

ANNUAL COMPLAINT & SERVICE MONITORING REPORT FOR 01 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023

Committee name	Finance and Corporate 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 2022 and 31 March 2023 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 2022/23
- Appendix C: Complaint and Compliment report for Housing Services for 2022/23
- Appendix D: Complaint and Compliment report for Adult Social Care for 2022/23
- Appendix E: Complaint and Compliment report for Children and Young People Services for 2022/23
- Appendix F: Complaint and Compliment report for Education Services for 2022/23
- Appendix G: Complaint and compliment report for Finance Directorate for 2022/23
- Appendix H: Complaint and Compliments for Place Directorate for 2022/2

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 recommend 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

Legal Services confirm that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

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 own staff or those acting on its behalf, 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 2022/23

1. Total number of complaints/compliments recorded for 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Directorate	Informal complaints	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 3 complaints	Ombudsman Investigations	Compliments
Finance Directorate	558	191	25	0	7	2
Adult Social Care	72	37	n/a	n/a	6	23
Children and Young People Services	62	76	0	0	2	64
Education Services	74	7	2	0	0	2
Place Directorate	4,410	505	94	0	31	131
Total for 2022/23	5,176	816	121	0	46	245
Total for 2021/22	4,473	802	102	0	75	349

- 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 16% of informal complaints (5,176) escalated to a Stage 1 complaint (816) and only 15% of Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2 (102).
- The number of compliments (245) for 2022/23 is 30% (104) less than the figure for 2021/22. A message will be put in the Council's All Staff email reminding officers of the process for logging compliments.

2. Total number of complaints/compliments recorded for 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2023

Year	Informal complaints	Stage 1 complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 3 complaints	Ombudsman Investigations	Compliments
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
2021/22	4,473	802	102	0	75	349
2022/23	5,176	816	121	0	46	245

- The number of informal complaints recorded for 2022/23 of 5,176 is 703 (16%) more than the figure of 2021/22 of 4,473. The main reason for the increase in informal complaints is in the waste area where changes were made to the route used by crews to collect waste and this has resulted in more complaints, with collections missed, as crews got used to the area they now collected from.
- 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.

- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service, completed 29 (39%) fewer investigations when comparing the 2022/23 figure of 46 with that of 2021/22 of 75. What is important to note is that only 6% of complaints escalate from Stage 1 (802) to an investigation by the Ombudsman (46).
- 3. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Service Ombudsman investigations completed for 2022/23**

The table below provides the outcome of all investigations concluded by the Ombudsman.

Service Area	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Did not investigate	Total
Finance	0	0	0	7	7
Adult Social Care	3	0	1	2	6
Children and Young People's	1	0	0	1	2
Education	0	0	0	0	0
Housing	1	1	0	13	15
Waste	0	0	0	0	0
ASBET	0	0	0	3	3
Planning and Building Control	0	0	1	4	5
Green Spaces	0	0	0	4	4
Transport and Projects	0	0	0	0	0
Parking	0	0	0	3	3
Highways	0	0	0	1	1
Total	5	1	2	38	46

- Of the 46 investigations concluded by the Ombudsmen for 2022/23, 83% (38) were investigations where the Ombudsman determined that based on the information presented to them, there was insufficient evidence of fault for them to open a full investigation into the complaint.
- 4. Members Enquiries (MEs)**

Number of MEs recorded

Period	Place Directorate	Adult Services	Children Services	Finance Directorate	Total
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
2021/22	9,432	112	58	167	9,769
2022/23	7,417	150	56	182	7,805

- The handling of Members Enquiries was reviewed and a new system using the GOSS platform was introduced on 1 January 2023. A key part of that change was to re define what an ME is i.e. *'a clear question has been asked that now requires investigation by Council Officers, or the supply of information from a Council department'*. We have also introduced the term *"service request"* which we have defined as *'a request for a one-off action to be taken, that requires action by an Officer and not investigative activities or supply of information'*. The effect of this is that the volume of MEs has reduced and will continue to do so over the years to come.

