

ANNUAL COMPLAINT & SERVICE MONITORING REPORT FOR 1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2021

Committee name	Corporate, Finance and Property Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Ian Anderson - Business Manager, Complaints and Enquiries
Papers with report	Appendix A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H
Ward	All

HEADLINES

To provide information to the Committee on key complaints and related service monitoring data.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee note the contents of the report and provide any comments to officers as appropriate.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This report provides information and analysis of complaints and Members' Enquiries received between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 and satisfies the requirement to publish annual information. The report includes:

- Appendix A: Background to the complaints process
- Appendix B: Complaints, compliments and Members' Enquiries trends for 2020/21
- Appendix C: Complaint and Compliment report for Housing Services for 2020/21
- Appendix D: Complaint and Compliment report for Adult Social Care for 2020/21
- Appendix E: Complaint and Compliment report for Children and Young People Services for 2020/21
- Appendix F: Complaint and Compliment report for Education Services for 2020/21
- Appendix G: Complaint and compliment report for Finance Directorate for 2020/21
- Appendix H: Other Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigations concluded during 2020/21

Implications on related Council policies

A key role of Select Committees is to monitor the performance of Council services within their remit. Select Committees may also recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

This report seeks to provide assurance that complaints and Members' Enquiries are being processed in accordance with the Council's published policies.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND TO THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. The Council's Vision

The Council's vision is about 'putting our residents first'. Feedback in the form of complaints and compliments is seen as a very important source of information from residents about the quality of services and care provided by the Council. In cases where something has gone wrong, we are committed to putting it right and ensure that it does not happen again.

2. What is a Complaint?

In general terms a complaint can be considered as:

"an expression of dissatisfaction by telephone, personal visit or in writing, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Council or its staff affecting an individual or group of customers."

3. How can people complain?

Complaints can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, via our website or email, either directly to the service area, Contact Centre or to the Complaints and Enquiries Team.

4. Remedies for redress

The purpose of redress is to remedy the injustice or hardship suffered and where possible to return a complainant to the position they would have been before the situation went wrong. Types of redress include:

- an apology;
- providing the service that should have been received in the first place;
- taking action or making a decision that the Council should have done before;
- reconsidering an incorrect decision;
- improving procedures so that similar problems do not happen again; and
- if after an investigation by Council staff or the Ombudsman, it is concluded that as a result of maladministration there is no practical action that would provide a full and appropriate

remedy or if the complainant has sustained loss or suffering, financial compensation may be the most appropriate approach.

5. Mediation

For some complaints it will not be appropriate, or possible, to resolve a complaint through the complaint process - particularly where there has been a breakdown in the relationship between the service provider and the service user or where emotions are running high. In such situations the Business Manager, Complaints and Enquiries will consider whether mediation is an option that should be considered. If both parties are agreeable, mediation by an independent mediator allows both parties to come together to see if they can reach a solution through dialogue.

APPENDIX B

COMPLAINT, COMPLIMENTS AND MEMBERS' ENQUIRIES FOR 2020/21

1. Total number of complaints/compliments recorded for 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Directorate	Informal complaints	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 3 complaints	Ombudsman Investigations	Compliments
Finance	121	171	15	0	6	17
Adult Social Care	52	48	N/A	N/A	4	92
Children and Young People Services	86	87	0	0	1	132
Residents Services	2,328	483	27	0	23	351
Total for 2020/21	2,587	789	42	0	34	502

- Residents Services existed as a directorate until Jean Palmer OBE retired in January 2021. I have, therefore, reflected this in this report but in reports for future years it show data in the two new directorates that have replaced Residents Services.
- The Council's focus when dealing with complaints is in trying to resolve a complaint to the satisfaction of the resident. The figures above suggest that this is the case, with the volume of complaints decreasing when escalating up the complaint process i.e. only 30% of informal complaints (2,587) escalated to a Stage 1 complaint (789) and only 5% of Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2 (42).
- The Council received a significant number of compliments (502) for this period and compares favourably when compared with the volume of Stage 1 complaints recorded (789).

2. Total number of complaints/compliments recorded for 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2021

Year	Informal complaints	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 3 complaints	Ombudsman Investigations	Compliments
2016/17	2,081	665	62	3	58	76

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2017/18	2,090	889	43	1	50	146
2018/19	2,756	837	73	0	86	234
2019/20	2,339	861	80	0	59	301
2020/21	2,587	789	42	0	34	502

- The number of compliments recorded over the past 5 years has continued to rise from 76 in 2016/17 to 502 for 2021/21. This suggests that satisfaction levels are higher than in previous years.
- The number of informal complaints recorded for 2020/21 of 2,587 is significantly higher than the 2016/17 figure of 2,081. However, the number of formal complaints recorded (Stage 1, 2, and 3) is generally lower for 2020/21 than in previous years.
- The number of Ombudsman Investigations is lower for 2020/21 than in any other previous years. This is because the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decided to pause their investigations for 4 months to allow Local Authorities to focus on our Covid 19 response.
- The Council's Corporate complaints procedure was revised in 2017, which allowed officers to escalate a complaint direct from Stages 1 and/or 2 to the Ombudsman where it is felt that the decision cannot be overturned through the complaint process. This change in approach has been applied by officers and it is for this reason that there have been fewer Stage 2 complaints and no Stage 3 complaint investigations in the past 3 years.

3. Members Enquiries (MEs)

Number of MEs recorded

Period	Residents Services	Adult Services	Children Services	Finance Directorate	Total
2016/17	8,755	170	67	193	9,185
2017/18	8,110	144	61	187	8,502
2018/19	11,308	117	69	181	11,675
2019/20	11,047	135	62	179	11,423
2020/21	9,533	145	54	228	9,960

- The number of MEs recorded for 2020/21 is lower than the two previous years and this is largely due to the restrictions in place as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, where people were adhering to the Government Guidance to stay at home and only go out for essential travel.
- Residents Services accounts for 96% (9,533) of all MEs recorded and this pattern is consistent with the previous four years.
- Over the past 5 years, Adult Services, Children and Young People's Services and the Finance Directorate recorded fewer MEs when compared with Residents Services. However, these enquiries tend to be more complex and take longer to address.

MEs broken down by Ward

Ward	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Barnhill	157	148	354	282	290
Botwell	378	401	1,099	1,842	1,248
Brunel	266	311	377	215	169
Cavendish	126	164	163	120	81
Charville	549	537	529	542	362
Eastcote	231	300	233	249	170
Harefield	178	210	186	186	163
Heathrow Villages	290	270	553	496	255
Hillingdon East	634	878	814	841	778
Ickenham	87	146	149	116	97
Manor	155	161	158	193	162
Northwood	154	148	107	96	121
Northwood Hills	133	173	155	172	187
Pinkwell	343	304	615	515	522
South Ruislip	141	168	216	348	287
Townfield	396	484	664	624	605
Uxbridge North	256	273	302	258	169
Uxbridge South	2,218	1,444	2,095	1,128	1,218
West Drayton	380	336	452	367	491
West Ruislip	269	212	244	166	156
Yeading	514	455	1,005	1,703	1,655
Yiewsley	246	306	284	175	110
Miscellaneous	1,084	673	921	789	664
Total	9,185	8,502	11,675	11,423	9,960

- 13% (1,463) fewer MEs submitted for 2020/21 (9,960) when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 11,423. The 2020/21 figure was impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic when people were asked to stay at home and only make essential journeys.
- However, when the 2020/21 figure of 9,960 is compared against the 2016/17 figure of 9,185 and the 2017/18 figure of 8,502, 8% (775) and 15% (1,458) more MEs were recorded in 2020/21.
- The miscellaneous figure relates to enquiries from Elected Members such as MP's, enquiries from other Councillors, cross Ward enquiries, Mayors Office, etc.

