health received one complaint in relation to reduction in care package; outcome passed to investigation team for further consideration
- Adult Services and Health received one complaint in relation to adult social care concerns for a relative; outcome passed to investigation team for further consideration
- Adult Services and Communities received one complaint in relation to service received for specialist equipment; outcome premature complaint

Children's Services received two enquiries as follows:

- Strengthening Families received one complaint in relation to an exclusion at a child protection conference; outcome premature complaint
- SEND team received one complaint in relation to delays in receiving an EHCP plan; awaiting outcome from the Ombudsman

Finance received two enquiries as follows:

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- Revenues and Benefits received one complaint in relation to a council tax refund; outcome premature complaint
- Revenues and Benefits received one complaint in relation to an appeal and investigation with DWP; outcome case closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction

Strategy received one enquiry as follows:

- Projects and Programmes Team received one complaint in relation to a noise complaint due to road works; outcome passed to investigation team for further consideration

Governance received one enquiry as follows:

- Democratic Support received one complaint in relation to an appeal against the refusal of a school place; outcome passed to investigation team for further consideration

Regeneration received one enquiry as follows:

- Planning received one complaint in relation to lack of response to a planning enquiry; outcome passed to investigation team for further consideration

5.4 Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries

During 1 October to 31 December 2020 the council received two Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint in relation the Landlord's handling of and response to a repair request and a request for compensation; outcome awaiting Ombudsman's decision
- Wolverhampton Homes received one complaint in relation to visits to a property and various issues; outcome awaiting 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. The 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 for Adults and Children's Services to ensure they use the learning from complaints to drive service improvements. See attached Appendix 4, Learning dashboard.

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Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Children's Services

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Received
See Appendix 3 (1.2)



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

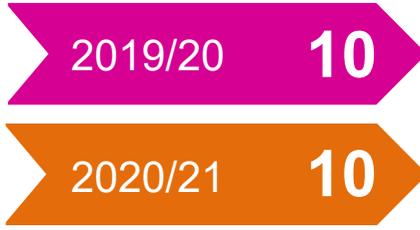


Corporate complaints

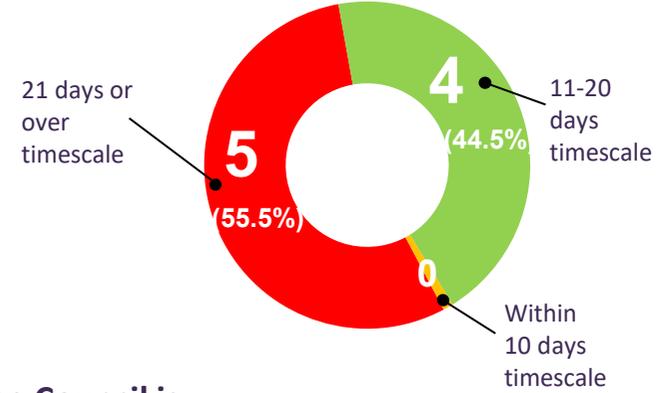
This represents no increase to Q3 (2019/20)



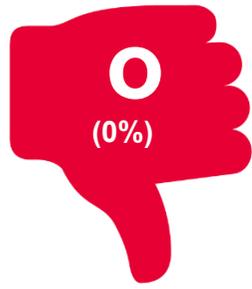
Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q3
See Appendix 3 (1.2)



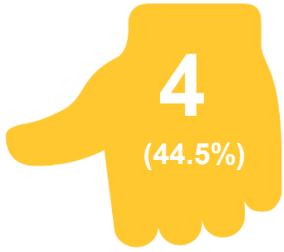
Response Timescales (for complaints closed in Q3) See Appendix 3 (1.3 and 1.4)



Complaints where the Council is at fault (Upheld)
Cases closed during Q3
See Learning Appendix 4



Complaints where the Council is partially at fault
Cases closed during Q3



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.

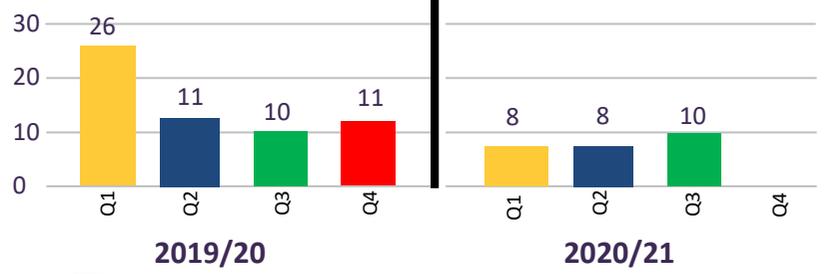
Complaints where the Council is not at fault
Cases closed during Q3



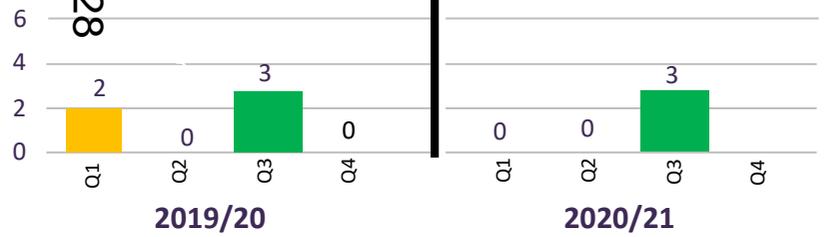
Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Children's Services

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2020)