Service areas that have the highest number of MEs recorded

Service Area	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Waste	5,566	5,950	4,964	3,934	2,003
Housing	1,239	1,288	1,269	976	1,021
Anti-Social Behaviour	1,649	1,408	1,176	1,258	761
Green Spaces	1,050	966	863	1,043	705
Planning	1,235	978	827	1,255	361

- Waste, Housing, Anti-Social Behaviour, Green Spaces and Planning Services (4,851) combined accounted for 62% of all enquiries submitted by Elected Members for 2022/23.
- Waste Service accounted for 26% of all MEs with Housing, Anti-Social Behaviour, Green Spaces and Planning accounting for 13%, 10%, 9% and 5% respectively, of all enquiries submitted by Elected Members for 2022/23.
- Highways accounted for 744 MEs for this period and this was 10% of MEs recorded.

Service Requests recorded from 1 December 2022 to 31 March 2023

Period	December 2022	January 2023	February 2023	March 23	Total
Number	99	311	307	306	1,023

- Members began to use the Members Portal in a staggered way from December 2022 and I have provided you with the number of Service Requests submitted for this period.

Complaints about a Councillor

Complaints about the conduct of a councillor have a separate complaint process that people are required to follow and these complaints are dealt with by the Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Lloyd White. More information on this process can be found on the following web pages: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/complaint-councillor

APPENDIX C

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR HOUSING SERVICES FOR 2022/23

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal complaints

- 34% (350) more informal complaints recorded when comparing the 2021/22 figure of 1,039 with the 2022/23 figure of 1,389.

Stage 1 complaints

- 259 Stage 1 complaints recorded for 2022/23. Of the 259 Stage 1 complaints, 24 were upheld, 68 partially upheld, 154 not upheld and 13 withdrawn or cancelled. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 8 working days, with 83% (215 out of 259) of Stage 1 complaints responded to within the 10-working day target.

Stage 2 complaints

- 31% (13) more Stage 2 complaints recorded when comparing the figure for 2020/21 of 42 with the 2022/23 figure of 55. Of the 55 Stage 2 complaints, 2 were upheld, 15 partially upheld and 38 not upheld. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 9.33 working days.

Stage 3 complaints

- There were no Stage 3 complaints investigated during 2022/23.

Investigation by the Local Government or Housing Ombudsman

- 15 complaints were concluded by the Ombudsman for this period with 1 upheld, 1 partially upheld and they did not investigate the remaining 13.

Compliments

- 81 compliments were recorded for 2022/23 which is fewer than the figure for 2021/22 of 167.

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 or Director.
- Stage 2 – response from a Director or Corporate Director of Place

- Stage 3 – response from the Chief Executive of 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.

a. 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.

Table 1 - 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	Total
2018/19	94	90	114	123	421
2019/20	124	87	142	104	457
2020/21	84	86	155	243	568
2021/22	298	304	279	158	1,039
2022/23	283	338	416	352	1,389

- 34% (350) more informal complaints recorded for 2022/23 of 1,389 when compared with the 20222 figure of 1,039. The increase in informal complaints was in the Repairs and Maintenance area, where residents were dissatisfied with the time taken to undertake repairs.

b. **STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS**

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

Table 2 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Period	Total
2018/19	157
2019/20	177
2020/21	231
2021/22	227
2022/23	259

- The number of Stage 1 complaints rose by 14 % from 227 for 2021/22 to 259 for 2022/23.

Table 3 - Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2018/19	22	44	84	7	157
2019/20	18	40	113	6	177
2020/21	39	52	127	13	231
2021/22	17	40	160	10	227
2022/23	24	68	154	13	259

- Of the 259 Stage 1 complaints, 9% (24) were upheld, 26% (68) partially upheld, 60% (154) not upheld and 5% (13) either cancelled or withdrawn.

Table 4 - Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 1 (working days)

	Time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint
2018/19	8.50
2019/20	8.09
2020/21	9.89
2021/22	8.75
2022/23	8.00

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 8 working days against the target of 10 working days and an improvement from the 2021/22 figure of 8.75 working days.

Table 5 - 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
2018/19	157	129	82 %
2019/20	177	152	86 %
2020/21	231	195	84 %
2021/22	227	183	81 %
2022/23	259	215	83 %

- 83% (215 out of 259) Stage 1 complaints were responded to within 10 working days. A slight improvement from 2021/22.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The Corporate Director for Place will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 10 working days.