Service areas that have the highest number of MEs recorded

Service Area	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Waste	3,588	3,340	5,566	5,950	4,964
Housing	917	905	1,239	1,288	1,269
Anti-Social Behaviour	1,257	1,261	1,649	1,408	1,176
Green Spaces	806	802	1,050	966	863
Planning	965	1,228	1,235	978	827

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Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

Business and Technical Support	330	416	313	312	313
Finance	193	187	181	179	228
Adult Social Care	170	144	117	135	145
Children Services	67	61	69	62	54

- Waste, Housing, Anti-Social Behaviour, Green Spaces and Planning Services (9,099) combined accounted for 91% of all MEs recorded for 2020/21.
- Waste Service accounted for 50% of all MEs with Housing, Anti-Social Behaviour, Green Spaces and Planning accounting for 13%, 12%, 9% and 8% respectively, of all ME recorded for 2020/21.

APPENDIX C

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR HOUSING SERVICES FOR 2020/21

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal complaints

- 24% (111) more informal complaints recorded when comparing the 2019/20 figure of 457 with the 2020/21 figure of 568.

Stage 1 complaints

- 31% (54) more formal complaints recorded for 2020/21 of 231 when compared with 2019/20 figure of 177. Of the 231 Stage 1 complaints, 39 were upheld, 52 partially upheld, 127 not upheld and 13 withdrawn or cancelled. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 9.89 working days, with 84% (195 out of 231) of complaints responded to within the 10-working day target.

Stage 2 complaints

- 29% (9) fewer Stage 2 complaints recorded when comparing the figure for 2019/20 of 31 with the 2020/21 figure of 22. Of the 22 Stage 2 complaints, 6 were upheld, 4 partially upheld and 12 not upheld. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 10.85 working days – four complaints took 20+ days to respond to and these complaints had an adverse impact on the average response time.

Stage 3 complaints

- There were no Stage 3 complaints investigated during 2020/21.

Investigation by the Local Government or Housing Ombudsman

- 5 complaints were considered by the Ombudsman, 1 complaint was upheld, 3 not upheld and 1 not investigated.

Compliments

- 132 compliments were recorded for 2020/21 which is rise from the 2019/20 figure of 92.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Housing complaints are managed in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. This procedure operates as follows:

- The Informal Complaint (service request).
- Stage 1 – response from the Head of Service.
- Stage 2 – response from a Corporate Director
- Stage 3 – response from the Chief Executive of the Council
- Stage 4 - Designated Person for the Council
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or Housing Ombudsman Service

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed report of all complaints and compliments for Housing Services is set out below.

1. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

The feedback we have received from residents indicate that most want action to resolve their concerns on the spot by discussing the problem with an officer/manager rather than going through the more formal complaint route. If we can resolve a resident's issue in this way we will do so, immediately. We will continue to take this approach, wherever possible.

Informal complaints (Service Requests)

Year	1 April to 30 June (Q1)	1 July to 30 Sept (Q2)	1 Oct to 31 Dec (Q3)	1 Jan to 31 March (Q4)	Total
2016/17	157	97	109	92	455
2017/18	104	88	102	114	408
2018/19	94	90	114	123	421
2019/20	124	87	142	104	457
2020/21	84	86	155	243	568

- 24% (111) more informal complaints recorded for 2020/21 of 568 when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 457. The increase in informal complaints was in the Repairs and Maintenance area, where residents were dissatisfied with the time taken to undertake repairs (Covid 19 restrictions impacted on timescales and the difficulties in sourcing material).

2. STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

A Head of Service will aim to respond within 10 working days.

Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Period	Total
2016/17	125
2017/18	170
2018/19	157
2019/20	177
2020/21	231

- 31% (54) more formal complaints registered for 2020/21 of 231 when compared with 2019/20 figure of 177.
- The increase in formal complaints was in the Repairs and Maintenance area, which was impacted by the Covid 19 restrictions, for the reasons I have given above.

Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2016/17	22	14	82	7	125
2017/18	13	32	121	4	170
2018/19	22	44	84	7	157
2019/20	18	40	113	6	177
2020/21	39	52	127	13	231

- Of the 231 Stage 1 complaints, 17% (39) were upheld, 23% (52) partially upheld, 55% (127) not upheld and 5% (13) either cancelled or withdrawn.
- 81% of the Homeless Prevention complaints were not upheld because the majority of these were challenges of the Council's Social Housing Allocation Policy.

Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 1 (working days)

	Time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint
2016/17	8.26
2017/18	7.80
2018/19	8.50
2019/20	8.09

2020/21	9.89
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- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 9.89 working days against the target of 10 working days.

Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

Period	Total number of complaints	Number responded to within 10 working days	% responded to within 10 working days
2016/17	125	99	79 %
2017/18	170	152	89 %
2018/19	157	129	82 %
2019/20	177	152	86 %
2020/21	231	195	84 %

- 84% (195 out of 231) Stage 1 complaints were responded to within 10 working days.

3. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

A Corporate Director will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 10 working days.

Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Period	Total
2016/17	12
2017/18	10
2018/19	24
2019/20	31
2020/21	22

- 29% (9) fewer Stage 2 complaints recorded when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 31. However, when comparing the 2020/21 figure of 22 with the 2016/17 figure of 12, this is an 83 (10) rise in the number of Stage 2 complaints recorded.

The table below provides a summary of the 22 Stage 2 complaints.

Complaint details	Decision at Stage 2
Complaint ref: 8474195 Miss X complained that following work undertaken by the Council, the issue had not been resolved.	Upheld The Council accepted that the work undertaken had not been fully completed and as a gesture of goodwill offered Miss X a small sum of money by way of redress.
Complaint ref: 8569144 Mr X wanted the Council to give specific dates when the roofing	Upheld Mr X was advised that the Council needed to waterproof the canopy above his front door and bay

repairs will begin, explain what is planned and provide a copy of the structural engineer's report.	window using a Procol liquid coating, which would be done on 8 January 2021. We apologised for the time taken to complete the repair.
Complaint ref: 8547626 Mr X complained about the length of time taken to undertake work in his property.	Upheld Mr X was informed that some of the repairs in the lounge cannot be completed until repairs are done to the balcony and this work requires scaffolding which was delayed because of snow and ice but we would progress the work as soon as we could.
Complaint ref: 8209395 Mrs X complained about the length of time it has taken for adaptation work to begin in her home.	Upheld Mrs X was informed that fencing work was impacted by Covid 19 pandemic as our contractor and the supplier had stopped work. We apologised for this delay and provided Mrs X with a date when the work would begin.
Complaint ref: 8440009 Mr X requested that the Council assess how many people were living in a property.	Upheld Mr X was informed that there was no evidence that the House was being used as a house in multiple occupation or in need of repair or over-crowded and that it had adequate fire precautions in the property.
Complaint ref: 8416296 Mr X complained about the length of time it was taken for a downstairs shower room to be installed.	Upheld We explained that revised drawings were needed as the original plans had been declined. Revised plans had been received from the architect and it was not going through the formal approval process. We apologised for the time taken to install the shower room.
Complaint ref: 8209395 Mr X complained about the time it took for adaptation work to begin at his property.	Partially Upheld We apologised for the start date having to be put back, but this was because of Covid 19 pandemic as the contractor due to do the work had closed their offices during the first lockdown.
Complaint ref: 8289177 Ms X complained about the conduct of an officer in the way he dealt with a report by her tenant that she was not undertaking repairs needed to her property.	Partially Upheld We apologised that timely response were not sent to her but advised that we were satisfied that a thorough investigation had been undertaken by the officer in accordance with our practices.
Complaint ref: 8263990 Ms X complained about the list of repairs the Council agreed to undertake.	Partially Upheld Ms X was advised that the Council will undertake repairs and not improvements to the property which is not needed. We apologised that this was not made clear to her.
Complaint ref: 8344153 Ms X complained about the time taken and the number of attempts to repair her outside stopcock so it can be turned off to renew the internal stopcock.	Partially Upheld The Council apologised for the number of visits needed and explained that more time and visits were needed as it needed to be co-ordinated with the water company and when officers attended, they could not, at first, find the stopcock, and then needed an unusual key which they had not come across before.

