

## APPENDIX 3

### SECTION 1:

### Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health Complaints Activity 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019

#### 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; 16 informal complaints were received during quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) compared to 15 received during quarter one 2018/19; an increase of one.

##### 1.2 Stage One Complaints

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the Council received 26 stage one Children's Services complaints compared to 16 during quarter one for 2018/19, an increase of ten.

The 26 complaints received during this first quarter refer to 15 separate service areas. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints, the highest figure of four referred to Disabled Children/Young People, followed by Fostering and the Child Assessment Team who each received three complaints.

##### 1.3 Timescales

Overall, 25 complaints were responded to and concluded during this first quarter. Nine complaints were responded to within 10 working days, seven within 20 working days, and the remaining nine 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 25 complaints resolved during this period 11 were dealt with in accordance with the Children's Act and the average timescale was 11 days. 14 complaints were dealt with in accordance with the Corporate Complaints Procedure (Non Children's Act) which states complaints should be responded to within 21 calendar days; the average timescale was 19 days.

##### 1.5 Stage Two Complaints

During this period, we have received two stage two complaints which were dealt with in accordance with the Corporate Complaints Procedure and, therefore, there were no financial implications for Children's Services.

Stage two complaints received as follows:

- Children and Young People in Care – One complaint received for Adoption Team in relation to unnecessary delays and poor communication; outcome upheld appropriate remedies/resolution and learning has been carried out.

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- Children and Young People in Care – One complaint received for Looked After Children Team 1 in relation to delays in replacing missing toys; outcome upheld, appropriate remedies and learning has been carried out.

Several other complaints that could have proceeded down this route were resolved after significant intervention and problem solving.

### 1.6 Stage Three Complaints

Where a 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 complaint's procedures, a stage three Independent Complaint Review Panel. There were no complaints escalated to stage three during this quarter.

### 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 quarterly monitoring process. During this first quarter, a pleasing 26 compliments were received for Children's Services, compared to 17 in quarter one 2018/19. Children's Safeguarding Team, Disabled Children/Young People Team and Leaving Care/Transitions Team 2 each received three compliments.

## 2.0 Public Health Complaints

- 2.1 Regionally and nationally, Councils receive very few complaints in relation to Public Health Services. A typical complaint would be where a Council has commissioned a service for local people through a Clinic or GP practice. Complaints in relation to GP's and Hospitals are dealt with through an entirely separate complaint process managed by Health Services.

In relation to Public Health services one complaint was received in quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019). This complaint was in relation to health and safety concerns at Bert Williams Leisure Centre; outcome, upheld, appropriate remedy and learning has been carried out.

## 3.0 Adult Social Care Complaints

### 3.1 Informal Complaints

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the Council received nine complaints which were resolved at service level without going through the formal route. This was compared to 19 informal complaints received during quarter one 2018/19, a decrease of ten.

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### **3.2 Stage One Complaints**

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the Council received 20 formal complaints (including one Public Health) compared with 18 in quarter one 2018/19; representing an increase of two complaints this quarter. Out of the 20 formal complaints received, there were three complaints received in relation to the Independent Providers. This is where Adult Social Care commission an independent agency to deliver a service on its behalf, such as a domiciliary care service. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints. The 20 complaints received covered 15 separate service areas; the highest figure of three complaints referred to the Adult Community Team East and the Health and Social Care Team followed by CM Community Care (Independent Provider) who received two.

### **3.3 Complaint Category**

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

### **3.4 Timescales**

Overall, 17 complaints were responded to and concluded during this first quarter. Eight complaints were responded to within 10 working days, eight within 20 working days and one complaint was responded to over 21 working days. The average number of days to respond and close all complaints over the term significantly was eleven 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.

### **3.5 Compliments**

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's quarterly monitoring process. Sixty three compliments were received during this first quarter relating to Adult Services. Bradley Resource Centre received 14, followed by Welfare Rights Team who received nine; Carer Support Centre, HARP, Support Plus and Therapists all received three each.

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

See Appendix 4.

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### **SECTION 2: Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Complaints Activity 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019**

#### **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 303 service request enquiries were logged with the customer feedback team during quarter one, compared to 387 received during quarter four. These types of enquiries are varied, for example, litter, missed bin collection, parking, 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 better outcome and resolution for the customer.

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

During this first quarter (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the Council received 55 stage one corporate complaints compared to 53 during quarter one for 2018/19, an increase of two cases. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints. The 55 complaints covering 11 separate service areas, the highest figure of 17 complaints referring to Customer Services, Waste Management received 15 and Revenues and Benefits received 8. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those matters at service level.

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

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the main issue of complaint involved failure to provide a service (29), followed by conduct of employees (7), failure to consider relevant matters (6), failure to achieve standards/quality (5), dissatisfaction of council policies (4) and delays in responding or administrative (4).

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

The average response time for responding to each complaint is 16 days for quarter one. This figure has increased from the previous quarter of 13 days; this average response time will be closely monitored with service groups to ensure a reduction is achieved. The response timescale for stage 1 complaints responding within 21 calendar days is 95%, which we have achieved our target of target 95%.

##### **4.5 Stage 2 corporate complaints in quarter one**

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the Council received four stage two corporate complaints.