Table 6 - Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Period	Total
2018/19	24
2019/20	31
2020/21	22

2021/22	42
2022/23	55

- 31% (13) more Stage 2 complaints were recorded when compared with the 2021/22 figure of 42 with the 2022/23 figure of 55. This was to be expected because in 2021/22 we made the decision to offer more complainants Stage 2 rather than a direct escalation to the Ombudsman and this is the reason for the rise in Stage 2 complaints for 2022/23.

Table 7 – Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Total
2018/19	2	1	21	24
2019/20	4	3	24	31
2020/21	6	4	12	22
2021/22	0	12	30	42
2022/23	2	15	38	55

- 4% (2) of Stage 2 complaints were upheld, 27% (15) partially upheld and 69% (38) not upheld.

Table 8 - Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 2 (working days)

	Time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint
2018/19	8.83
2019/20	10.50
2020/21	10.85
2021/22	9.11
2022/23	9.33

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 9.33 working days against the target of 10 working days.

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 investigations from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2023.

e. 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.

Table 9 - Total number of Ombudsman investigations

Period	Total number
2018/19	16

2019/20	15
2020/21	5
2021/22	19
2022/23	15

- 21% (4) fewer investigations concluded by the Ombudsman when comparing the 2021/22 figure of 19 with the 2022/23 figure of 15.
- Please see appendix B point 3 for more details on the outcomes of all complaints concluded by the Ombudsman for 2022/23.

f. COMPLIMENTS

Table 10 – number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	67
2019/20	92
2020/21	132
2021/22	167
2022/23	81

- 51% (86) fewer compliments received when comparing the 2021/22 figure of 167 with the 2022/23 figure of 81. I plan to put a message in the Council's All Staff email reminding officers of the need to let me know that they have received a compliment.
- Repairs/Maintenance team accounted for 80% (65 out of 81) compliments received for Housing Services.

APPENDIX D

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE FOR 2022/23

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal Complaints

- 10% (8) fewer informal complaints (service requests) recorded for 2022/23 of 72 when compared with the 2021/22 figure of 80.

Stage 1 complaints

- 37 Stage 1 complaints recorded for 2022/23 of which 7 were upheld, 10 partially upheld, 18 not upheld and 2 either withdrawn or cancelled. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 13.72 working days which is within our published target of 20 working days but outside our internal target of 10 working days.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

- The Ombudsman concluded 6 investigations during 2022/23 of which 3 were upheld, 1 not upheld and they did not investigate the other 2 complaints.

Compliments

- 23 compliments were recorded for 2022/23, which is less than the figure for 2021/22 of 33. We will remind officers/managers of the process to submit compliments.

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'.

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.

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.

Table 11 - 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	Total
2018/19	17	23	20	16	76
2019/20	18	10	14	11	53
2020/21	15	10	17	10	52
2021/22	21	15	26	18	80
2022/23	14	11	21	26	72

- 10% (8) fewer informal complaints recorded when comparing the 2021/22 figure of 80 with the 2022/23 figure of 72.

b. 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.

Table 12 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	40
2019/20	45
2020/21	48
2021/22	50
2022/23	37

- 26% (13) fewer Stage 1 complaints when comparing the 2021/22 figure of 50 with the 2022/23 figure of 37.

Table 13 - Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn/cancelled	Total
2018/19	5	7	25	3	50
2019/20	10	9	25	1	45
2020/21	9	11	26	2	48
2021/22	8	9	29	4	50
2022/23	7	10	18	2	37

- For 2022/23, upheld, partially upheld and not upheld complaints were 19%, 27% and 49% respectively of all complaints recorded.

Table 14 - Time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint (working days)

	Average time taken to respond to a complaint
2018/19	9.50
2019/20	11.49
2020/21	11.22
2021/22	13.04
2022/23	13.72

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint for 2022/23 is 13.72 working days, which is outside our internal target of 10 working days but within our published target of 20 working days.

c. 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.

Table 15 - Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total Number
2018/19	9
2019/20	8
2020/21	4
2021/22	7
2022/23	6

- The number of investigations undertaken by the Ombudsman remains broadly similar when comparing figures from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2023.
- Please see appendix B point 3 for more details on the outcomes of all complaints concluded by the Ombudsman for 2022/23.

d. COMPLIMENTS

Table 16 - Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	68
2019/20	65
2020/21	92
2021/22	33
2022/23	23

- 30% (10) fewer compliments recorded when comparing the figure for 2021/22 of 33 with that of 2022/23 of 23.