<p>Complaint ref: 8245448 Ms X wanted compensation for the period from March to May 2018 when her boiler was non-operational.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Ms X was informed that we make every effort to repair a boiler until either part's cannot be found to repair it or until it becomes uneconomic to do so. Officers had attended and left the boiler in working order.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8342868 Ms X complained that she was told that the work would not be undertaken until October 2020.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Ms X was informed that three works orders for non-emergency repairs were raised following two inspections of her flat after the leak. As a result, we had to stagger the work, with an electrician reconnect the extractor fan and re-clip some trunking, a decorator will repaint leak-stained ceilings in five rooms and a carpenter will renew the bath panel.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8394968 Ms X complained about the length of time it took to fix her boiler.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Ms X was informed that there was no record to show that we had received a report that her boiler was not working, if we had, we would have sent operatives to undertake the repair, which is what we did when she did report it.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8325787 Ms X complained about the length of time to install a dropped kerb by way of an adaptation to her property.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Ms X was informed that we needed to consult with local residents first whether a disabled parking bay could be removed. We had now completed the consultation and the work could progress.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8214091 Ms W was unhappy that DFG work to her property was not progressed during the "lockdown".</p>	<p>Not Upheld Ms W was advised that we had to comply with the restrictions introduced because of Covid 19 and could not undertake work in her property during this period.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8604809 Mrs X complained that an engineer attended to fit a new boiler on 29 December 2020 but could not undertake the work as it requires more than one operative to do the work.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Mrs X was informed that the Council cannot instal a new boiler until the rat problem in her property is resolved, the poison removed and she clears her property sufficiently to allow operatives to work in.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8334591 Mr X complained that the property offered to him by way of a decant not suitable as it had insufficient space and a lot of work needed to be done.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Mr X was informed that the property met his needs as the Maintenance Service's void contractor did the conversion from shower to bath and that the property met the Council's Minimum Lettable Standard (MLS).</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8426863 Ms X is a leaseholder and complained about the time taken by the Council to complete repairs to her property – leak into her property from the resident above her.</p>	<p>Not upheld Ms X was informed that leaseholders are responsible for undertaking internal repairs themselves but as a gesture of goodwill the Council made an exception and agreed to undertake repairs in her property at no financial cost to her as the leaseholder.</p>

<p>Complaint ref: 8564594 Miss X complained about the time taken for work to the roof, guttering, loft and dampness was taking.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Miss X was given specific dates when the Council would be able to undertake the work. She was also told that no evidence was found of rising damp.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8585899 Mr X complained that the Council was covering up corruption about when the report for repair was received and that his front door is not secure after it was broken into by the police.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Mr X was informed that our records show clearly when he reported the repair request by email and that an additional bolt was installed to his door to make it more secure.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8541933 Ms X complained that the work proposed did not meet her needs.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Ms X was informed that any works the Council does because of a Disabled Facilities Grants, is based on the recommendations made by the Occupational Therapist following an assessment.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8743874 Mr X complained that the work proposed for his brother did not meet his needs.</p>	<p>Not Upheld Mr X was informed that the hard standing was completed in accordance with the recommendations in the Occupational Therapist assessment and are unable to extend the hard standing. This is because we are required to complete the works to the recommended measurements and in accordance with our policy.</p>

Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 2 (working days)

	Time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint
2016/17	11.16
2017/18	8.63
2018/19	8.83
2019/20	10.50
2020/21	10.85

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 10.85 working days against the target of 10 working days. Four complaints, 8263900, 8334591, 8344153 and 8564594 impacted adversely on the average response time for Stage 2 responses as they all took 20+ days for a response to be sent.

4. STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS

At Stage 3, the Chief Executive commissions an investigation by an officer in Democratic Services and the aim is to respond within 15 working days.

There were no Stage 3 investigations from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2021.

5. INVESTIGATION BY THE COUNCIL'S DESIGNATED PERSON

If a complaint is about a tenancy, leasehold, or other housing management issue, a complainant can either refer their complaint to the 'Designated Person' to see if they can help to the complaint.

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Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

If the 'Designated Person' cannot resolve a complaint or if 8 weeks have elapsed since the Stage 3 response, a complainant can then complain to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

- There were no investigations undertaken by the Council's Designated Person.

6. INVESTIGATIONS BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN AND HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SERVICE

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the relevant Ombudsman at any stage of the complaint process.

Total number of Ombudsman investigations

Period	Total number
2016/17	22
2017/18	20
2018/19	16
2019/20	15
2020/21	5

- Fewer complaints were investigated by the Ombudsman during 2020/21 as they decided to pause their investigations for 4 months to allow Local Authorities to focus on our COVID-19 response. This is the reason why fewer investigations were concluded during this period.

The findings and decision of the investigations undertaken by the Ombudsman is set out below.

Complaint details	Ombudsman decision
<p>Complaint ref: 8184070 Mr X complained that the Council wrongly decided he had no housing need and therefore did not qualify to join the Housing Register. Mr X wanted the Council to let him to join the Housing Register and award him Band B priority on medical grounds.</p>	<p>Upheld The Ombudsman found that that the Council wrongly decided he had no housing need because it did not follow the procedure in its housing allocations policy for medical assessments when it assessed i.e. must refer to the Councils Medical Adviser before making a decision. The Council agreed to reconsider Mr X's application and make a new decision.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8260465 Ms X complained that the Council delayed in carrying out a review of her housing register application between July and December 2019.</p>	<p>Not Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council was not at fault in the way it dealt with Ms X's housing register application.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8304110 Miss X complained that the Council would not consider her request for a larger Housing Association property to accommodate her medical needs, as she has, and her two children occupy the only</p>	<p>Not Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council was not at fault when it considered Miss X's request for a larger Housing Association property, this is because the Council made its decision in line with its policy.</p>

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

two bedrooms in her property.	
Complaint ref: 8288895 Mr X complained that the Council had not resolved his complaints of mould, repairs to his cat flap and his request for assistance to furnish the property and install flooring.	Not Upheld The Housing Ombudsman Service found no maladministration in the way the Council responded to Mr X's reports and requests for repairs.
Complaint ref: 8195566 Mr X complained that the Council did not offer him a flat because it wrongly said he had rent arrears. He says the Council should move him into Band A due to the impact the error has had on him.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman found insufficient evidence of fault by the Council and insufficient evidence of injustice.

NB The remaining 18 Ombudsman investigations are shown under Appendix H.

