

NOTICE  
OF  
MEETING

**INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY PANEL**

will meet on

**TUESDAY, 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2021**

**At 7.00 pm**

by

**COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MAIDENHEAD AND ON [RBWM YOUTUBE](#)**

TO: MEMBERS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

COUNCILLORS SAYONARA LUXTON (CHAIRMAN), JON DAVEY,  
CHRISTINE BATESON (VICE-CHAIRMAN), PHIL HASELER AND GURCH SINGH

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS JOHN BALDWIN, NEIL KNOWLES, JOHN BOWDEN,  
SHAMSUL SHELM AND GURPREET BHANGRA

Karen Shepherd – Head of Governance - Issued: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) or contact the Panel Administrator **Oran Norris-Browne** Oran.Norris-Browne@RBWM.gov.uk

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## **AGENDA**

### **PART I**

| <b><u>ITEM</u></b> | <b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>  | <b><u>PAGE<br/>NO</u></b> |
|--------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 1.                 | <b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b><br><br>To receive any apologies for absence.   | -                         |
| 2.                 | <b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b><br><br>To receive any declarations of interest.   | 3 - 4                     |
| 3.                 | <b><u>MINUTES</u></b><br><br>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2021.  | 5 - 10                    |
| 4.                 | <b><u>Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT</u></b><br><br>To consider the report.   | 11 - 38                   |
| 5.                 | <b><u>ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT 2020/21</u></b><br><br>To consider the report.  | 39 - 74                   |
| 6.                 | <b><u>WORK PROGRAMME</u></b><br><br>To consider the Panel's Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year.<br><br>To include consideration of items scheduled on the <a href="#">Cabinet Forward Plan</a> . | 75 - 78                   |

## MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

### Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

### Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
  - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
  - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

### Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

### Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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# Agenda Item 3

## INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillors Sayonara Luxton (Chairman), Christine Bateson (Vice-Chairman), Phil Haseler, Neil Knowles and Gurch Singh

Also in attendance: Councillor John Baldwin, Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra, Councillor Gerry Clark, Councillor Samantha Rayner, Councillor Donna Stimson and Councillor Ewan Larcombe

Officers: Fatima Rehman, Chris Joyce, Andrew Durrant, Shilpa Manek and Tim Golabek

### APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Bateson nominated Councillor Luxton to be Chairman, which was seconded by Councillor Haseler. A named vote was taken.

| <b>Appointment of Councillor Luxton as Chairman (Motion)</b> |         |
|--|---------|
| Councillor Sayonara Luxton                                   | For     |
| Councillor Christine Bateson                                 | For     |
| Councillor Phil Haseler                                      | For     |
| Councillor Neil Knowles                                      | Against |
| Councillor Gurch Singh                                       | Against |
| <b>Carried</b>   |         |

**RESOLVED;** That Councillor Luxton be Chairman of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2021/22.

Councillor Haseler nominated Councillor Bateson to be Vice Chairman, which was seconded by Councillor Luxton. A named vote was taken.

| <b>Appointment of Councillor Bateson as Vice Chairman (Motion)</b> |         |
|--|---------|
| Councillor Sayonara Luxton   | For     |
| Councillor Christine Bateson                                       | For     |
| Councillor Phil Haseler  | For     |
| Councillor Neil Knowles  | Against |
| Councillor Gurch Singh   | Against |
| <b>Carried</b>   |         |

**RESOLVED;** That Councillor Bateson be Vice Chairman of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2021/22.

### WELCOME FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed the Panel.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Davey and Councillor Knowles substituted.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

## MINUTES

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2021 be approved.**

The Chairman informed Members of progress on actions arising from the previous minutes:

| <b>Actions from the previous meeting</b>   | <b>Update</b>   |
|--|---|
| Councillor Davey to be informed of the estimated number of evictions likely to be made, and the Crucial Conversations training for Councillors to be explored offline. | <b>ACTION: Tracy Hendren to provide an update offline.</b><br><br>Regarding Crucial Conversations, Emma Duncan, Monitoring Officer and Deputy Director of Law and Strategy, said offline that this would be picked up as part of the wider training that would be provided to Members in the new Code of Conduct. This included interactions between Members and staff and was likely to feature in the AGS action plan for next year, to form part of the work around governance resilience. |
| Town Managers to provide future reports of activities in outlier shopping centres and high streets, such as Ascot and Eton.  | David Scott said offline that the request was raised with the Town Centre Manager, however there was currently no provision for a footfall counter in the out of town centre areas, and no obvious place to locate ones that would act with a reliable basis as there is in Windsor and Maidenhead main shopping high street areas, where pedestrians are channelled into a narrow count zone. Car parking information was also not collected in parishes, as they were free of charge.       |
| Chris Joyce to advise Councillor Baldwin of the timeliness of Project Centre offline.  | See below.  |
| Councillor Baldwin to be included in the Wraysbury Drain meeting.  | Councillor Baldwin was invited and did not attend the call.   |

Councillor Baldwin said phase two of the active transport plans were emailed by Chris Joyce in August 2020, but the visual plan was published by the Project Centre in January 2021. A decision was to be made shortly after the publication, but it was difficult for councillors to visualise what was being proposed and the impact on the local communities before then. Chris Joyce said the delay between the bid and the schemes coming forward was because the Department for Transport (DfT) did not decide on funding until November 2020. Once funds were announced, initial concepts were developed into more detailed schemes.

Councillor Baldwin said evaluating whether outsourcing to Project Centre was a good contract had not been progressed. Chris Joyce said the borough had a contract with Project Centre until March 2022 and would then come for renewal, where the options for the contract would be reviewed.

## Q4 PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT

Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place Services, said the report had been aligned to the Interim Council Strategy. Ascot footfall was included in the report following the Vice Chairman's comment in the last meeting. Whilst it was a challenging year, the council ensured vulnerable residents were supported and their needs were met where possible. Some service programs' delivery models were adapted to ensure there was continued service provision

where possible during the pandemic. Partners and the community played an essential role throughout the pandemic.

At close of 2020/21, six out of eight performance metrics met or exceeded targets, with one metric within the accepted tolerance threshold in relation to the percentage of other planning applications. In response to the pandemic, homeless households in temporary accommodation was untargeted in 2020/21 due to central government's Everyone In campaign. Highway contractor's responsiveness to urgent safety hazards in relation to the percentage of two-hour orders had improved from last year and was 99.8% in 2020/21. Footfall trends fluctuated in response to the lockdown restrictions, but the trends were broadly followed with lower volumes. The strong Shop Local sentiment and the RBWM Recovery Strategy continued to promote commercial centres of the borough as a safe place to visit and focused on retaining local spend.

Councillor Baldwin said he was concerned that the two mandatory consultees did not respond to the report, and Andrew Durrant said Adrien Waite was unwell and therefore unable to respond, and he was unable to respond on Tracy Hendren's behalf. The report had contributions from all teams. Councillor Knowles said a note from the mandatory consultees or those covering would be useful for completeness.

Councillor Haseler said it was positive that many homelessness incidents had been prevented given the current climate. Councillor Knowles asked if the 98% target throughout the year for emergency two-hour orders responded on time was an auto response to a report made through an emergency problem. Andrew Durrant said once the report was made, the response rate was triggered. The Vice Chairman asked how residents in the south of the borough and rural areas would access lateral flow tests if they did not have child support for instance. Andrew Durrant said Braywick and Windsor Leisure Centres were the initial lateral flow tests sites, but there were other methods such as home kits. This would be picked up offline.

**ACTION: David Scott to update how residents in the south of the borough and rural areas would have access to lateral flow tests offline.**

The Panel noted the item.

## BUS ROUTES UPDATE

Chris Joyce, Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth, said bus services outside of London had been deregulated since the 1980s, which withdrew local authorities' powers to control and direct where bus services were placed. This allowed private companies to operate on a commercial basis, setting routes, timetables, and fares. Where a commercial service was not viable, the council had powers to secure provision of any further public transport services it considered necessary through contracts and supported services.

There were national discussions about the drop in demand of bus services during the pandemic, which was supported through grants by central government. The national bus strategy, Bus Back Better, set out a new vision to increase bus service usage up to pre-pandemic levels and delivered new models of delivery. The strategy asked local authorities to either commit to enhanced partnerships, which was a new form of partnership with private organisations, or a franchising model by June 2021. The strategy also sought to implement bus service improvement plans by October 2021, and the government offered £100,000 in grants to support local authorities to undertake the work.

Councillor Haseler asked if the bus services decided what was commercially viable. Chris Joyce said a bus operator could put forward any route on a commercial basis, and if it did not recoup its costs, it would withdraw the service. The borough would be able to operate supported services; however, it could not compete with commercial services such as providing

subsidised routes. The borough could identify areas where there were no bus routes and put out a tender and bus companies would set out how much money they would need to operate.

Councillor Haseler asked how ward councillors should address representations made on changing and adding bus routes and Chris Joyce said his team should be contacted. As part of the bus service improvement plan, views on improving existing and additional routes would be explored and assessed. The purpose of enhanced partnerships was for a greater focus on service quality rather than a commercial approach.

The Vice Chairman asked if there would be funds for electric buses (e-buses) and Chris Joyce said e-buses were more expensive than diesel buses and central government had not yet announced the use of funding. The Vice Chairman said with cars transitioning to electric, would buses also be changing, and Chris Joyce said there was a transition to hybrid and e-buses. High demand routes were able to justify high investments, and the government had funding opportunities to upgrade fleets from diesel to hybrid and electric models. Councillor Knowles said having hybrid or e-buses could be part of the contracting basis for companies to bid and suggested options such as making town centres a low emission zone. Councillor Stimson, Cabinet Member - Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside, said the borough would do everything in its capacity to decarbonise and electrify services where possible and seek funding availability.

The Vice Chairman asked how bus routes through multiple boroughs were managed and Chris Joyce said if it was a commercial service, bus operators decided the bus stops, fares, and routes, though they would often liaise with the borough. If it was supported services, neighbouring authorities could work in partnership to deliver the bus routes.

Councillor Knowles said there were bespoke taxi services for less mobile residents in Old Windsor to travel to GP practices because there were no direct transport links. The engagement with ward councillors in the bus service improvement plan would allow local intelligence such as this to be considered and could be an opportunity to have a demand and needs based analysis.