APPENDIX E

COMPLAINT REPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICE'S FOR 2022/23

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal Complaints

- 42% (44) fewer informal complaints (service requests) were recorded for 2022/23, when compared with the figure for 2021/22 of 106.

Stage 1 complaints

- 76 Stage 1 complaints were recorded for 2022/23, which is 10% (7) more than the 2021/22 figure of 69. Of the 76 Stage 1 complaints, 12 were upheld, 21 partially upheld, 41 not upheld and 2 either withdrawn or cancelled. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 11.32 working days and 68% (52 out of 76) of 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)

- No investigations were undertaken by the Ombudsman during this period.

Compliments

- 64 compliments were recorded for the period 2022/23, which is less than the figure of 77 for 2021/22.

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 statutory 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 an Assistant Director or Head of Service.
- 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.

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.

Table 17 - 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	Total
2018/19	14	23	33	21	91
2019/20	21	16	25	26	88
2020/21	21	18	21	26	86
2021/22	23	27	27	29	106
2022/23	17	22	12	11	62

- 42% (44) fewer informal complaints (service requests) recorded for 2022/23 (62) when compared with the 2021/22 figure of 106.

b. STAGE 1 – LOCAL RESOLUTION

An Assistant Director or Head of Service will investigate and aim to respond to complaints within 10 working days.

Table 18 - Total number of complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	60
2019/20	71
2020/21	87
2021/22	69
2022/23	76

- 10% (7) more Stage 1 complaints recorded when compared with the 2021/22 figure of 69 with the 2022/23 figure of 76.

Table 19 - Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2018/19	9	15	32	4	60
2019/20	9	21	37	4	71
2020/21	9	25	47	6	87

2021/22	7	15	45	2	69
2022/23	12	21	41	2	76

- For 2022/23, 16% of complaints were upheld, 28% partially upheld, 54% not upheld and 2% withdrawn or cancelled.

Table 20 - Time taken to respond to a complaint (working days)

	Working days
2018/19	10.82
2019/20	9.75
2020/21	9.82
2021/22	9.97
2022/23	11.32

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 11.32 working days for 2022/23, which is outside the 10-working day target set.

Table 21 - 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
2018/19	60	47	78 %
2019/20	71	57	80 %
2020/21	87	72	83 %
2021/22	69	56	81 %
2022/23	76	52	68 %

- Only 68% (52 out of 76) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10-working day target. This is an area that is of concern and I will work with colleagues to improve in this area.

c. 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.

Table 22 – Total number of Stage 2 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	2
2019/20	0
2020/21	0
2021/22	0
2022/23	0

- No Stage 2 children's investigations were commissioned for 2022/23.

d. 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 commissioned between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2023.

e. 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.

Table 23 – Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total number
2018/19	5
2019/20	1
2020/21	1
2021/22	3
2022/23	2

- The number of Ombudsman investigations concluded remains broadly the same year on year.
- Please see appendix B point 3 for more details on the outcomes of all complaints concluded by the Ombudsman for 2022/23.

f. COMPLIMENTS

Table 24 – number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	12
2019/20	124
2020/21	132
2021/22	77
2022/23	64

- Compliments have fallen from 77 in 2021/22 to 64 for 2022/23.

APPENDIX F

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR EDUCATION SERVICES FOR 2022/23

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal Complaints

- 74 informal complaints (service requests) were recorded for 2022/23 which is 270% (54) more than the period 2021/22 of 20. This is mainly as a result of enquiries/requests for investigations submitted by Ofsted to the Council.

Formal Complaints

- 7 Stage 1 complaints were recorded for 2022/23 of which 1 was upheld and 6 not upheld. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 9.29 working days, which is within the 10-working day target set.
- 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

- 2 compliments were recorded for 2022/23.

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 Executive Director for Education and SEND
- 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.