7. COMPLIMENTS

Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	19
2017/18	24
2018/19	67
2019/20	92
2020/21	132

- 43% (40) more compliments were recorded when comparing the 2019/20 figure of 92 with the 2020/21 figure of 132.

Here's what some people said about housing services:

"I just wanted to write and thank you for helping me so much when you had to relocate me urgently. As you know, I suffer with chronic mental health issues and mobility issues and was terrified about having to move so quickly with Corona happening. You were extremely helpful and supportive and even after I moved in you assisted me with my worries about some things. You were professional but very empathetic and understanding. I am so grateful to be where I am and really hope I can stay here a long time. I am just starting to get settled. So grateful for all you help X. You are excellent in your job."

"I viewed my new home yesterday and signed the tenancy yesterday. I just wanted to email to say thank you so much! I am overwhelmed at the house it is beautiful and I intend to put my love for interior design into it. It was unfortunate circumstances that I had to be transferred but all of you were amazing from start to finish in particular X, Y and Z. I apologise for my constant emails/questions etc. I'm sure you probably don't get enough credit for your hard work, but I feel this was such a positive experience for me and the process has been smooth. Once again, you should all be recognised for your hard work, and I will be forever grateful."

"She was absolutely delighted with the service and said that she couldn't praise the operative or anybody at the council enough, she said that the works carried out were excellent and her door

is now working perfectly. She said that the operative attended within half an hour of her reporting the issue, and she couldn't believe how quickly he arrived. She wanted to give him more than 10/10 for the question of how satisfied she was with the service from the operative. She also said that she was so grateful to the council for staying open and continuing with our work during everything that is going on - she was absolutely delighted with everything."

"I can confirm that the re-routing of pipe work which was carried out today has been carried out by two fantastic guys who were X and Y, they were patient, friendly and very professional with not only with the work itself but with my husband Z really understanding and I would like to recommend them both to be put forward to a recognition scheme if there is one or even a Thank You from their supervisor or Manager please can you do this for me. Credit where credit is due."

"Thank you for sending such a lovely operative round, and that he showed his ID and was wearing the correct PPE, and she was very grateful."

"Mr and Mrs Y called as they wanted to pass on a message of thanks, they advised he was a gentleman, very polite and very hard working and are very pleased with the job he carried out."

APPENDIX D

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE FOR 2020/21

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal Complaints

- 52 and 53 informal complaints (service requests) were recorded for 2020/21 and 2019/20, respectively.

Stage 1 complaints

- 48 Stage 1 complaints were recorded for 2020/21, which is a 7% (3) increase.
- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 11.22 working days. 77% (37 out of 48) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within our internal target of 10 working days and 96% (46 out of 48) were responded to within our published target of 20 working days.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

- The Ombudsman concluded 4 investigations during 2020/21, 2 were not upheld and they did not investigate the other two complaints.

Compliments

- 92 compliments were recorded for 2020/21, which is a 42% (27) rise on the 2019/20 figure of 65.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The procedure for dealing with Adult Social Care complaints is regulated by the 'The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009'.

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

This procedure is far less prescriptive and allows for early escalation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman should the complainant be dissatisfied with the response from the Local Authority. The intention of this procedure is to achieve resolution at the first attempt, to remove bureaucracy and is designed to empower complainants in shaping from the outset the approach to resolving the complaint.

- The Informal Complaint (service request).
- Stage 1 – response from a Director or Assistant Director or Head of Service of the area complained about.
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed explanation of all complaints and compliments for Adult Social Care is set out below.

1. THE INFORMAL COMPLAINT

The feedback we have received from residents indicate that most want action to resolve their concerns on the spot by discussing the problem with an officer/manager rather than going through the more formal complaint route. If we can resolve a resident's issue in this way we will do so, immediately. We will continue to take this approach, wherever possible.

Informal Complaints received – (Service requests)

Year	1 April to 30 June (Q1)	1 July to 30 Sept (Q2)	1 Oct to 31 Dec (Q3)	1 Jan to 31 March (Q4)	Total
2016/17	29	34	20	22	105
2017/18	18	18	12	16	64
2018/19	17	23	20	16	76
2019/20	18	10	14	11	53
2020/21	15	10	17	10	52

- 52 and 53 informal complaints (service requests) were recorded for 2020/21 and 2019/2020, respectively. When compared with the 2016/17 figure of 105, this amounts to 53 (50%) fewer informal complaints recorded.

2. STAGE 1 COMPLAINT - LOCAL RESOLUTION

At Stage 1 of the complaint process a Director or Assistant Director or Head of Service will carry out an investigation and aim to respond within 10 working days.

Total number of Stage 1 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	35
2017/18	54
2018/19	40
2019/20	45

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

2020/21	48
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- 3 (7%) more formal complaints recorded for 2020/21 then 2019/20

Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn/ cancelled	Total
2016/17	4	9	22	0	35
2017/18	3	11	36	4	54
2018/19	5	7	25	3	50
2019/20	10	9	25	1	45
2020/21	9	11	26	2	48

- The outcomes remain broadly similar when comparing the five years as a whole.
- For 2020/21, upheld, partially upheld and not upheld complaints was 19%, 23% and 54% respectively of all complaints recorded.

Time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint (working days)

	Average time taken to respond to a complaint
2016/17	9.53
2017/18	9.52
2018/19	9.50
2019/20	11.49
2020/21	11.22

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint for 2020/21 is 11.22 working days, which is outside our internal target of 10 working days but within our published target of 20 working days.

Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

Period	Total number of complaints	Number responded to within 10 working days	% responded to within 10 working days
2016/17	35	27	83 %
2017/18	54	44	81 %
2018/19	40	33	83 %
2019/20	45	42	93 %
2020/21	48	37	77 %

- 37 (77%) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within our internal target of 10 working days and 46 (96%) were responded to within our published target of 20 working days.
- Covid 19 impacted on response times as it took us longer to undertake investigatory work.

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATIONS (LGO)

Where it appears that a Council's own investigation has not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the LGO and at any stage of the complaint process.

Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total Number
2016/17	8
2017/18	11
2018/19	9
2019/20	8
2020/21	4

Fewer complaints were investigated by the Ombudsman during 2020/21 as they decided to pause their investigations for 4 months to allow Local Authorities to focus on our COVID-19 response. This explains why fewer LGO investigations were concluded during this period.

The table below provides details of the complaints considered by the Ombudsman.

Complaint details	LGO decision
<p>Complaint ref: 7214117 Mr X complained that the Council stopped his home care package in October 2018, leaving him without the care and support he needed. He says this affected his health and wellbeing, causing him distress</p>	<p>Not upheld The Ombudsman concluded that there was no fault in the way the Council assessed Mr X's care needs and decided he did not meet the criteria for formal care and support</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 7210457 Mr X complained that his mother remained longer in a private hospital in January 2019 than she should of, thereby incurring costs.</p>	<p>Not upheld The Ombudsman did not uphold the complaint as there was no fault in the Council's actions.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8262234 Ms X complained that the new social worker she had been allocated was from a team led by a manger she does not feel able to work with due to a lack of trust on her part.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate Ms X's complaint because there is no evidence of fault by the Council which warrants an investigation.</p>
<p>Complaint ref: 8328231 Mr X was unhappy with how the Council dealt with safeguarding concerns raised about the residential care home where his mother lives.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the complainant is satisfied with the response he has now had from the Council and the matter he was complaining about has been resolved.</p>

4. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

I have looked at all the complaints recorded to identify errors and what we did to resolve these issues. Listed below are the main themes:

Communication

- In five complaints we apologised either for errors contained within our communication and/or incorrect information/advice provided.