Councillor Singh said it was surprising to see the number of supported services in Maidenhead, which was a considerable cost to the borough. Councillor Singh asked if there were options to incentivise bus contractors to increase demand of buses, and Chris Joyce said the current model made it difficult to work in partnership with bus operators. Enhanced partnerships would allow the borough to work closely with bus operators and encourage usage and service quality rather than having a commercial focus. This was because once the contract was secured, it was in the operators' best interest to increase demand.

Councillor Singh said the borough had one of the lowest bus usage and highest car park usage in the country. With the regeneration of Maidenhead town centre, it was likely that the town centre car park would not be accessible for at least five years, and therefore supported services could be used to drive footfall and traffic into the town centre. Chris Joyce said the local borough was polycentric, with three town centres rather than one, therefore it made it more difficult for traditional bus services to increase demand. However, bus services and demand could be improved, as it was a cyclical process where the better quality the services were, the greater the demand would be, and therefore greater revenue would be generated. Councillor Singh suggested inviting Courtney Buses to the meeting.

Councillor Hilton asked what an enhanced partnership was, as from July 2021, only local transport authorities who are engaged in advanced partnerships would continue to receive any new sources of bus funding from central government. Tim Golabek, Service Lead – Transport and Infrastructure, said franchising was only available to certain authorities with combined mayoral powers and therefore this was not an option for the borough, unless the borough applied for additional powers from the DfT. Through franchising, an authority would own the bus services and would be franchised to a bus operator. Enhanced partnerships were a negotiation between the bus operator and authority, where they were contractually obliged to



benefit to bus operators and the borough. For instance, the authority may need to commit to improving aspects of the borough such as bus priority measures in certain locations, and bus operators may provide more buses or reduced fares.

Councillor Hilton asked if enhanced partnerships gave scope to working with all bus operators across the borough to change the way bus operators collectively worked. Chris Joyce said this was intended, and the bus strategy was looking into better integration between services, such as fares and ticketing. The national bus strategy advocated lower and simpler fares, simpler structures, and better integration.

### WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Haseler asked for clarification on the '21 mph speed limit in borough' suggested item, and Chris Joyce said this was not legal, as traffic signs could only be in tens. Councillors Singh and Knowles requested the Council Transport Strategy report to be considered by the Panel, and Councillor Singh suggested an update on traffic light works on Oldfield Road/A4 roundabout.

The meeting, which began at 6.15 pm, finished at 7.37 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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|   |  |
|---|--|
| Report Title:                               | 2021/22 Q1 Data & Performance Report                         |
| Contains Confidential or Exempt Information | No - Part I  |
| Cabinet Member:                             |  |
| Meeting and Date:                           | Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 21 September 21. |
| Responsible Officer(s):                     | Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place                  |
| Wards affected:                             | All  |



## REPORT SUMMARY

*The council is currently working to an Interim Strategy, adopted by Cabinet on 30 July 2020 in recognition of the significantly changed operating context brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*A new Corporate Plan to succeed the Interim Strategy is presently being developed. It has been agreed that performance reports continue to provide insight into the Interim Strategy's delivery (Appendix A) until such time as the new Corporate Plan and associated performance management framework is in place. Performance of measures previously reported to the Panel under the Council Plan 2017-2021 are included on the basis that these measures provide insights into current service delivery.*

## 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:

- i) **Notes the 2021/22 Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel Q1 Data & Performance Report in Appendix A.**
- ii) **Requests relevant Cabinet Members, Directors and Heads of Service to maintain focus on improving performance.**

## 2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### Options

**Table 1: Options arising from this report**

| Option  | Comments  |
|---|---|
| Accept the recommendations in this report.<br><b>This is the recommended option</b> | This will allow continuing insight into the delivery of the council's agreed priorities in order to aid decision-making and maintain focus on continuous improvement. |
| Not accept the recommendations in the report.                                       | The failure to use relevant performance information to understand delivery against the council's agreed priorities impedes the  |

| Option | Comments  |
|--------|---|
|        | council's ability to make informed decisions and seek continuous improvement. |

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2017-21 remained current up to 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption in recognition of the significantly changed operating context brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Interim Strategy sets out the priorities to which the council is responding, acknowledging that any instances where previous objectives can still be delivered without affecting delivery of interim objectives is a good thing and will be supported. The council is currently developing a new Corporate Plan and related performance management framework to succeed the Interim Strategy. It has been agreed that performance reporting against the Interim Strategy continues until such time as the new Corporate Plan and related performance management framework is approved.
- 2.2 Appendix A provides insights into the Interim Council Strategy's priorities and how they are progressing. It details the council's ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic and also key updates in relation to major workstreams such as the Transformation Strategy, Environment and Climate Strategy, alongside corporate developments relating to the People Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 2.3 As the nation is on the road to recovery from the pandemic, the impact of COVID-19 on the community and the economy can still be felt in a number of areas of the council's operations and this has been reflected in the council's key performance indicators. For example, there has been a slow decrease in the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation and footfall volumes to town centres are increasing albeit in lesser numbers compared to pre-Covid times. Encouragingly, the performance in relation to the volume of households where prevention duty has been ended successfully has been very successful where housing options officers are continually preventing and relieving homelessness through a range of measures. More positively, planning service have been able to process an increased volume of planning applications compared to same period last year as staff have well adapted to remote working conditions.
- 2.4 Table 2 summarises the position of all reported key performance indicators as at the close of Q1. Appendix A sets out performance trends and related commentary for each indicator. All indicators continue to be monitored and reported to relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panels on a quarterly basis as part of an ongoing performance dialogue.

**Table 2: Summary KPI Q1 21-22 position**

|  | <b>Green<br/>(Succeeding<br/>or achieved)</b> | <b>Amber<br/>(Near<br/>target)</b> | <b>Red<br/>(Needs<br/>improvement)</b> | <b>Non-<br/>Targeted<br/>measure</b> |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| No. homeless households in temporary accommodation               |   |                                    |  | X                                    |
| No. households where prevention duty has been ended successfully | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Monthly Footfall: Maidenhead Town Centre                         | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Monthly Footfall: Windsor Town Centre                            | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage emergency 2 hr orders responded on time (Highways)    | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage of Major Planning Applications processed in time      | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage of Minor Planning Applications processed in time      | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage of "Other" Planning Applications processed in time    |   | X                                  |  |                                      |
| <b>TOTAL (8)</b>   | <b>6</b>                                      | <b>1</b>                           | <b>0</b>                               | <b>1</b>                             |

### 3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The key implications of this report are set out in table 3.

**Table 3: Key Implications**

| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Unmet</b>                | <b>Met</b>                | <b>Exceeded</b> | <b>Significantly Exceeded</b> | <b>Date of delivery</b> |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| The council is on target to deliver its strategic priorities | < 100% priorities on target | 100% priorities on target |                 |                               | 30 June 2021            |

### 4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The risks and their control are set out in table 4.

**Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation**

| <b>Risk</b>   | <b>Level of uncontrolled risk</b> | <b>Controls</b>   | <b>Level of controlled risk</b> |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Poor performance management practices resulting in lack of progress towards the council's agreed strategic priorities and objectives. | HIGH                              | Robust performance management within services to embed a performance management culture and effective and timely reporting. | LOW                             |

## 7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 There are no Equality Impact Assessments or Data Protection Impact Assessments required for this report. There are no climate change or data protection impacts as a result of this report.

## 8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Performance against the strategic priorities is regularly reported to the council's four Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Comments from the Panels are reported to Cabinet Members, Directors and Heads of Service as part of an ongoing performance dialogue.

## 9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 The full implementation stages are set out in table 5.

**Table 5: Implementation timetable**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Details</b>   |
|-------------|--|
| Ongoing     | Comments from the Panel will be reviewed by Cabinet Members, Directors and Heads of Service. |

## 10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Appendix A: Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel Q1 Data & Performance Report.

## 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by one background document:

- Interim Council Strategy 2020/21:  
<https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=7763&Ver=4>

## 12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

| Name of consultee | Post held  | Date sent | Date returned |
|-------------------|--|-----------|---------------|
| Andrew Durrant    | Executive Director of Place                                | 18.08.21  | 10.09.21      |
| Hilary Hall       | Executive Director of Adults, Health and Housing           | 18.08.21  | 19.08.21      |
| Chris Joyce       | Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth | 18.08.21  |               |
| Tracy Hendren     | Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service           | 18.08.21  | 09.09.21      |
| Adrien Waite      | Head of Planning   | 18.08.21  |               |
| Simon Dale        | Interim Head of Highways                                   | 18.08.21  | 18.08.21      |
| Alysse Strachan   | Head of Neighbourhoods                                     | 18.08.21  | 10.09.21      |

## REPORT HISTORY

| Decision type:   | Urgency item? | To follow item? |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Non-key decision | No            | No              |

|  |
|--|
| Report Author: Rachel Kinniburgh, Strategy and Performance Team Leader, 01628 796370 |
|--|

## Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel

### Q1 2021-22 Data and Performance Report

April 2021 – June 2021

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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2017-21 remained current up to 30 July 2020 when Cabinet approved an Interim Council Strategy 2020/21 for immediate adoption on the basis that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly altered the context in which the council is currently operating.
- 1.2 The Interim Council Strategy clarifies the revised priorities to which the council is responding, acknowledging that any instances where previous objectives can still be delivered without affecting delivery of interim objectives is a good thing and will be supported. The priorities are:
  - **Covid-19 objectives:** focusing on the immediate response, long-term recovery, and new service requirements.
  - **Interim Focus Objectives 2020-21:** focusing on revised service operating plans, development of the Transformation Strategy, Climate Strategy, Governance, and People Plan.
  - **Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy:** focusing on the impact of Covid-19, economic downturn, and government policy.
- 1.3 This report is structured to provide insight into the delivery of the Interim Strategy's priorities (section 2). Performance of measures previously reported to the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel are also included on the basis that these measures provide some insights into service delivery. These measures are grouped in this report by the lead service.
- 1.4 The council is currently developing a new Corporate Plan and related performance management framework to succeed the Interim Strategy. It has been agreed that performance reporting against the Interim Strategy continues in this format until such time as the new Corporate Plan and related performance management framework is adopted.