Stage two complaints received as follows:

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- Regeneration - One complaint received for Planning Department in relation to a residential development at Burton Crescent; outcome not upheld.
- Housing - One complaint received for Facilities Department in relation to charges for the toilets at West Park and cleanliness of toilets at East Park; outcome partially upheld – appropriate remedies and resolution carried out by the service.
- Finance - One complaint received for Revenues and Benefits in relation to housing benefit payments made to tenant and receipt of safeguarding request; outcome partially upheld; appropriate remedies and resolution carried out by the service.
- City Environment – One complaint received for Environmental Protection in relation to garden remediation/restoration works, in particular front drain on driveway; outcome not upheld.

### 4.6 Corporate Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's quarterly monitoring process. During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the Council has received 63 compliments, a decrease from the previous quarter. Planning received 34, followed by Customer Services receiving 8 and Environmental Services receiving 6.

### 4.7 Area of Learning for Corporate Compliments

See Appendix 4.

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

### 5.1 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Enquiries

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the council received two Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries. The Adult Directorate received one and the Children's Directorate received one.

The Adult Directorate received one enquiry.

- one complaint for Adult Services and Communities in relation to the Council not properly informing the customer of the changes to her husband's respite care; outcome not upheld, no maladministration.

The Children's Directorate received one enquiry.

- one complaint for Children and Young People in Care in relation to no communication since January 2019 with Children's Services in relation complainant's child, who is under a care order; outcome upheld; at fault and injustice; action plan has been compiled and appropriate remedies/resolution have been carried out by the service

### 5.2 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the council received three enquiries from the Housing Ombudsman. All three enquiries were received for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

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- One complaint for Wolverhampton Homes in relation the council's response to her request to have the fridge freezer unit in her property re-sited into the kitchen, as it currently stands in front of a back door, blocking the exit; outcome no maladministration.
- One complaint for Wolverhampton Homes in relation to the landlord's response to their reports of occupancy and succession of tenancy rights; outcome no maladministration.
- One complaint for Wolverhampton Homes in relation to installation of a driveway and hard standing at the property, and for the landlord to replace some fencing at the property; outcome awaiting final decision from the Housing Ombudsman.

### 5.3 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman assessment enquiries

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the council received ten Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman assessment enquiries.

Adult Services received one complaint as follows:

- Adult Services and Communities - one complaint for advocacy support/issues raised in relation to the lease on a property; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action.

Children's Services received three complaints as follows;

- Children and Young People in Care – one complaint received in relation to granting grade 3 level foster carer; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action
- Strengthening Families – one complaint received in relation to complainant cannot progress his complaint; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction. One complaint in relation to a S47 investigation and social services involvement with the family; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

City Environment received three complaints as follows:

- Environmental Services/Arbor Team – one complaint received in relation to the Council refusing to cut back a tree which is blocking light and has damaged the footpath outside the property; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action
- Environmental Services/Arbor Team – one complaint in relation height and overhanging trees at side of property; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action
- Parking Services – one complaint in relation to PCN for parking contravention; no documentation received by complainant; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

Finance received one complaint as follows:

- Revenues and Benefits – one complaint in relation to council tax demand; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

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Finance and legal services received one complaint as follows:

- Revenues and Benefits/Legal Services – one complaint in relation to Discretionary Housing Benefit; outcome, premature complaint; complaint logged and response issued to the customer.

Regeneration and Adults received one complaint as follows:

- Planning and Commissioning Services received one complaint in relation to Planning Permission and Supported Living Accommodation; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction

### 5.4 Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries

During quarter one (1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019) the council received two Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries for Wolverhampton Homes.

- One complaint received in relation to Council's handling of report of Anti-Social Behaviour; outcome requested Wolverhampton Homes to escalate complaint to stage two of Wolverhampton Homes' complaints procedure
- One complaint received in relation to disrepair issues; awaiting outcome from Housing Ombudsman

### 6.0 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report 2018/19

6.1 The Ombudsman publishes annual complaint statistics for each local authority in England. The Ombudsman made 70 decisions in 2019/18 in relation to this Council; this process involves referring complaints back to the Council, no further action, invalid complaints, advice given and detailed investigations. From the 70 decisions made the Ombudsman decided to carry out 19 detailed investigations of the complaints they received about the City of Wolverhampton Council for 2018/19.

Out of the 19 detailed investigations carried out, the Ombudsman has recorded 9 (47%) findings of fault (upheld) for the Council during 2018/19 (this compares to an average of 61% in similar authorities). City of Wolverhampton Council's performance for 2018/19 can be compared with neighbouring authorities via the Ombudsman's new interactive map; this new interactive map shows annual performance data for all councils in England, with links to published decision statements, public interest report, annual letters and information about service improvements that have been agreed by each Council. This interactive tool will assist the Council to monitor the improvements they agree to make following the Ombudsman's investigations, as well as supporting scrutiny of local services. See link to interactive map as follows: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance>

The Ombudsman has confirmed that the upheld numbers which they report will not necessarily match the complaints data that we hold as statistics are recorded by the Ombudsman in different business periods.

### 7.0 Action Plans/Learning

7.1 See Appendix 4.