Table 25 - 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	Total
2018/19	8	2	6	4	20
2019/20	4	2	0	2	8
2020/21	1	2	11	8	22
2021/22	1	2	14	3	20
2022/23	14	20	21	19	74

- 270% (54) more informal complaints recorded when comparing the figure of 20 for 2021/22 with the 2022/23 figure of 74. 55% (41) were enquiries submitted by Ofsted in relation to issues raised by parents with them in relation to the operational management of the school. The complaints/enquiries needed to be addressed through the school's own complaint procedure.

b. STAGE 1 – LOCAL RESOLUTION

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

Table 26 - Total number of complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	32
2019/20	16
2020/21	3
2021/22	6
2022/23	7

- The total number of Stage 1 complaints remain broadly the same when comparing figures for 2021/22 of 6 with the 2022/23 figure of 7.

Table 27- Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2018/19	1	1	29	1	32
2019/20	2	6	8	0	16
2020/21	1	0	2	0	3
2021/22	0	2	4	0	6
2022/23	1	0	6	0	7

- 14% (1) of complaints were upheld and 86% (6) not upheld.

Table 28 - Time taken to respond to a complaint (working days)

	Working days
2018/19	10.84
2019/20	8.94
2020/21	7.67
2021/22	6.33
2022/23	9.29

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 9.29 working days.

Table 29 - 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
2018/19	32	25	78 %
2019/20	13	12	92 %
2020/21	3	3	100 %
2021/22	6	6	100 %
2022/23	7	6	86 %

- 86% of complaints were responded to within the 10 working days target.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The Executive Director for Education and SEND will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 10 working days.

Table 30 – Total number of Stage 2 complaints recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	0
2019/20	1
2020/21	0
2021/22	0
2022/23	2

- There were 2 investigations undertaken during 2022/23 under the Council's corporate complaints procedure.

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 2017 to 31 March 2022.

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.

Table 31 - Total number of LGO investigation

Period	Total number
2018/19	4
2019/20	0
2020/21	0
2021/22	0
2022/23	0

- There were no investigations concluded by the Ombudsman during this period.
- Please see appendix B point 3 for more details on the outcomes of all complaints concluded by the Ombudsman for 2022/23.

f. COMPLIMENTS

Table 32 - Compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	1
2019/20	1

2020/21	4
2021/22	2
2022/23	2

- The number of compliments remains consistent year on year.

APPENDIX G

COMPLAINT AND COMPLIMENT REPORT FOR FINANCE DIRECTORATE FOR 2022/23

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal complaints

- 558 informal complaints (service requests) recorded for 2022/23, which is a significant rise from the 2021/22 figure of 350.

Stage 1 complaints

- 191 Stage 1 complaints recorded for 2022/23 of which 12 were upheld, 12 partially upheld, 162 not upheld and 5 either withdrawn or cancelled. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 6.01 working days with 96% of all Stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 working days.

Stage 2 complaints

- 25 Stage 2 complaints recorded for 2022/23. The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 2.40 working days with all 96% (24 out of 25) Stage 2 complaints responded to within 10 working days.

Stage 3 complaints

- There were no Stage 3 investigations for 2022/23.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) referrals

- 7 complaints were concluded by the Ombudsman during this period and in all 7 the Ombudsman decided not to investigate.

Compliments

- 2 compliments were recorded in 2022/23.

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 a Director or 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.

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.

Table 33 - 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	Total
2018/19	25	30	33	20	108
2019/20	25	22	16	19	82
2020/21	18	9	23	71	121
2021/22	91	86	78	95	350
2022/23	143	149	151	115	558

- 59% (204) more informal complaints (service requests) recorded for 2021/22 then in 2022/23.

b. STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

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

Table 34 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints

Period	Housing Benefit	Council Tax	Finance	Total
2018/19	72	157	6	235
2019/20	82	125	6	213
2020/21	45	121	5	171
2021/22	28	133	6	167
2022/23	28	156	7	191

- 14% (24) more Stage 1 complaints registered when comparing the 2020/21 figure of 167 with the 2022/23 figure of 191. Council Tax complaints accounts for 82% of all Finance Directorate complaints.

Table 35 - Outcome of complaints

Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
2018/19	19	24	191	1	235
2019/20	38	23	151	1	213

2020/21	15	16	140	0	171
2021/22	19	27	114	7	167
2022/23	12	12	162	5	191

- For 2022/23, 12% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld, 12% partially upheld and 85% not upheld.