## 2. Interim Council Strategy: Delivery of priorities

2.1 This section provides a brief overview of key activities and milestones achieved by the council to date in 2021/22.

| PRIORITY:                   | COVID-19 OBJECTIVES  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Item                        | Achievements and key milestones  |
| <b>Response (immediate)</b> | <p><b>Community response and Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) Residents:</b> Official shielding was lifted for more than 8,000 residents – some 6% of the population – in April 2021. This brought to an end an innovative community partnership protecting our CEV residents from Covid-19. From the outset of the first lockdown in March 2020 a coordinated team of staff, drawn from all services in the council, maintained regular contact with residents who were shielding and took any appropriate action to ensure that these individuals' needs were met.</p> <p>The <a href="#">public-facing online directory of Covid-19 Support Groups</a> developed to direct residents to community-based support options for particular needs, continues to be developed and is a key tool for residents and services going forward. The database (Lyon), which again was developed during the pandemic, continues to be developed to manage interactions with anyone seeking help and support in the community. Lyon also enables registration of individuals wishing to volunteer their time to the community effort, and with the development of an app will support appropriate “matching” of volunteers with those needing help and support.</p> <p>With the easing of restrictions from 19 July 2021, CEV residents still need to be extremely cautious and are being encouraged to adhere to the Government guidance. The council, through the network of community groups, will continue to provide appropriate help and support.</p> |
| <b>Response (immediate)</b> | <p><b>Outbreak Control Plan and Local Outbreak Engagement Board:</b> The <a href="#">Outbreak Control Plan Summary</a> was published on the RBWM website on 30 June 2020 in line with national instruction from the Department of Health and Social Care. The plan was produced in collaboration with the NHS and Public Health to guide our response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, to put in place measures to identify and contain outbreaks and to protect the public's health. The Outbreak Engagement Board is a subgroup of the Health and Wellbeing Board, established to provide public-facing engagement and communication in relation to Covid-19. The Board meets every fortnight (every other meeting is in public). The Local Outbreak Control Plan continues to be updated to reflect changes in national guidance.</p>  |
| <b>Response (immediate)</b> | <p><b>Community Influencers and Community Information Champions:</b> In October 2020 a new “community influencers” group was established with representatives from across various RBWM departments, including Achieving for Children, Libraries and Environmental Health. The group's aim is to communicate key Covid-19 messages to the wider community, whilst targeting messaging to specific demographic groups based on analysis of key datasets. The group launched its “Community Information Champion” scheme in November 2020, through which members of the community can volunteer themselves to receive regular information from the council regarding Covid-19 and then share this information with their family, friends, and other contacts. This approach ensures greater</p>   |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
|                             | <p>transmission of key Covid-19 messages across the community where other council communication methods may not have reached. Champions can also feedback to the council any questions or requests for clarity from the community. This two-way relationship helps the council to refine its Covid-19 messages and to also dispel any myths that may be circulating regarding the virus. To date, a network of 150 Champions has been established.</p> <p>A new Covid Engagement Officer was recruited, jointly funded by Public Health and the council to support a wide range of COVID related engagement activities. There has also been the opportunity to vaccinate residents within their localities with vaccinations being offered on the mobile testing unit.</p> <p>Engagement with communities to mitigate the rise in infections and cases remains a key priority for the council and its partners.</p>   |
| <b>Recovery (long-term)</b> | <p>The <a href="#">RBWM Recovery Strategy</a> sets out the council's approach to supporting residents and businesses, empowering communities to thrive and building lasting partnerships with businesses.</p> <p>During Q1 2021-22 activity was focussed on supporting businesses and residents through the government roadmap to reopening. A Royal Borough re-opening and recovery strategy was developed to support the safe reopening of the high street and recovery of the high street economy in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead as restrictions start to lift. The aim was to provide clear, consistent messages that considered the needs of the destination, its local communities, its businesses and its visitors to stimulate the local economy and a return to days out and staycations in a safe and measured way. Innovative "Tech For Good" tools were used in the form of "Hello Lamp Post", which lets people talk to street objects and share their thoughts on the high streets and what they want to see on their town centres. All of these comments are then considered as part of the local recovery plan. This initiative has been rolled out in Windsor with over 3,000 responses to date and there are plans to introduce it across the borough. The campaign "Don't Let Your Guard Down" was launched to provide reassurance to visitors returning to visit our local towns.</p> <p>A recovery dashboard has been developed which will be used to steer future workstreams from the recovery and renewal strategy adopted in 2020. Q2 activity will focus on business engagement and support following stage 4 of the roadmap to reopening and developing jobs and skills support for our residents.</p> |
| <b>Recovery (long-term)</b> | <p><b>Local Contact Tracing Service:</b> The council set up a local contact tracing service which started operating in November 2020 to complement the national NHS Test and Trace service. Operating 7 days a week, the service reaches out to residents who have tested positive for Covid-19 but who have not been successfully contacted by the national NHS Test and Trace system. The service introduced a text messaging service on 9 June 2021. Over 3,000 messages were sent, consisting of:</p> <p>Week 1: Acknowledging the use of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Test Community Collect service and reminding users to log their result at <a href="https://www.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/report-result">https://www.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/report-result</a> within 24</p>   |

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
|                                    | <p>hours if they had tested positive. Suggesting that LFD Home Tests can sometimes be false positives: make sure to also take a Confirmatory PCR Test within 48 hours to reconfirm that you indeed need to isolate and to get access to the Isolation Support Fund if relevant.</p> <p>Week 2: Communicating that it may still be possible for people that have received vaccinations to contract COVID-19, although a full course will reduce the chances of becoming seriously ill. Cautioning the residents that cases are rising within RBWM and reiterating the public health message to continue to follow the national guidelines of social distancing, wearing a face mask and washing your hands frequently.</p> <p>Week 3: Communicating the provision to self-book a vaccination if you are 18 years or over via the following link <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination">www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination</a> and acknowledging the walk-in centres' availability in Maidenhead and Windsor.</p> <p>RBWM switched to "Local 0" on 28 June 2021. The "Local 0" will result in RBWM residents that have tested and recorded positive being contacted by a local tracer rather than a tracer working nationally. The purpose of this shift is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce the time before the resident is contacted, and hence further potential cases identified.</li> <li>• allow for a better understanding of types of cases in the borough.</li> <li>• provide a more efficient and proactive approach to identifying trends and taking appropriate action</li> </ul> <p>The opening hours have been extended from 10am – 4pm to 9am – 5pm, 7 days a week. This reflects the national ambition to have more calls 'handled' locally to increase the overall effectiveness of contact tracing locally. This change was expected to dramatically increase the number of cases RBWM handled and a recruitment drive has been put in place in order to support the service and increased level of capacity necessary. At the close of Q1 2021/22, there were 134 cases and 243 calls made. (Full impact of the switch to 'Local 0' will be reported in Q2).</p> |
| <p><b>Recovery (long-term)</b></p> | <p><b>Lateral Flow Device Tests:</b> From 8 February 2021 rapid Covid-19 test centres opened in Braywick Leisure Centre and Windsor Leisure Centre, offering 30-minute Lateral Flow Device Tests (LFDTs) initially to people working in public-facing roles who do not have Covid-19 symptoms. The purpose of the tests was to identify asymptomatic carriers of the virus. Following an announcement by the Prime Minister in April 2021, anyone was able access the LFDT at the centres, or to pick up a home-testing kit or get a rapid Covid-19 test at Braywick or Windsor Leisure Centre as lockdown restrictions were eased. In addition to the leisure centre test sites, a mobile testing offer was started at Ascot Racecourse.</p> <p>After a review of the demand the operating hours were adjusted slightly at both leisure centres to reflect ongoing demand. This saw the Lateral Flow Test (LFT) sites reduced to 2 booths at each site and moved to revised delivery areas to allow the leisure centres to reuse the original spaces for leisure income generating activities. The revised operation,</p>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>implemented on 17 May 2021, was still able to deliver the service to meet the ongoing demands.</p> <p>The mobile testing operation unit moved from Ascot racecourse to Horton (Champney Hall) on Mondays and Wraysbury (Car Park, The Green) on Wednesdays with effect from Monday 21 June operating from 9am – 1pm. The mobile unit now offers assisted testing as well as distributing Community Collect kits. The mobile unit is now being used to support pop up vaccination offer at locations being agreed with the NHS.</p> <p>Collection of Community Collect kits is now also available from each of the reception areas of all 5 leisure centres and Windsor Information Centre. This allows greater access and availability to the kits for residents. During Q1 6,329 LFTs were completed and 5,823 Community Collect kits have been distributed.</p> |
|--|--|