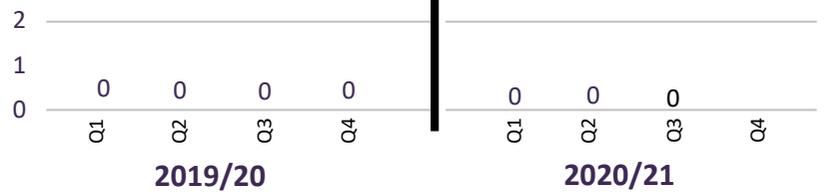
Stage 1 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.2)
Breakdown by Quarter



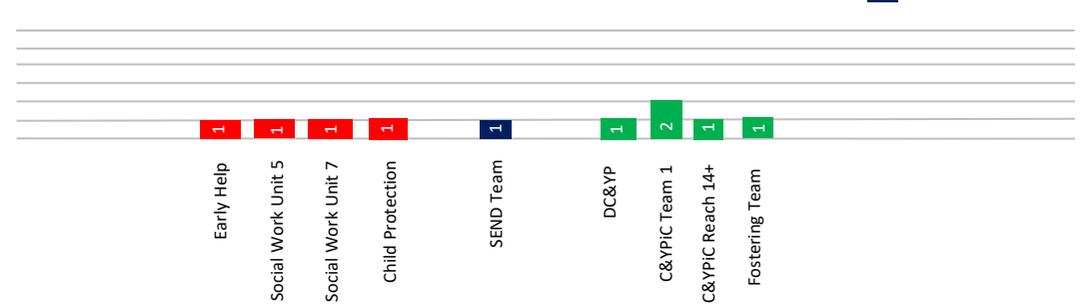
Stage 2 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.5)
Breakdown by Quarter



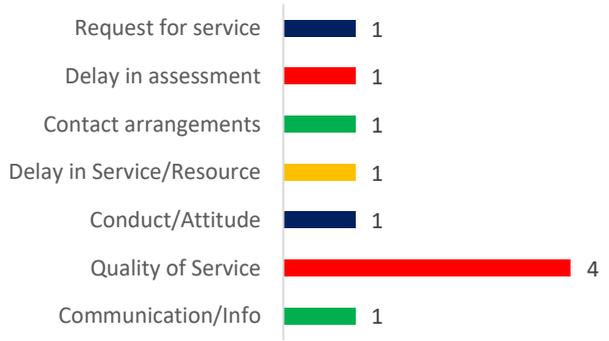
Stage 3 Complaints Comparison – Appendix 3 (1.6)
Breakdown by Quarter



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



Stage 1 Complaints Received
Breakdown by Category



4

Compliments
Appendix 3 (1.8)

11

Informal
Complaints
Appendix 3 (1.1)

Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Adult Services and Public Health

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 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 Q3 2019/20



10

Complaints where the Council is at fault (Upheld)
Cases closed during Q3
See Learning Appendix 4



Stage 1 Complaints Comparison for Q3

See Appendix 3 (2.1 and 3.2)



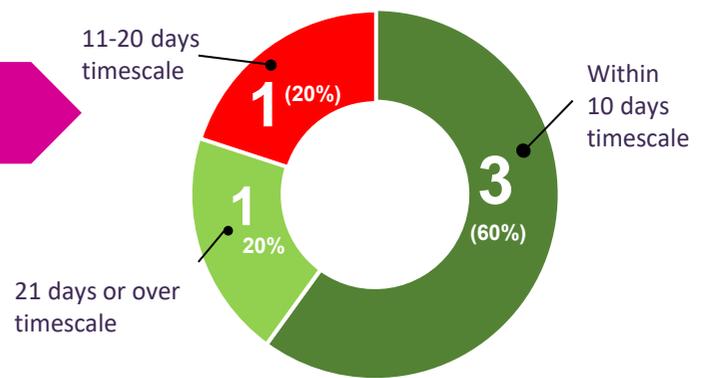
Complaints Where The Council Is Partially At Fault

Cases closed during Q3



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 Q3) – See Appendix 3 (3.4)



Complaints Where The Council Is Not At Fault

Cases closed during Q3

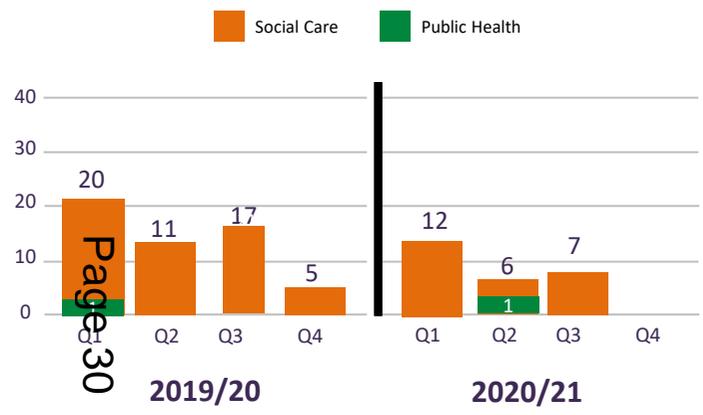


Appendix 1 Statutory Customer Feedback Adult Services and Public Health

Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2020)

Stage 1 Complaints Comparison

Breakdown by Quarter - See Appendix 3 (3.2)



Stage 1 Complaints Received - Breakdown by Category



19

Compliments - Appendix 3 (3.5)

6

Informal Complaints Appendix 3 (3.1)

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