Delays

- In three complaints we apologised for the time taken to decide whether to waive the fees or re-instate a service or that a carer attended an appointment late.

5. COMPLIMENTS

Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	79
2017/18	56
2018/19	68
2019/20	65
2020/21	92

- 42% (27) more compliments were recorded for 2020/21 when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 65. We also received 44 more compliments (92) than complaints (48) when comparing figures for 2020/21.

Here's what some people have said.

“Thank you for organising the care for my husband after his discharge from Hillingdon Hospital. We appreciate your help and advice given during this difficult time.”

“X and I were out walking by a local lake (Little Britain) when he told me he was "excited". When I asked him why he said it was because he would be seeing you tomorrow. X went on to say that you have been his Social Worker for a year now and also described you as a "foster parent". X quickly changed the terminology and said "you know what I mean" but I think it showed that he sees you as a positive paternal figure in his life. As you know X isn't one to compliment people unless he means it so he's clearly enjoying spending time with you which is really nice as some of our young people tend to have a less positive relationship with their social workers.”

“Thank you and the team of staff for the excellent care and support at Swan house, where the residents are keeping safe and well. That is wonderful and highly appreciated.”

“Thank you for your Email and the kind comments within. I am humbled by the generous offer that X, Y and your Council colleagues have made. I will be guided by Z regarding the invoicing of the 40% charge for routes cancelled due to Coronavirus. Our time working together has come to an end too soon, so let me take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for the future. Hopefully, our paths will cross at some stage in the not-too-distant future. It has been a pleasure working with you and thank you once again.”

I wanted to put on record my thanks to and admiration for and all responsible for the excellent and speedy response to my enquiry this morning. A long-term friend, my car mechanic to be precise, rang me last night in a frantic and terribly distressed state; his wife of 40 years or

so had been sectioned and admitted to hospital in the “Riverside” due to severe mental health issues following the death’s, over some time, of both their two adults but young sons. My friend was deeply and overwhelmed concerned that after 7 days of admission his wife was likely to be discharged very soon to the home environment where he simply could not cope with her at present, especially as having visited her yesterday he felt she was nowhere near ready for discharge...could I help. I rang this morning to speak to X however having explained the situation and its apparent urgency to Y she sprang into action contacting Z who took the situation in hand. My friend was contacted by the team manager and is now being given support with an ongoing element to help him cope and the team have contacted the hospital to make sure that my friends wife is properly assessed, treated and managed etc. These prompt actions will I am sure have averted problems and reassured these two hard working and good people, both in their 70’s I think about this frightful situation.”

APPENDIX E

COMPLAINT REPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICE'S FOR 2020/21

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal Complaints

- 86 informal complaints (service requests) were recorded for 2020/21, which is slightly less than the 2019/20 figure of 88.

Stage 1 complaints

- 87 Stage 1 complaints were recorded for 2020/21, which is 23% (16) more than the 2019/20 figure of 71. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 9.82 working days and 83% (72 out of 87) Stage 1 complaints were responded to within 10 working days.

Stage 2 and 3 Complaints

- There were no Stage 2 investigations concluded during this period.
- There were no Stage 3 review hearings held during this period.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

- One investigation was concluded during this period, the Ombudsman decided not to investigate the complaint.

Compliments

- Compliments recorded have risen from 124 for 2019/20 to 132 for 2020/21.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaints made by children or on their behalf are governed by the Children's Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 (Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1738). This sets out the three-stage complaint procedure that Local Authorities are required to follow when dealing with complaints made by for example any child or young person, any local authority foster carer, children leaving care, etc. Hillingdon's procedure operates as follows:

- The Informal Complaint (service request).
- Stage 1 – Local Resolution - response from the Head of Service or Assistant Director.
- Stage 2 – Independent Investigation by two people (Investigating Officer and Independent Person).
- Stage 3 – Review Panel comprising of three independent people
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A detailed report of all complaints and compliments for Children and Young People Service's is set out below.

1. THE INFORMAL COMPLAINT

The feedback we have received from residents indicate that most want action to resolve their concerns on the spot by discussing the problem with an officer/manager rather than going through the more formal complaint route. If we can resolve a resident's issue in this way we will do so, immediately. We will continue to take this approach, wherever possible.

Informal Complaints received – (Service requests)

Year	1 April to 30 June (Q1)	1 July to 30 Sept (Q2)	1 Oct to 31 Dec (Q3)	1 Jan to 31 March (Q4)	Total
2016/17	33	26	29	15	103
2017/18	14	15	16	15	60
2018/19	14	23	33	21	91
2019/20	21	16	25	26	88
2020/21	21	18	21	26	86

- The number of informal complaints (service requests) recorded remains broadly similar when compared with previous years.

2. STAGE 1 – LOCAL RESOLUTION

An Assistant Director or Head of Service will investigate and aim to respond to complaints within

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

10 working days.

Total number of complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	33
2017/18	53
2018/19	60
2019/20	71
2020/21	87

- 23% (16) rise in Stage 1 complaints recorded when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 71 with the 2020/21 figure of 87.

Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2016/17	0	12	17	4	33
2017/18	4	10	36	3	53
2018/19	9	15	32	4	60
2019/20	9	21	37	4	71
2020/21	9	25	47	6	87

Proportionally, the volume of upheld, partially upheld, and not upheld complaints remains broadly the same for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Time taken to respond to a complaint (working days)

	Working days
2016/17	10.63
2017/18	10.75
2018/19	10.82
2019/20	9.75
2020/21	9.82

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 9.82 working days for 2020/21, which is within the 10-working day target set.

Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

Period	Total number of complaints	Number dealt with within 10 working days	% dealt with within 10 working days
2016/17	33	25	76 %
2017/18	53	45	85 %
2018/19	60	47	78%
2019/20	71	57	80 %
2020/21	87	72	83 %

- 83% (72) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10-working day target. This is comparable with previous years.

3. **STAGE 2 INVESTIGATIONS**

A Stage 2 investigation is conducted by an Investigating Officer (IO) and Independent Person (IP) with specialist skills and knowledge of the Children's Act. The timescale to conclude such an investigation is set by statute at 25 working days but this may be extended to a maximum of 65 working days.

Period	Total number
2016/17	0
2017/18	2
2018/19	2
2019/20	0
2020/21	0

- No Stage 2 children's investigations were commissioned during this period.

4. **STAGE 3 INVESTIGATIONS**

At Stage 3 of the statutory complaint process, three people independent of the Council, will consider the complaint and wherever possible work towards a resolution. The timescale to conclude such an investigation is 45 working days.

- There were no Stage 3 investigations undertaken between 2016 to 2021.

5. **INVESTIGATION BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGO)**

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and at any stage of the complaint process.

Period	Total number
2016/17	4
2017/18	7
2018/19	5
2019/20	1
2020/21	1

- Fewer complaints were concluded by the Ombudsman during 2020/21 as they decided to pause their investigations for 4 months to allow Local Authorities to focus on our COVID-19 response. This explains why fewer LGO investigations were concluded during this period.

One complaint was investigated by the Ombudsman and their findings is set out below.