| <b>PRIORITY:</b>                       | <b>INTERIM FOCUS OBJECTIVES 2020-21</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Item</b>                            | <b>Achievements and key milestones</b>   |
| <b>Revised Service Operating Plans</b> | <p>As part of the organisational recovery strategy, services have made changes to existing operating models where necessary to continue to deliver services with customers being at the centre of it. One example has been the <a href="#">Library Transformation Strategy</a>. This strategy is the outcome of the public library consultation and focuses on facilitating and coordinating, via community groups and other partners, a range of services for everyday life to meet community needs. One such example is the select and deliver service supported by volunteers to ensure all residents are able to access library services regardless of mobility, disability or distance from a static library or any other barrier.</p>  |
| <b>Transformation Strategy</b>         | <p>The <a href="#">Transformation Strategy 2020-2025</a> was unanimously approved by the Cabinet Transformation Sub-Committee on 22 September 2020. The strategy's development responds to key challenges surrounding the council's financial position and builds upon the strong foundations of innovation and community-empowerment that quickly developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Strategy aims to deliver radical changes to the way in which the council operates and identifies 6 key areas for transformation (culture, environment, prevention, digital, process redesign and finance).</p> <p>Action plans by which to deliver the Strategy are at sign-off stage with quarterly Cabinet Transformation Sub-Committee meetings being added to the corporate diary. Whilst Covid-19 has impacted progress, a number of projects have been implemented, proving that design and innovation can be done quickly and in an agile fashion. Asset Based Community Development methods have been used to deliver the Embedding Community Response project in Clewer and Dedworth. This project has created a blueprint for the council to work with communities to co-produce and co-design ways of delivering community projects.</p> <p>In April 2021, the next phase of Embedding Community Response, was launched in Maidenhead, with the creation of five subgroups working directly with communities and partners.</p> <p>The RBWM Together Engagement site has launched and this will be used as an integrated tool for community engagement and empowerment.</p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>A successful bid to the NHS Charities fund has given us the opportunity to innovate a joined-up health, social care, and community initiative. The programme refers individuals in need, for wrap-around support led by the community (Maidenhead Magpies) but backed up by the council and NHS in a unified approach. Whilst needs differ across the individuals, the support being offered is similar. Supporting the vision of enabling people to remain independent for longer, this project will also test some of the technology enabled care systems available on the market to embed digital solutions as part of the personalised care.</p>  |
| <b>Environment and Climate Strategy</b> | <p>The Council has strengthened its Sustainability and Climate Change Team, recruiting two new Sustainability Officers and moving the Countryside Manager and Landscape Officer into the team to provide additional resource.</p> <p>The Council has made good progress against the action plan. Key achievements have included securing external funding in excess of £1 million to deliver energy projects within the Borough, drafting a Biodiversity Action Plan and helping facilitate the launch of a Repair Café in Maidenhead.</p> <p>Officers have met regularly with the cross-party steering group as well as working closely with the community to deliver specific actions. Work is underway to look at future governance arrangements that will support delivery of the strategy moving forward.</p>   |
| <b>Governance</b>                       | <p>A new full-time Monitoring Officer and Deputy Director of Law and Strategy joined the Council in February 2021 to lead a new Governance, Law and Strategy Directorate and to bolster the council's governance capability.</p> <p>The focus of the Directorate since February 2021 has been to develop robust processes and systems to enhance decision-making and performance and to develop a culture to support this.</p> <p>Key areas of focus in Q1 have been as follows:</p> <p>Identifying and responding to key governance issues: The Statutory Officers Group consisting of the Head of Paid Service, S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and deputies oversee the governance framework and meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and monitor the progress and actions contained in the Annual Governance Action Plan.</p> <p>In Q1 the Council's governance environment has been tested against the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's new Risk and Resilience Framework, which builds on the CIPFA's "Delivering Good Governance". Key areas of work have been identified and incorporated into the plan for the current year Annual Governance Statement (AGS).</p> <p>The AGS itself has been revised to reflect best practice.</p> <p>Member Code of Conduct: A new Code of Conduct has been adopted and Members trained. Training has also been provided to Parish Councils. Members have also been given training on social media usage.</p> <p>Corporate Plan: The Corporate Plan is a key document in terms of delivering outcomes for our residents and communities and measuring</p> |



|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
|                    | <p>performance. The development of the plan is following an evidence-based approach and is currently at the consultation draft stage.</p> <p>Communications and engagement: Consultation best practice guidance has been developed and circulated and builds on a more rigorous process that has been introduced on Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs). A new Communication Protocol and Engagement Strategy is in the process of being developed. An e-newsletter is being produced for Parishes to foster closer working and better outcomes for residents.</p> <p>Constitution: The Constitution has been reviewed and updated during the year. There is a greater focus on using the rules of debate to support effective decision making.</p> <p>Following the CIPFA financial governance reviews, detailed action plans were developed in relation to finance and pension fund governance and these have continued to be monitored and reviewed throughout the year. All actions for the finance governance review have been started and almost all actions completed in year. For the pensions action plan, these are reported to the Pensions Fund Committee and over half have already been completed and the rest are expected to be completed to the timelines agreed.</p> |
| <b>People Plan</b> | <p>The council's appraisal process was relaunched in June 2021. Now called Connect, forms have been updated that support the scoring of objectives as well as the review of how work is undertaken in line with our values of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in strong foundations</li> <li>• Empowered to improve</li> <li>• One team and vision</li> <li>• Respect and openness.</li> </ul> <p>The new format has been used by the chief executive and directors in their recent end of year reviews and across all levels in the organisation. The next stage will be to move the process online and into the HR Information System "iTrent".</p> <p>The updated People Strategy and People Activity Plan have been shared with Corporate Leadership Team, Ambassador group and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion network. It is currently being finalised and will be shared with all employees.</p>   |

| <b>PRIORITY:</b>                              | <b>REVISED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Item</b>                                   | <b>Achievements and key milestones</b>  |
| <b>Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy</b> | <p>The Medium-Term financial strategy was refreshed and approved during 2020/21 and was approved at Full Council on 23 February 2021 as part of setting the budget for 2021/22.</p> <p>At cabinet in July, an update on the medium-term financial plan was considered that set the financial criteria necessary to commence the development of the 2022/23 budget, according to the agreed strategy.</p> <p>Any revisions to the strategy will be considered throughout the budget setting process for 2022/23.</p> |

### 3. Service Performance Summary Report (YTD)

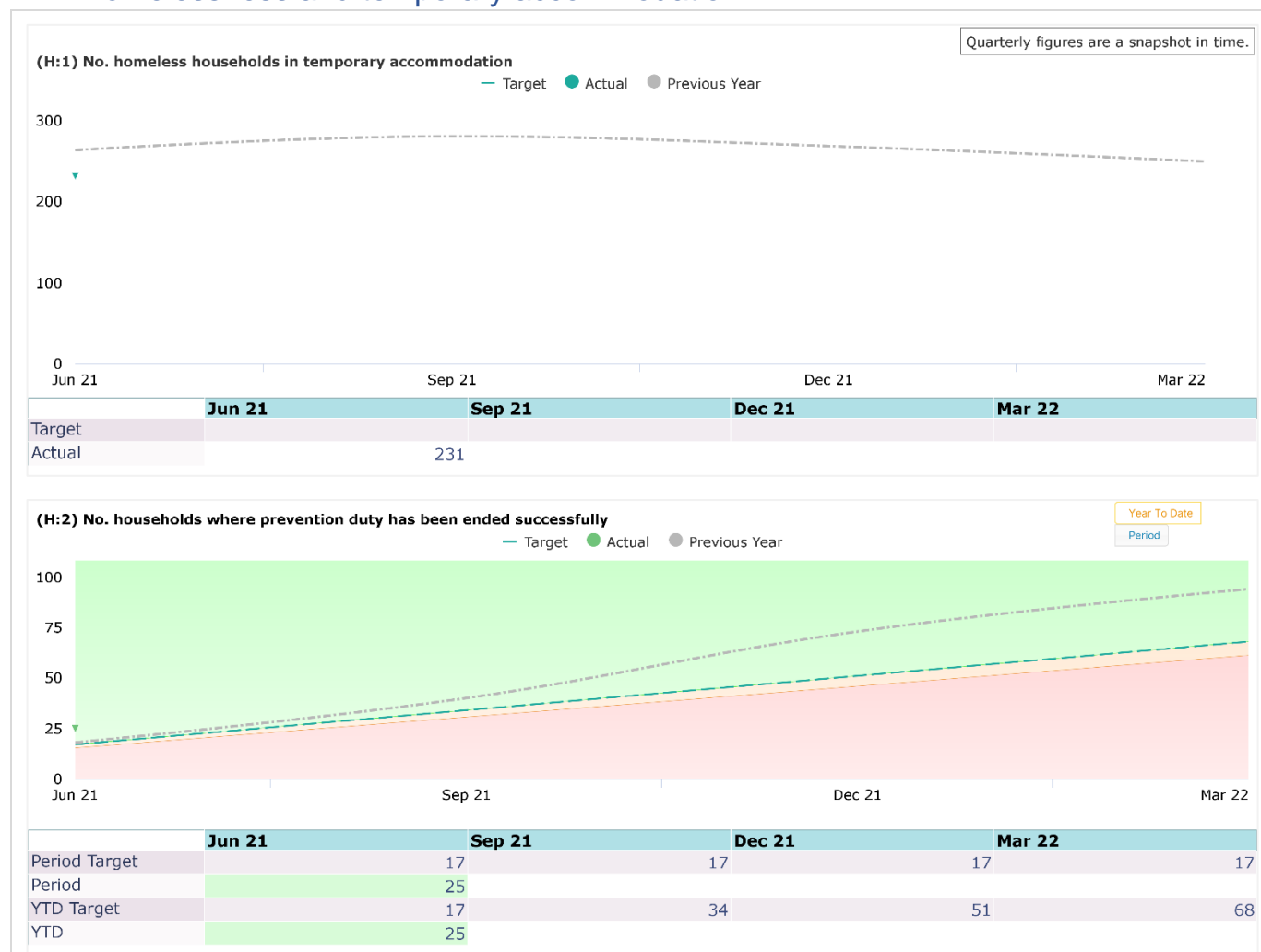
3.1 Performance of measures previously reported to the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel are set out here on the basis that these measures provide some insights into service delivery (priority 2).

|  | <b>Green<br/>(Succeeding<br/>or achieved)</b> | <b>Amber<br/>(Near<br/>target)</b> | <b>Red<br/>(Needs<br/>improvement)</b> | <b>Non-<br/>Targeted<br/>measure</b> |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| No. homeless households in temporary accommodation               |   |                                    |  | X                                    |
| No. households where prevention duty has been ended successfully | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Monthly Footfall: Maidenhead Town Centre                         | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Monthly Footfall: Windsor Town Centre                            | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage emergency 2 hr orders responded on time (Highways)    | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage of Major Planning Applications processed in time      | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage of Minor Planning Applications processed in time      | X   |                                    |  |                                      |
| Percentage of "Other" Planning Applications processed in time    |   | X                                  |  |                                      |
| <b>TOTAL (8)</b>   | <b>6</b>                                      | <b>1</b>                           | <b>0</b>                               | <b>1</b>                             |