Table 36 - Time taken to respond to complaint at Stage 1 (working days)

	Working days
2018/19	6.39
2019/20	5.79
2020/21	5.78
2021/22	5.55
2022/23	6.01

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint is 6.01 working days against a target of 10 working days.

Table 37 - 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
2018/19	235	231	98 %
2019/20	213	210	99 %
2020/21	171	169	99 %
2021/22	167	161	96 %
2022/23	191	184	96 %

- 96% (184 out of 191) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 10-working day target.

c. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

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

Table 38 - Total number of Stage 2 complaints

Period	Housing Benefit	Council Tax	Finance	Total
2018/19	7	20	0	27
2019/20	10	10	1	21
2020/21	6	9	0	15
2021/22	6	13	0	19
2022/23	6	19	0	25

- The number of Stage 2 complaints has risen by 24% 6) from 19 for 2021/22 to 25 for 2022/23.

Table 39 - Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 2

	Working days
2018/19	5.88
2019/20	7.38
2020/21	6.87
2021/22	4.79
2022/23	2.40

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 2 complaint is 2.40 working days against the target of 10 working days.

Table 40 - 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
2018/19	27	25	93 %
2019/20	21	19	90 %
2020/21	15	15	100 %
2021/22	19	19	100 %
2022/23	25	24	96 %

- 96% (24 out of 25) of Stage 2 complaints were responded to within the 10-working day target.

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 investigations undertaken for 2021/22

e. 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.

Table 41 - Total number of LGO investigations

Period	Total number
2018/19	12
2019/20	8
2020/21	6
2021/22	10
2022/23	7

- The Ombudsman concluded 7 complaints during this period.

- Please see appendix B point 3 for more details on the outcomes of all complaints concluded by the Ombudsman for 2022/23.

f. COMPLIMENTS

Table 42 - Number of compliments recorded

Period	Total number
2018/19	2
2019/20	10
2020/21	17
2021/22	6
2022/23	2

- The number of compliments has fallen from 6 to 2, which is disappointing.

APPENDIX H – COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS FOR PLACE DIRECTORATE FOR 2022/23

(This directorate also includes Housing Services whose figures are shown in Appendix C)

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Informal complaints

- 3,021 informal complaints (service requests) were recorded for Waste Services for 2022/23. Waste Services accounted for 1,297, 605 for the Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team (ASBET), 312 for Parking Services, 292 for Green Spaces, 248 for Highways, 167 for planning and 100 for Transport and Projects.

Stage 1 complaints

- 57 Stage 1 complaints were recorded for Planning and Building Control, followed by 43 for Waste, 41 for Parking Services, 35 for ASBET and Green Spaces, 25 for Highways and 10 for Transport and Projects.

Stage 2 complaints

- 9 Stage 2 complaints were recorded for ASBET, followed by 8 for Green Spaces, 7 for Planning and Building Control, 5 each for Highways and Waste 3 for Parking Services and 2 for Transport and Projects.

Stage 3 complaints

- There were no Stage 3 investigations undertaken for 2022/23.

Investigation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

- The Ombudsman concluded 5 Planning and Building Control, 4 Green Spaces, 3 each for Parking and ASBET and 1 for Highways.

Compliments

- 24 compliments were recorded for Waste, 10 for Planning and Building Control, 5 for Parking, and 1 for Transport and Projects.

THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

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 Director or the Corporate Director for Place
- Stage 3 – response from the Chief Executive of the Council
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

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.

Table 43 - 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
Highways	63	74	30	81	248
Parking	62	93	70	87	312
Transport and Projects	30	35	15	20	100
Waste	228	299	360	410	1,297
Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team	167	203	113	122	605
Green Spaces	82	101	51	58	292
Planning	38	60	33	36	167
Total	670	865	672	814	3,021

- Waste accounts for 43% (1,297) of all service requests for this directorate followed by ASBET 20% (605), Parking 10% (312), Green Spaces 10% (292), Highways 8% (248), Planning 6% (167) and Transport and Projects 3% (100).