Complaint details	LGO decision
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<p>Complaint ref: 8559009 Mr S was unhappy with the way an officer conducted a meeting, he felt that the officer was biased and unprofessional.</p>	<p>Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this as they could not consider whether the Council should take any safeguarding action because a Court is considering this.</p>
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6. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

I looked at all the complaints recorded to identify errors and what we did to resolve these issues. Listed below are the main themes:

- **Communication**

12 people complained about communication issues i.e. lack of communication, that we did not explain things clearly, poor written communication, not informing them of changes with staffing dealing with their case, etc.

- **Delays**

Seven people complained about delays in services that we provided particularly with completing Annual Reviews and Education Health and Care Plan. We apologised in all cases.

7. COMPLIMENTS

Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	46
2017/18	60
2018/19	12
2019/20	124
2020/21	132

- 6% (8) rise in the number of compliments recorded for 2020/21 of 132 when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 124.
- 34% (45) more compliments recorded than complaints when comparing the Stage 1 complaint figure of 87 with the number of compliments recorded of 132.

Here's what some people have said.

“Thank you for the update. I am impressed by your hard work and diligence on this case. This has been one of our high-profile cases due to the complexity, extensive SSD involvement and high-risk indicators. The professional network has also been difficult to manage including xxxx SSD' S lack of cooperation. I know we have had many discussions over this case resulting in

good outcomes for the children. I am so glad that finally we now have a clear permanency plan for X and Y.”

“I just wanted to say a huge thank you for all of your support this year. It is so reassuring, especially during these unsettling and remote working times, to be able to contact you both for advice and support. Both me and my safeguarding team are very appreciative of your help.

“It’s been pleasure to have you as personal adviser. I’m glad to have you I would like to say thank you for all your supports and advice. I’m happy to be one of your clients because you’re friendly, intelligent, patient and quick response more than a personal adviser.”

“I just wanted to drop you a quick email to say a huge thank you for your contributions to the case conference this morning. You are fantastic and have undertaken so many steps to protect mum and the children before the case even came to conference. Your commitment to keeping women and their children safe is brilliant and you leave no stone unturned when it comes to devising risk assessments and safety plans. The conference would have been so much harder this morning if it wasn’t for your expertise and I’m hugely grateful. This case is such high risk and I’m glad the children and their mum have got such amazing support around them.”

“Hi X just wanted to share my good news with you Y has started college doing beauty therapy ... she didn’t do too well with exams, but it was to be expected! On the other side she has come out of this ordeal a whole new person ... and I would like to say thank you and we will be eternally grateful for the input you put in to help us through in the very beginning lots of love and sending you and your family all the best”

APPENDIX F

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR EDUCATION SERVICES FOR 2020/21

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal Complaints

- Informal complaints (service requests) have risen from 8 for 2019/20 to 22 for the same period in 2020/21. This was largely due to the increase in complaints forwarded to the Council from Ofsted for us to investigate.

Formal Complaints

- There were 3 Stage 1 complaints recorded for this period. One complaint was upheld and 2 not upheld with all three complaints being responded to within 10 working days.
- There were no Stage 2 and 3 complaints investigations undertaken during this period.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

- There were no LGO investigations concluded during this period.

Compliments

- 4 compliments were recorded for 2020/21, which is a rise from the 2019/20 figure of 1.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaints about education and schools are governed by the Education Act 2002. The Local Authority will only deal with complaints that are education related such as the provision of the national curriculum, school admission appeals, exclusions, special educational needs assessments, child protection issues, allegations of child abuse, etc.

Complaints about the internal management of a school must initially be made in writing to the Headteacher of the school. If this fails to resolve the issue, concerns should then be raised with the chair of governors. If a complainant remains dissatisfied, they can then escalate their complaint to the Department for Education and beyond that to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman via a Member of Parliament.

For those complaints where this Local Authority has a statutory duty to investigate, we will deal with these complaints under the Council's Corporate complaints procedure as follows:

- The Informal Complaint (service request)
- Stage 1 – response from the Head of Service.
- Stage 2 – response from the Corporate Director for Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services
- Stage 3 – response from the Chief Executive of the Council.
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A more detailed explanation of how the complaint procedure operates, the main complaint themes and statistical data for each stage of the complaint process is provided below.

A. THE INFORMAL COMPLAINT

The feedback we have received from residents indicate that most want action to resolve their concerns on the spot by discussing the problem with an officer/manager rather than going through the more formal complaint route. If we can resolve a resident's issue in this way we will do so, immediately. We will continue to take this approach, wherever possible.

Informal Complaints received – (Service requests)

Year	1 April to 30 June (Q1)	1 July to 30 Sept (Q2)	1 Oct to 31 Dec (Q3)	1 Jan to 31 March (Q4)	Total
2016/17	6	4	6	2	18

2017/18	2	2	4	6	14
2018/19	8	2	6	4	20
2019/20	4	2	0	2	8
2020/21	1	2	11	8	22

- Informal complaints have risen significantly from 8 for 2019/20 to 22 for 2020/21. Most of these informal complaints were complaints received by Ofsted which they asked the Council to investigate.

B. STAGE 1 – LOCAL RESOLUTION

The Head of Service will aim to respond within 10 working days.

Total number of complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	6
2017/18	33
2018/19	32
2019/20	16
2020/21	3

- With so many schools closed during much of this period or providing education virtually, the volume of complaints recorded has dropped from 16 for 2019/20 to 3 for 2020/21.

Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2016/17	0	0	6	0	6
2017/18	0	2	30	1	33
2018/19	1	1	29	1	32
2019/20	2	6	8	0	16
2020/21	1	0	2	0	3

- Volumes of complaints is low, which was expected as many schools have been closed during much of this period because of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Time taken to respond to a complaint (working days)

	Working days
2016/17	7
2017/18	9.36
2018/19	10.84

2019/20	8.94
2020/21	7.67

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint was 7.67 working days.

Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

Period	Total number of complaints	Number dealt with within 10 working days	% dealt with within 10 working days
2016/17	6	6	100 %
2017/18	33	28	85 %
2018/19	32	25	78 %
2019/20	13	12	92 %
2020/21	3	3	100 %

- All three complaints were responded to within the 10-working day target.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The Corporate Director for Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 10 working days.

Period	Total number
2016/17	0
2017/18	0
2018/19	0
2019/20	1
2020/21	0

There were no Stage 2 investigations undertaken during 2020/21

d. STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS

At Stage 3, the Chief Executive commissions an investigation by an officer in Democratic Services and the aim is to respond within 15 working days.

- There were no Stage 3 complaints from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2021.

e. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGO) INVESTIGATIONS

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the LGO and at any stage of the complaint process.

Total number of LGO investigation

Period	Total number
2016/17	1

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

2017/18	1
2018/19	4
2019/20	0
2020/21	0

- There were no investigations concluded by the Ombudsman during this period.

f. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

In the one upheld complaint, a staff member was overheard swearing in a classroom. We apologised for this and that it would be dealt with internally through our appraisal process. This was considered to be a one-off incident rather than an issue for the College as a whole.

g. COMPLIMENTS

Compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	4
2017/18	2
2018/19	1
2019/20	1
2020/21	4

- A small increase in the volume of compliments recorded for 2020/21 of 4 when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 1.

Here's what some people have said:

"I would like to thank the School Placement and Admissions Team, particularly X, who I feel has gone above and beyond in helping me secure a school place for my 5-year-old. As a military family posted to the area short notice during the middle of a global pandemic her kindness and prompt replies have made a stressful situation much more manageable. I am extremely grateful for her help and would like this to be formally recognised."