## 4. Housing: Performance Trends

### 4.1. Homelessness and temporary accommodation



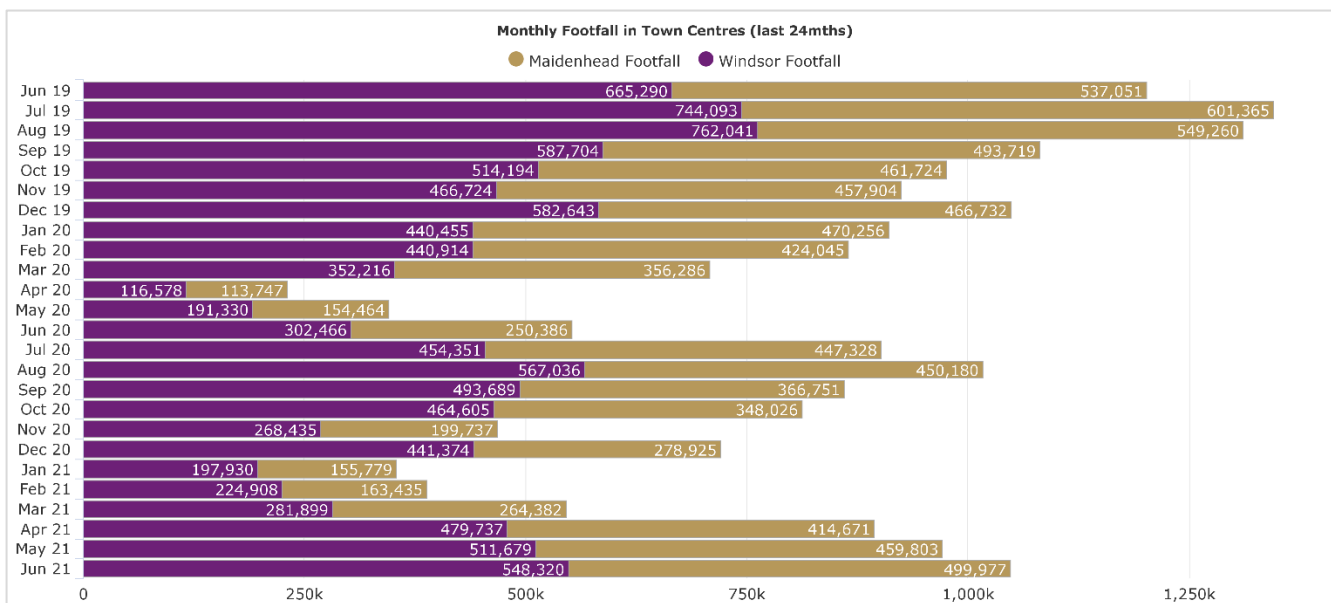
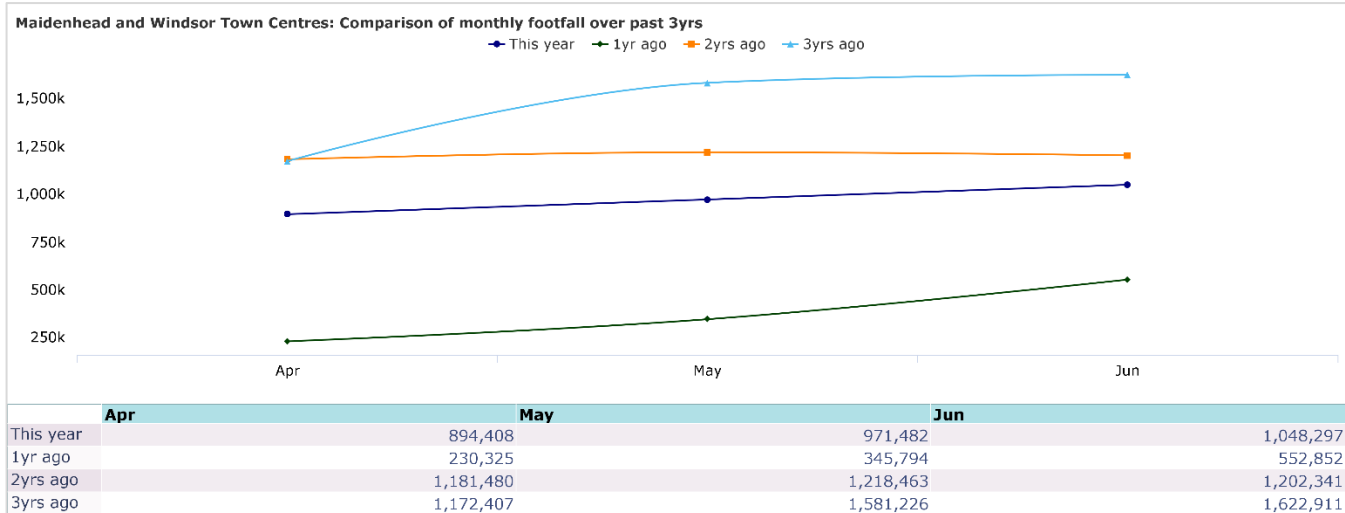
### Q1 Commentary

**((H:1) No. homeless households in temporary accommodation: (231)** Temporary accommodation is provided to households when they approach the local authority and there is reason to believe the household is in priority need or vulnerable and homeless. Numbers of households in temporary accommodation are monitored, including types of accommodation and whether in or out of Borough, with a view to reducing numbers quarter by quarter. Despite the hard work and commitment of officers to reduce homelessness, the ongoing impact of Covid-19 is reflected in the slow decrease in numbers; hence this measure continues to be untargeted.

**(H:2) No. households where prevention duty has been ended successfully (25)** The year-end target for this measure is 68 with a red flag raised if figures are at/fall below 10% of the target. This target is 8 more than 2020/21 (year-end target of 60) and the service has set itself a challenge after having exceeded targets consistently for all quarters in 2020/21. Despite the impact of Covid 19, the Housing Options officers are continually preventing and relieving homelessness through a range of measures which include enabling applicants to retain their existing accommodation or providing alternative accommodation options. This has meant that the households where homelessness has been prevented under the Council's Prevention duty has continued to be successful and is above the target (17) in Q1 by 8 households.

## 5. Infrastructure, Sustainability and Growth: Performance Trends

### 5.1. Footfall in Town Centres (combined)

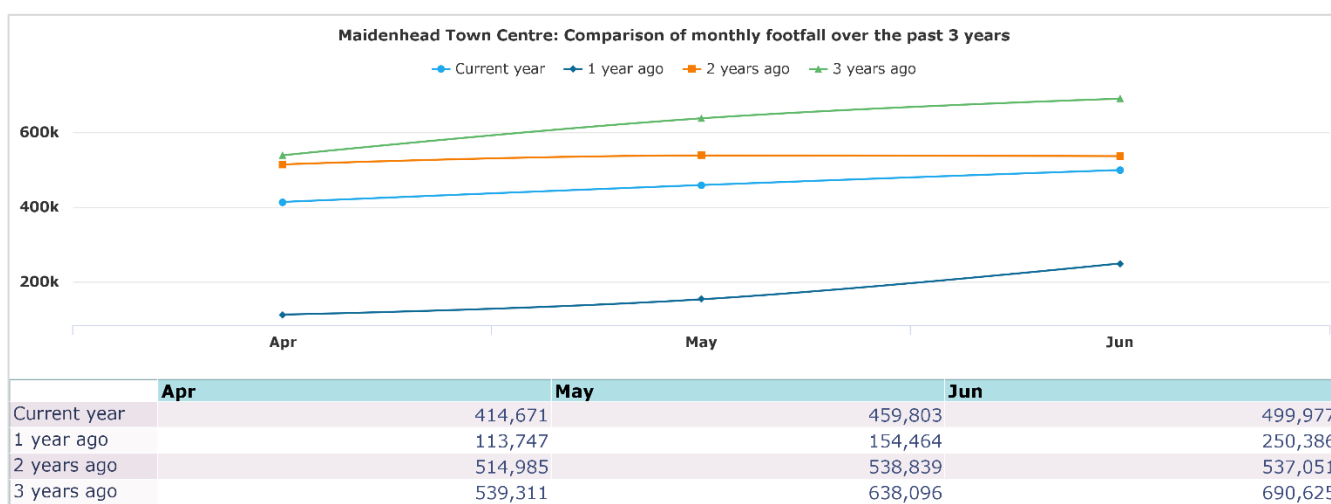
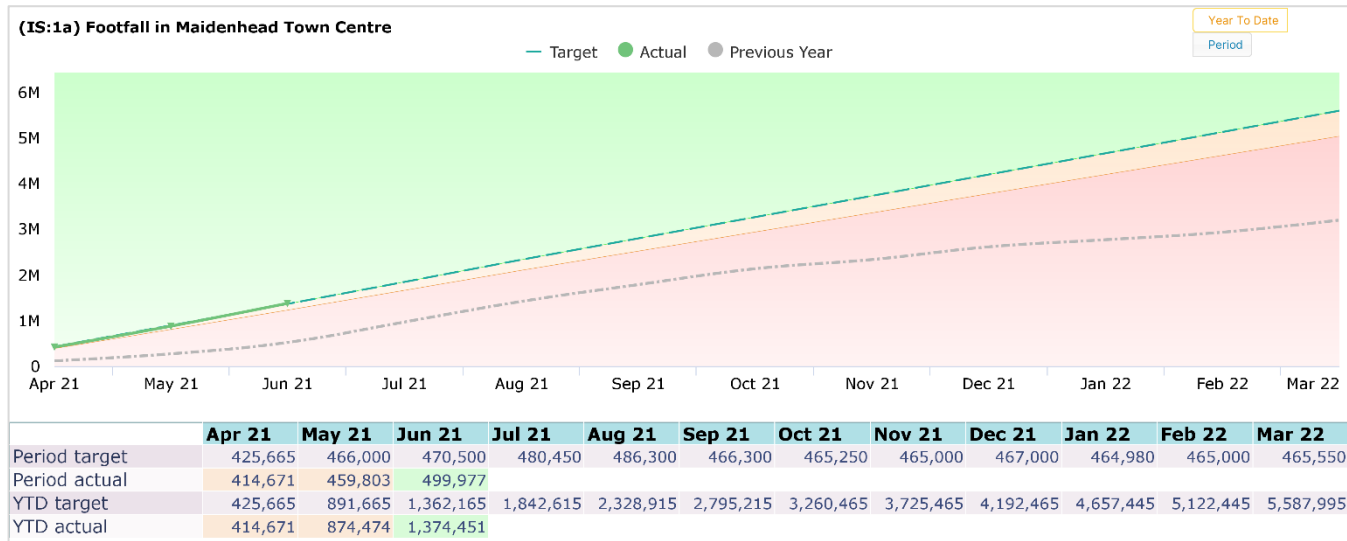


### Q1 Commentary

Phased lifting of lockdown restrictions since 8 March 2021 has seen an increase in footfall in town centres (Windsor and Maidenhead) with a combined footfall of 2,914,187.

There is a clear evidence-base emerging that, prior to Covid-19, consumer spending patterns are continuing to move away from physical goods (more inclined to online shopping) and towards leisure experiences, including eating and drinking. Consumer behaviours are likely to change further after this pandemic which will likely have an overall impact on footfall figures. In Q1, the RBWM Recovery Strategy set out actions focused on supporting businesses and residents through the government roadmap to reopening. To make better decisions based on customer-driven business intelligence the “Hello Lamp Post” innovative platform has been piloted in Windsor initially and will be rolled out throughout the borough later. The team also launched the “Don’t Let your Guard Down” campaign, an effective and engaging method to communicate the public health message to follow guidelines. The team will continue to focus on business engagement and support following step 4 of the roadmap to reopening and developing jobs and skills support for our residents.