2. **STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS**

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

Table 44 - Total number of Stage 1 complaints

2022/23	Total number
Highways	25
Parking	41
Transport and Projects	10
Waste	43
Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team	35

Green Spaces	35
Planning and Building Control	57
Total	246

- Planning accounts for 23% (57) of formal complaints followed by ASBET 25% (71), Waste 17% (43), Parking 17 (41), Green Spaces and ASBET with 14% each (35), Highways 10% (25) and Transport and Projects 4% (10).

Table 45 - Outcome of complaints

2022/23	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
Highways	0	1	24	0	25
Parking	3	4	34	0	41
Transport and Projects	0	0	10	0	10
Waste	21	5	15	2	43
Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team	4	4	27	0	35
Green Spaces	2	4	29	0	35
Planning and Building Control	3	10	43	1	57
Total	33	28	182	3	246

- Waste services has the highest number of upheld complaints - 49% (21).
- Planning has the highest number of not upheld complaints – 75% (43).
- Of all services, 13% (33) of Stage 1 complaints were upheld, 11% (28) partially upheld, 74% (182) not upheld.

Table 46 - Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 1 (working days)

2022/23	Highways	Parking	Transport and Projects	Waste	ASBET	Green Spaces	Planning
Average time taken to respond	7.60	9.10	8.30	5.60	13.09	13.88	12.23
Target	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Variance	- 2.40	- 0.90	-1.70	- 4.40	+ 3.09	+ 3.88	+ 2.23

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint for these services is set out above.

Table 47 - Number and % of complaints responded to within 10 working days

2022/23	Total number of complaints	Number of complaints responded to within 10 working days	% responded to within 10 working days
Highways	25	22	88 %
Parking	41	31	76 %
Transport	10	9	90 %

and Projects			
Waste	43	41	95 %
ASBET	35	22	63 %
Green Spaces	35	24	69 %
Planning and Building Control	57	40	70 %

- The table above provides the performance for each service area. A few of the area's response times is lower than expected and I am working with colleagues to improve response times in these areas.

3. STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

A Director or the Corporate Director for Place will aim to respond to Stage 2 complaints within 10 working days.

Table 48 - Total number of Stage 2 complaints

2022/23	Total number
Highways	5
Parking	3
Transport and Projects	2
Waste	5
ASBET	9
Green Spaces	8
Planning and Building Control	7
Total	39

- ASBET, Green Spaces and Planning accounted for 23% (9), 21% (8) and 18% (7), respectively, of all Stage 2 complaints for these services.

Table 49 – Outcome of complaints

2022/23	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Withdrawn	Total
Highways	0	0	5	0	5
Parking	0	1	2	0	3
Transport and Projects	0	0	2	0	2
Waste	0	2	3	0	5
ASBET	0	2	7	0	9
Green Spaces	0	0	8	0	8
Planning and Building Control	0	1	6	0	7
Total	0	6	33	0	39

- 15% (6) of Stage 2 complaints were upheld and 85% (33) not upheld.

Table 50 - Time taken to respond to a complaint at Stage 2 (working days)

2022/23	Highways	Parking	Transport and Projects	Waste	ASBET	Green Spaces	Planning
Average time taken to respond	6.60	14.67	8.50	10.60	9.00	3.50	14.14
Target	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Variance	- 3.40	+ 4.67	- 1.50	+ 0.60	- 1.00	- 6.50	+ 4.14

- The average time taken to respond to a Stage 1 complaint for these services is set out above.

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 2018 to 31 March 2023.

5. INVESTIGATIONS BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN

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.

Table 51 - Total number of Ombudsman investigations

2022/23	Total Number
Highways	1
Parking	3
Transport and Projects	0
Waste	0
ASBET	3
Green Spaces	4
Planning and Building Control	5
Total	16

- The figures above provide details of all investigations concluded by the Ombudsman during this period.
- Please see appendix B point 3 for more details on the outcomes of all complaints concluded by the Ombudsman for 2022/23.

7. COMPLIMENTS

Number of compliments recorded

Table 52 – number of compliments recorded

Period – 2022/23	Total number
Highways	0
Parking	5
Transport and Projects	1
Waste	24
ASBET	3
Green Spaces	7
Planning and Building Control	10
Total	50

- Waste services accounted for 48% (24) of all compliments received.