"I would like to start with a wholehearted thank you to both you and your team. At a time of such unprecedented stress and anxiety for people and parents in the UK/Hillingdon your department has done amazingly to keep going with this whole process and in spite of some of the absolute crap you read about in the media, you should all be commended for forming some sort of normality out of the turmoil."

"I thank you for the work you do and the immense difference you make in Safeguarding our more vulnerable clients. Secondly thank you for the support you give to us in the secondary school environment and thirdly, apologies can you resend the attachment as my system appears to have corrupted the content."

APPENDIX G

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR FINANCE DIRECTORATE

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal complaints

- There were 39 more informal complaints (service requests) recorded when comparing the same period for 2019/20 of 82 with the same period in 2020/21 of 121.

Stage 1 complaints

- 42 fewer Stage 1 complaints when comparing the figure for 2019/20 of 213 with the 2020/21 figure of 171. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 5.78 working days with 99% of all Stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 working days.

Stage 2 complaints

- 6 fewer Stage 2 complaints recorded for 2020/21 of 15 with the 2019/20 figure of 21. Business Grant complaints and our application of the Business Support Grant accounted for 47% (7) of all Stage 2 complaints. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 6.87 working days with 100% of Stage 2 complaints responded to within 10 working days.

Stage 3 complaints

- There were no Stage 3 complaints recorded for 2020/21.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) referrals

- 6 complaints were concluded by the Ombudsman during this period with 1 upheld, 1 not upheld and the Ombudsman decided not to investigate the other 4 complaints received.

Compliments

- 17 compliments were recorded in 2020/21, which is 7 more than the 2019/20 figure of 10.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Finance Directorate complaints are managed in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure. This procedure operates as follows:

- The Informal Complaint (service request)
- Stage 1 – response from a senior officer from the Appeals and Complaints Team.
- Stage 2 – response from the Corporate Director for Finance.
- Stage 3 – response from the Chief Executive of the Council.
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

DETAILED COMPLAINT REPORT

A more detailed explanation of how the complaint procedure operates, the main complaint themes and statistical data for each stage of the complaint process is provided below.

1. THE INFORMAL COMPLAINT

The feedback we have received from residents indicate that most want action to resolve their concerns on the spot by discussing the problem with an officer/manager rather than going through the more formal complaint route. If we can resolve a resident's issue in this way we will do so, immediately. We will continue to take this approach, wherever possible.

Informal complaints received – (Service requests)

Year	1 April to 30 June (Q1)	1 July to 30 Sept (Q2)	1 Oct to 31 Dec (Q3)	1 Jan to 31 March (Q4)	Total
2016/17	97	73	64	182	416
2017/18	129	36	26	31	222
2018/19	25	30	33	20	108
2019/20	25	22	16	19	82
2020/21	18	9	23	71	121

- 48% (39) more informal complaints (service requests) recorded for 2020/21 then 2019/20. This is partly because of the higher volume of informal complaints recorded for quarter 4 of 71, which is because of an unusually high number of Business Rate complaints relating to our application of the Business Support Grant.

2. STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

An experienced officer from the Appeals and Complaints Team will investigate the complaint and aim to respond within 10 working days.

Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Period	Housing Benefit	Council Tax	Finance	Total
2016/17	105	179	1	285
2017/18	91	141	11	243
2018/19	72	157	6	235
2019/20	82	125	6	213
2020/21	45	121	5	171

- 20% (42) fewer Stage 1 complaints when comparing the 2019/20 figure of 213 with the 2020/21 figure of 171. Whilst the figure for 2020/21 figure is lower than previous years, it is offset by the higher figure for informal complaints.

Outcome of complaints

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2016/17	72	34	174	5	285
2017/18	40	37	161	5	243
2018/19	19	24	191	1	235
2019/20	38	23	151	1	213
2020/21	15	16	140	0	171

- Proportionally, the outcome of complaints remains broadly similar to previous years with upheld, partially upheld, and not upheld complaints accounting for 9%, 9% and 82% respectively of all complaints recorded.

Time taken to respond to complaint at Stage 1 – working days

	Working days
2016/17	6.22
2017/18	6.81
2018/19	6.39
2019/20	5.79
2020/21	5.78

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 5.78 working days against a target of 10 working days.

Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

Period	Total number of complaints	Number responded to within 10 working days	% responded to within 10 working days
2016/17	285	283	99 %
2017/18	243	241	99 %
2018/19	235	231	98 %
2019/20	213	210	99 %
2020/21	171	169	99 %

- 99% (169 out of 171) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10-working day target. This continues to remain a high performing area. The only complaints to miss the target was 8210227 and 8214901 and there were valid reasons why they could not be completed with 10 working days.

3. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The Corporate Director for Finance will investigate and aim to respond within 10 working days.

Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Period	Housing Benefit	Council Tax	Finance	Total
2016/17	11	28	1	40
2017/18	7	16	0	23
2018/19	7	20	0	27
2019/20	10	10	1	21

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

2020/21	6	9	0	15
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- The number of Stage 2 complaints has fallen from 21 in 2019/20 to 15 for 2020/21. Business Grants complaints accounted for 47% (7) of all Stage 2 complaints.

Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 2

	Working days
2016/17	5.35
2017/18	4.30
2018/19	5.88
2019/20	7.38
2020/21	6.87

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 6.87 working days against the target of 10-working days.

Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

Period	Total number of complaints	Number responded to within 10 working days	% responded to within 10 working days
2016/17	40	38	95 %
2017/18	23	23	100 %
2018/19	27	25	93 %
2019/20	21	19	90 %
2020/21	15	15	100 %

- All Stage 2 complaints were responded to within 10-working days.

4. STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS

At Stage 3, the Chief Executive commissions an investigation by an officer in Democratic Services and the aim is to respond within 15 working days.

Total number of Stage 3 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	3
2017/18	0
2018/19	0
2019/20	0
2020/21	0

- No Stage 3 complaints were investigated during 2020/21 nor for the previous 3 years. This is because the Council's Corporate complaints procedure was reviewed in 2017/18 and it allowed officers to escalate a complaint direct from Stages 1 or 2 to the Ombudsman in

cases where the decision is unlikely to be overturned. Officers have applied the revised policy since 2017/18

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATION (LGO)

Where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint, the complainant is entitled to refer their complaint to the LGO and at any stage of the complaint process.

Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total number
2016/17	8
2017/18	10
2018/19	12
2019/20	8
2020/21	6

- Fewer complaints were investigated by the Ombudsman during 2020/21 as they decided to pause their investigations for 4 months to allow Local Authorities to focus on our COVID-19 response. This explains why fewer LGO investigations were concluded during this period.

The findings and decision of the complaints investigated by the LGO is set out below.

Complaint details	LGO decision
Complaint ref: 8214901 Mr X complained about how the Council his mother's care costs.	Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council was at fault for not specifying how much Mrs Y's care charges would be. The Council apologised and agreed to review its procedure.
Complaint ref: 8395749 Mr X complained that the Council unreasonably decided to backdate charges when it became aware that Mrs X received extra benefit in 2020.	Not Upheld The Ombudsman found no evidence of fault in the Council's financial assessment of Mrs X's contribution towards care charges.
Complaint ref: 8321615 Mr X complained about matters related to his application for a COVID-19-related business grant. He states this caused stress and his business had to spend time pursuing the matter.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as the main issue had been resolved as the Council has now paid the grant. Investigation would be disproportionate in the circumstances and would be unlikely to find fault significantly affecting what happened
Complaint ref: 8352977 Mr X complained about the Council's decision not to award his firm a business rates 'holiday' for 2020/21.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is not enough evidence of fault by the Council.
Complaint ref: 8660153 Mr X complained about the Council's handling of his request for small	Did not investigate The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint as the Magistrates' Court is better

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

business rates relief for premises he bought in 2020. He does not think he owes the business rates the Council is demanding from him.	placed to decide whether Mr X is liable for business rates for the premises.
Complaint ref: 8632395 Mr X complained that the Council failed to pay his business any grants during COVID-19 or to award Small Business Rates Relief.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is not enough evidence of fault by the Council.

6. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

In 11 complaints we apologised for incorrect information provided, delay in sending a Council Tax bill, delay in refunding payments and delay in responding to a communication.

7. COMPLIMENTS

Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2016/17	0
2017/18	4
2018/19	2
2019/20	10
2020/21	17

- 70% (7) more compliments were recorded for 2020/21 when compared with the 2019/20 figure of 10.

Here's what some people said about the Administration and Finance Service:

"My thanks go out to everyone working in this awfully difficult situation and a special thank you to Miss X who dealt with my call with sensitivity and understanding."

"I am sorry that I am late in responding for your kind action taken in favour my mother, Mrs.Z. I understand from my sister, Y that she had sent a thank you letter to all of you. Both my mother and I would like to express our deep gratitude to all of you (although belatedly) for your kind and compassionate service. Our admiration goes to all the carers and to all of you for also doing a superb job in times of this Coronavirus pandemic."

"Thank you so much for your email and approving the grant, it really is a huge relief, much appreciated."

"Many thanks for your prompt assistance. This is a massive help towards us keeping a business that has been established for over 50 years in the borough of Hillingdon."

"Thank you very much for your time, understanding and patience X. That made me cry, I thought I was going to lose my shop. I can only imagine the level of fraudulent claims you guys are dealing with. I can keep my studio and only source of income now. Should you ever fancy a tattoo, there is one on the house for you."

Classification: Public

Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee – 7 September 2021

“Just wanted to say a HUGE thank you to the Team at Hillingdon, for the speed and efficiency in getting the COVID grants out to small businesses. It’s made such a massive difference to my business, as we wouldn’t be here otherwise. It must have been difficult as it’s such a new way of working for everyone - but you had to implement a system to get it out there. You have done a great job.”

“My thanks go out to everyone working in this awfully difficult situation and a special thank you to Miss X who dealt with my call with sensitivity and understanding.”

APPENDIX H – Other Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Investigations concluded during 2020/21

I have set out below the 18 remaining Resident Services investigations concluded by the Ombudsman – please Appendix C for the other 5.

Service area	Complaint details	Ombudsman decision
Anti-social behaviour	Complaint ref: 8244787 Mr X complained that the Council failed to properly investigate or take appropriate action in relation to smoke which enters his property from the restaurant below.	Upheld The Ombudsman found that the Council failed to fully investigate Mr X’s reports of nuisance and this amounts to fault.
Anti-social behaviour	Complaint ref: 8306111 Mr X complained that the Council should not have issued an Abatement Notice because he did not have a mattress and toilet in his garden. He wants the council to cancel the Notice and apologise for not checking before issuing the Notice.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as there is insufficient evidence to warrant an investigation.
Anti-social behaviour	Complaint ref: 8425692 Mr X complained that in September 2020 the Council issued a fixed penalty notice requiring him to pay £400 for the inappropriate disposal of household waste. Mr X says the Council should not have issued the notice, that he took reasonable steps to have the waste collected from the assigned position, and that the Council has not acted properly in how it has dealt with the matter.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate Mr X’s complaint as it is for a court to decide any dispute about the issuing of the fixed penalty notice.
Anti-social behaviour	Complaint ref: 8479612 Mr X complained about the Council’s response to numerous complaints he has made about various matters, including repairs to	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate the complaint because the limited injustice caused to Mr X as a result of the claimed fault is insufficient to warrant an investigation

	the footpath, hedges overhanging the pavement and officers turning a blind eye to fly-tipping.	
Green Spaces	Complaint ref: 8511054 Ms X complained that the Council buried her mother in the wrong plot	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate because the Council offered her a fair remedy.
Green Spaces	Complaint ref: 8247536 Mr X complained that the trees to the rear of his property are blocking light into his garden	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint as he was unlikely to find fault in the way the Council considered the complaint
Green Spaces	Complaint ref: 8154318 Mr X disagrees with the Council's decision to refuse his application for a dropped kerb.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council.
Green Spaces	Complaint ref: 8303224 Mr X says there is dangerous play equipment in a park and he disagrees with the Council's assessment that it is safe.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council
Highways	Complaint ref: 8122840 Mr X complained that the Council provided misleading signs and markings where the public highway meets a private road. He says it extended double yellow lines on the private land and when he entered the site, he received a £100 private penalty. He wants the Council to end the parking restrictions where it meets private land.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault which would warrant an investigation.
Highways	Complaint ref: 8426933 Ms X complained that the authorised contractors working on HS2 to carry out works outside her home at weekends as well as during the week for over two months affording residents no respite from the noise and disruption.	Not upheld The Ombudsman found that there are no grounds to criticise the Council's decision to complete the works at weekends and during the night.
Highways	Complaint ref: 8446134 Mr X complained that the Council refused his application for a dropped kerb and kept the application fee.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint about an unsuccessful application for a dropped kerb as there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council
Highways	Complaint ref: 8606048	Did not investigate

	Mr X complained that the Council would not replace the quadrant kerbs with tapered kerbs on his crossover. He wants the Council to replace the kerb stones.	The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council.
Parking	Complaint ref: 8543971 Mr X complained that the Council has failed to take appropriate action to deal with parking issues on his road. He says he and his wife are mentally exhausted and have spent money to deal with the matter themselves.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate Mr X's complaint that the Council refusal to implement a proposal for parking restrictions on his road as it is submitted too late.
Planning	Complaint ref: 8473814 Mr X says the Council has failed to act on his reports that his neighbour has built a roof extension without planning permission. Mr X is concerned the structure is unsafe and says it has damaged his property.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because he is unlikely to find fault in the way the Council decided not to take planning enforcement action or decided that it cannot act under the Building Act 1984.
Planning	Complaint ref: 8463354 Mr X complained that the Council has failed to take action against his neighbour for breaching planning control. He says his neighbour's development is unsightly and out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because it is unlikely they would find fault by the Council.
Transport and Projects	Complaint ref: 8405870 Mr X complained that in 2015 the Council created a 'bus cage' – yellow markings indicating a bus stop – outside a property he owns. He says this caused access problems and has decreased the amount of rent he can charge for his property.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because the complaint is made too late.
Transport and Projects	Complaint ref: 8440394 Ms X complains that the Council has failed to remove fallen trees, leaves and debris from a stretch of road by her home and it has closed dialogue with her about the implementation of safety measures.	Not upheld The Ombudsman did not uphold this complaint because there is insufficient evidence of fault in the way the Council reached its decision on how it would respond to Ms X's concerns to justify starting an investigation.
Waste	Complaint ref: 8205608 Mr X complained that the lack of food waste recycling provision by the Council. He feels the lack of provision constitutes discrimination and a lack of equal opportunities towards residents in flats, since separate food waste collection is offered by the Council for kerbside residents.	Did not investigate The Ombudsman did not investigate this complaint because there is currently no legal or policy requirement for it do so and for that reason the Ombudsman cannot find fault with the position of the Council, or the steps it is taking.