## 5.2. Maidenhead Town Centre footfall



### Q1 Commentary

The year-end target for Maidenhead is set at 5,587,995, a 75% increase on the 2020/21 outturn of 3,193,140 and with a 10% tolerance. This target has been acknowledged as a reasonable expectation against which to track emerging trends due to the various ways in the which the pandemic has impacted day to day life and business operations, rather than a definitive statement of success/failure.

At the close of Q1 footfall for Maidenhead was 1,374,451, above the target of 1,362,165 by 12,286. Increase in footfall follows in line with the roadmap to ease lockdown restrictions. From 12 April 2021 outdoor hospitality resumed, all retail reopened as well as wider services like community centres, indoor leisure facilities and outdoor attractions. In May 2021 further restrictions were lifted, once again boosting footfall to businesses in the town centre. After 18 months of restrictions and lockdowns and the continued message of "Work from home" footfall in Maidenhead is still below pre-Covid levels however seeing positive signs of recovery with June footfall (499,977) coming very close to the pre-pandemic footfall figures 2 years ago in June 19 (537,051).

Apart from reaching out to businesses and residents via existing channels like Visit Windsor, Make Maidenhead and Enjoy Maidenhead, the Economic Growth team has delivered a reopening and recovery marketing plan promoting local businesses during the pandemic via a newly created channel, "My Royal Borough". The campaign included both online/social media

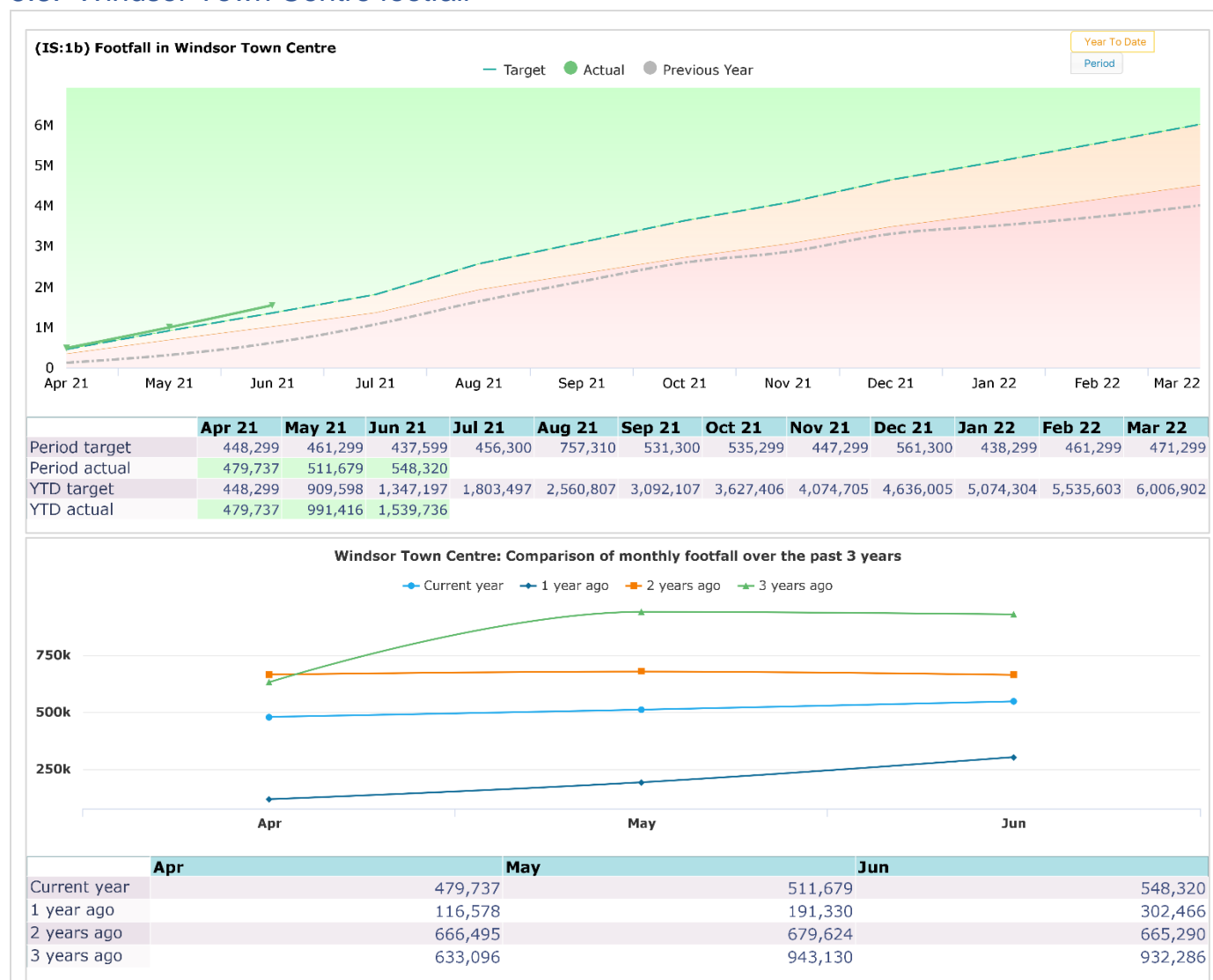
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content and physical branding throughout our town centres with the messaging “Don’t Let Your Guard Down”. The “Don’t Let Your Guard Down” campaign has been launched to give businesses the support they need ahead of reopening and to remind businesses and residents alike of the public health message. The branding has been featured in national media and has been a fun but effective way to remind residents and visitors of the public health message to continue to exercise caution and follow the guidelines.

Free “lunch and learn” sessions have been put on for any retailers who want to step up their digital marketing and social media presence. A blog has also been set up sharing the lockdown stories of businesses around the borough.

Maidenhead footfall is largely influenced by volumes of office workers, and with home-working options now a likely ongoing feature of businesses across the country this will impact the footfall figures. Encouragingly, building on the strong “shop local” sentiment that has emerged throughout the pandemic, local people are starting to support their independent businesses. The service expects to see increased growth in footfall in Quarter 2 as the final phase of reopening proceeds and restrictions are lifted.

### 5.3. Windsor Town Centre footfall



### Q1 Commentary

The year-end target for Windsor is set at 6,006,902, a 50% increase on the 2020/21 outturn of 4,004,601, and with a 25% tolerance to take account of the pandemic’s impact on the tourist

*industry and related restrictions on international travel which largely influences Windsor's footfall. This target has always been acknowledged as a reasonable expectation against which to track emerging trends rather than a definitive statement of success/failure since the impact of the pandemic can still be felt in many areas of travel and business.*

At the close of Q1 2021/22 total footfall for Windsor was 1,539,736, above target of 1,347,197 by 192,539. Whilst also subject to the challenges presented by increased home-working options and online shopping, Windsor's footfall is heavily influenced by the tourist trade. International travel (supporting approximately 30% of footfall) and the business conference offer from hotels in the town (supporting approximately 33% of footfall) have been hit hard by the pandemic and might not see a significant increase until next summer 2022-23. The volume of coach park users in Q1 has only been 113 in comparison to 2,018 two years ago in 2019/20 for the same period (pre-pandemic volumes); a reduction by 94%.

The "Don't Let Your Guard Down" campaign has been launched by the recovery team to maintain sensible safety behaviours for residents, visitors and businesses while they return to the new normal. To support high street recovery a "tech for good" engagement tool called "Hello Lamp Post" has been rolled out which allows people to talk to street objects via a scanned QR code and provide feedback which then enables the Recovery Team to gain customer-driven business intelligence to help make better decisions. Windsor has reintroduced a number of street markets and traders back into the town centre and commercial promotions have re-started. Specific activities include Monthly Street food market, Monthly Farmers Market, which has been moved to Bachelor Acre, and Bandstand Live Programme for Alexandra Gardens.

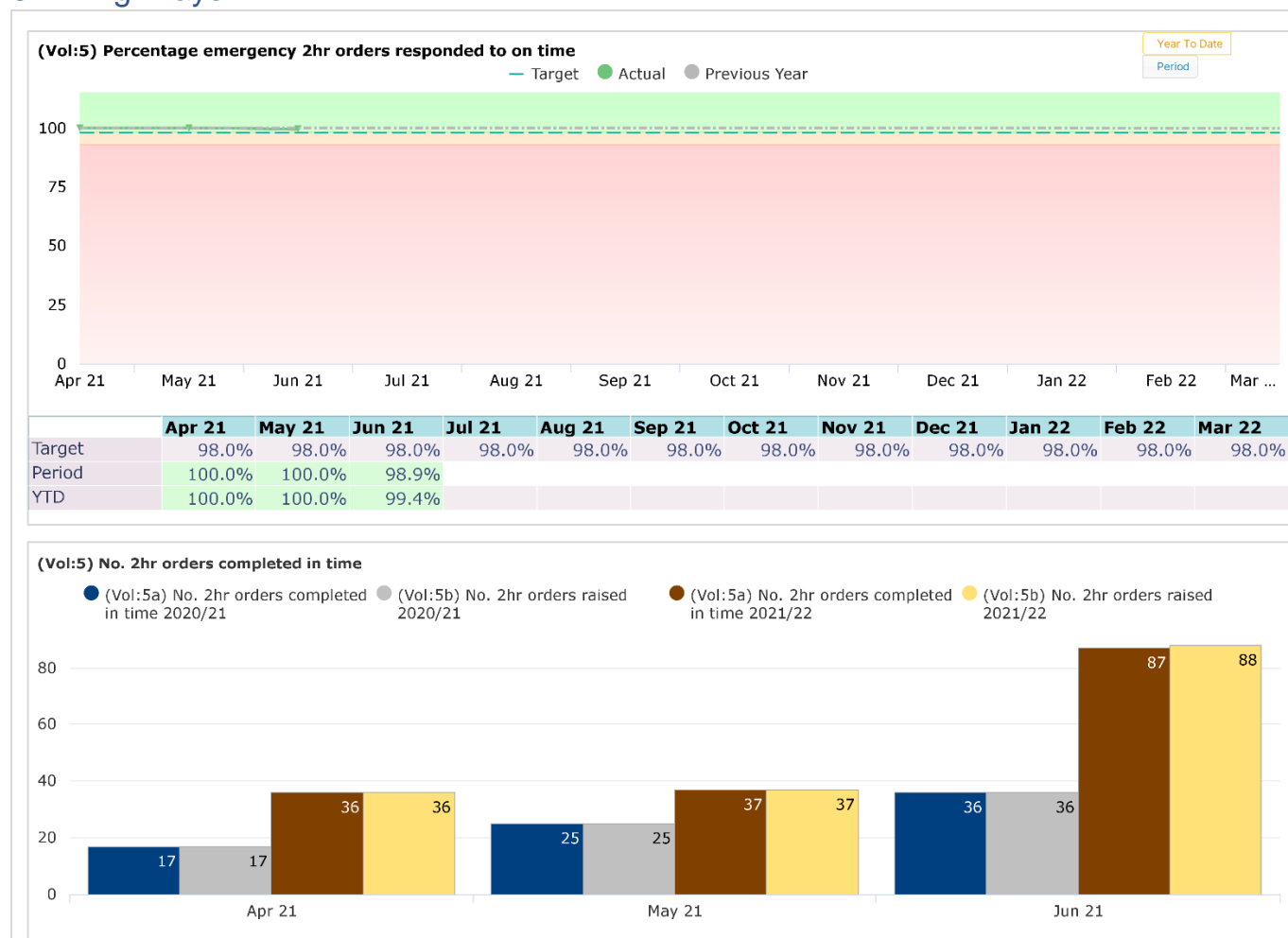
The step by step lifting of restrictions since March 2021 has seen a steady increase in the footfall and, with the lifting of most of the remaining legal restrictions for Covid-19 from 19 July 2021 coupled with the school summer holidays, visitor numbers are expected to increase in Q2.

### **Ascot Town Centre**

There are currently no footfall counters in Ascot high street and the surrounding commercial centres. The return of racing at Ascot Racecourse has had a strong impact on footfall into the high street and the associated increase in spend. In the last quarter Ascot Racecourse has successfully hosted a number of race day events, most notably the return of Royal Ascot which saw a restricted attendance of 12,000 per day (usually 60,000 per day). Ascot Racecourse are slowly rebuilding their events programme and have a number of key non-racing events planned for the rest of the year.

## 6. Neighbourhood Services: Performance Trends

### 6.1. Highways



#### Q1 Commentary

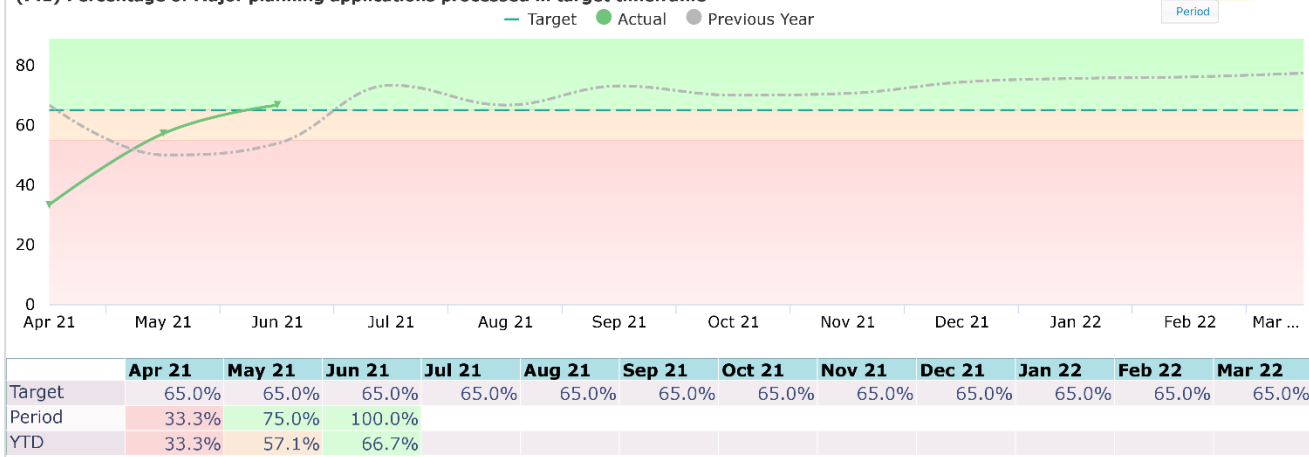
*The target for this measure is 98% with red flag raised if performance is equal to/below 93%.*

The aim of this indicator is to ensure the maintenance of a safe highway network for all road-users by monitoring the contractor's responsiveness to urgent safety hazards. At the close of Q1 performance is 99.4% (160/161), above target (98%) by 1.4. The number of 2hr orders raised in Q1 2021/22 (161) is more than twice the volume raised in the same period last year (78 in Q1 2020/21). This could be attributed to floods in early June leading to a high number of orders raised, coupled with an increase in road users as lockdown restrictions were eased from March 2021. The team appropriately directs other resources during such time when there is a prolonged and high number of callouts to complete the defects within 2hrs.

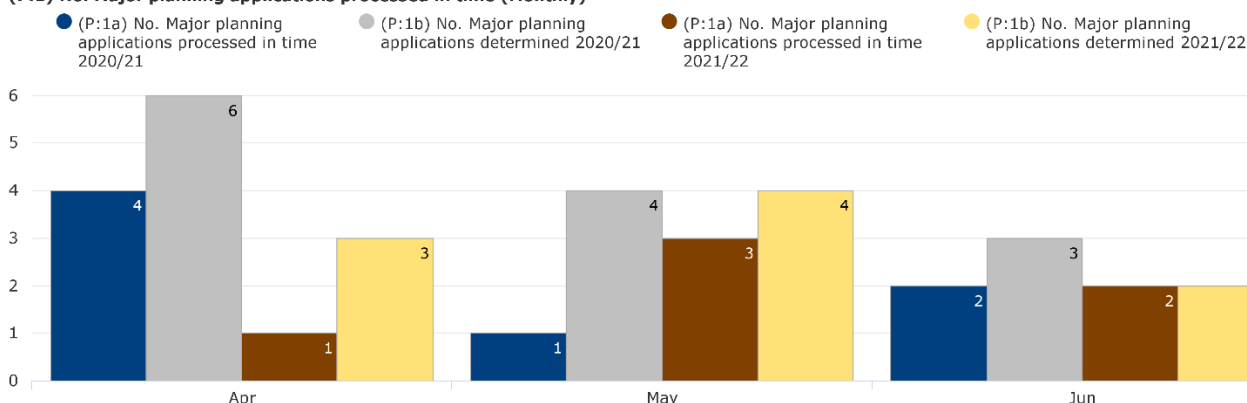
## 7. Planning: Performance Trends

### 7.1. Planning Applications: Major

(P:1) Percentage of Major planning applications processed in target timeframe

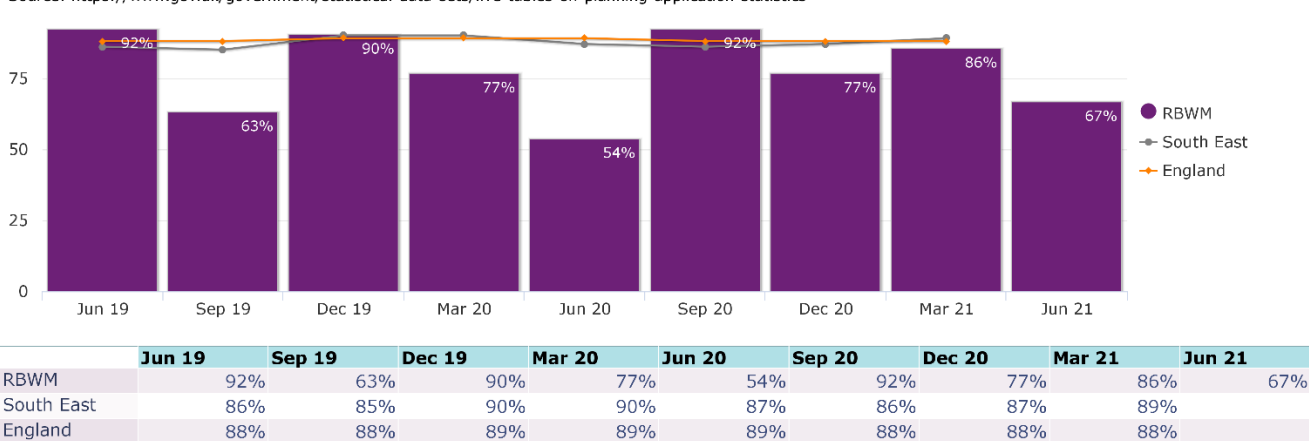


(P:1) No. Major planning applications processed in time (Monthly)



Benchmarking: Quarterly Figures (P:1) Percentage of Major planning applications processed in target timeframe

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>



### Q1 Commentary

The target for this measure is 65% with red flag raised if performance is equal to or below 55%.

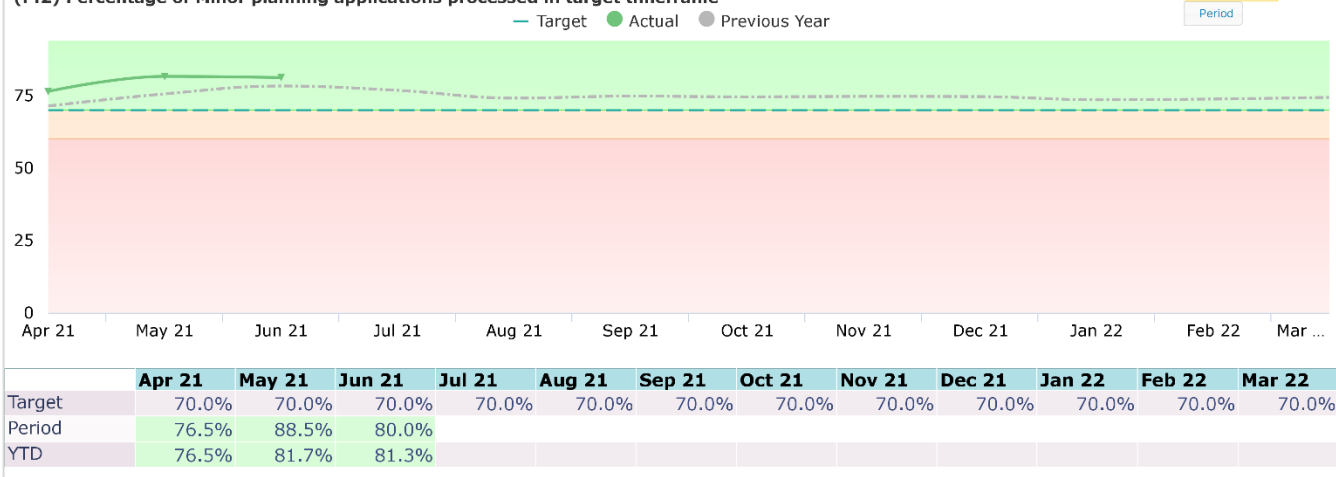
At the end of Q1 year-to-date performance stands at 66.7% (6/9), above target (65%) by 1.7 and higher than the performance in Q1 2020/21 (53.8%, 7/13). Period performance in April 2021 was impacted by having to refer applications to Panel for refusal, and hence agreement for an extension of time was not possible. Performance has improved since then with June 2021 performance being 100%.

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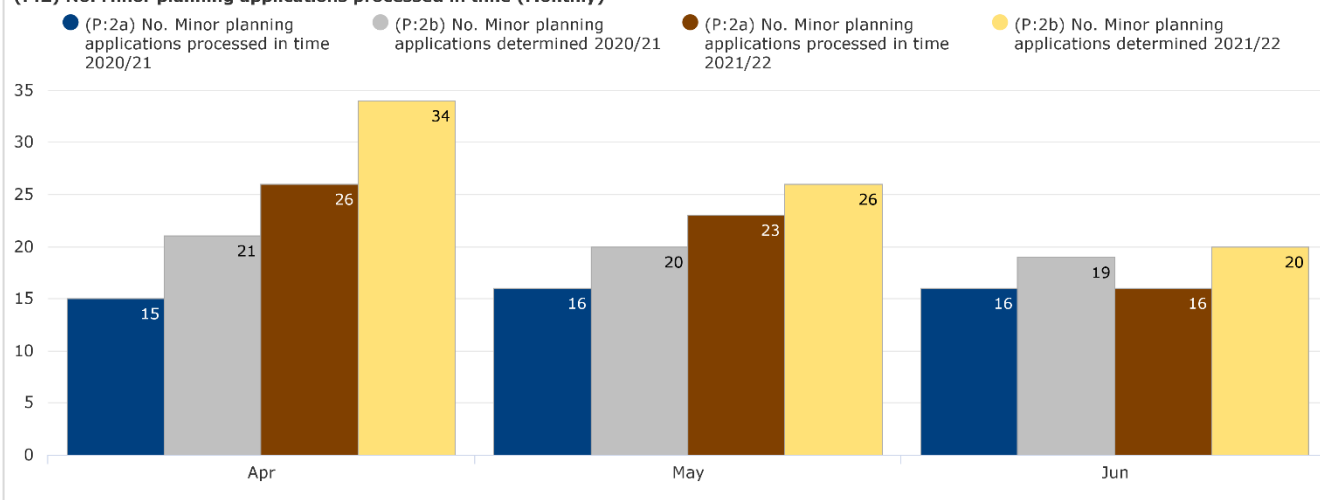
The total number of applications determined in Q1 2021/21 (9) is fewer than Q1 2020/21 (13). Benchmarking data available up to the end of Q4 2020/21 shows council's performance steadily improving from the 2020/21 Q1 position and coming very close to the South East and England performance in 2020/21 Q4 (Windsor and Maidenhead 86%, South East 89%, England 88%).

### 7.2. Planning Applications: Minor

(P:2) Percentage of Minor planning applications processed in target timeframe

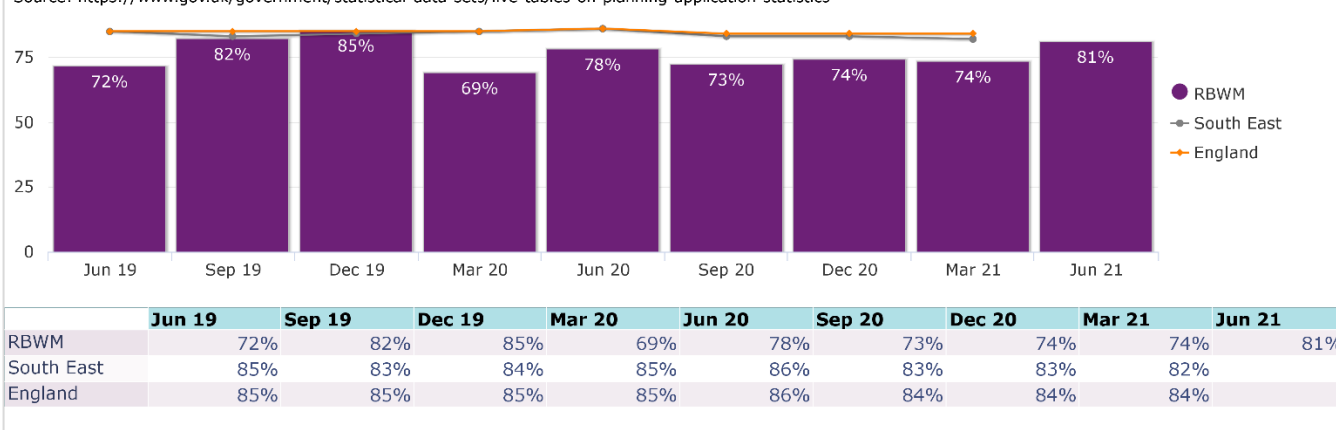


(P:2) No. Minor planning applications processed in time (Monthly)



Benchmarking: Quarterly Figures (P:2) Percentage of Minor planning applications processed in target timeframe

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>



### Q1 Commentary

The target for this measure is 70% with red flag raised if performance is equal to or below 60%.



## Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2021/22 Performance Report

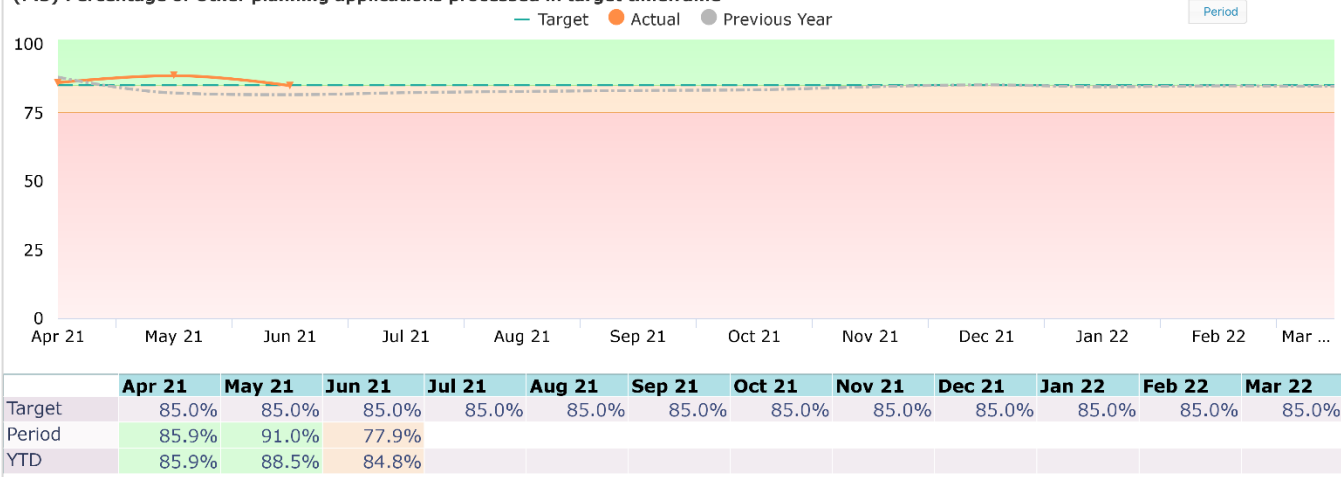
At the end of Q1 year-to-date performance stands at 81.3% (65/80), exceeding the target of 70% by 11.3 and higher than the performance in Q1 2020/21 (78.3% 47/60).

There has been a 33.3% increase in the volume of applications determined in Q1 2021/22 (80) when compared to Q1 2020/21(60). This could be attributed to staff having adapted well to the remote working conditions now when compared to same time last year.

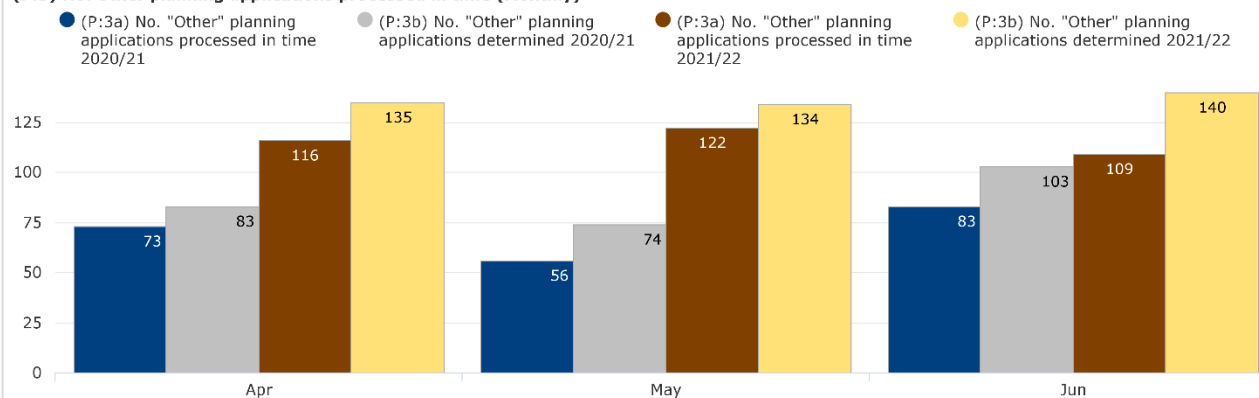
Benchmarking data available up to the end of 2020/21 Q4 shows that quarterly performance is below South East and England performance.

### 7.3. Planning Applications: Other

(P:3) Percentage of Other planning applications processed in target timeframe

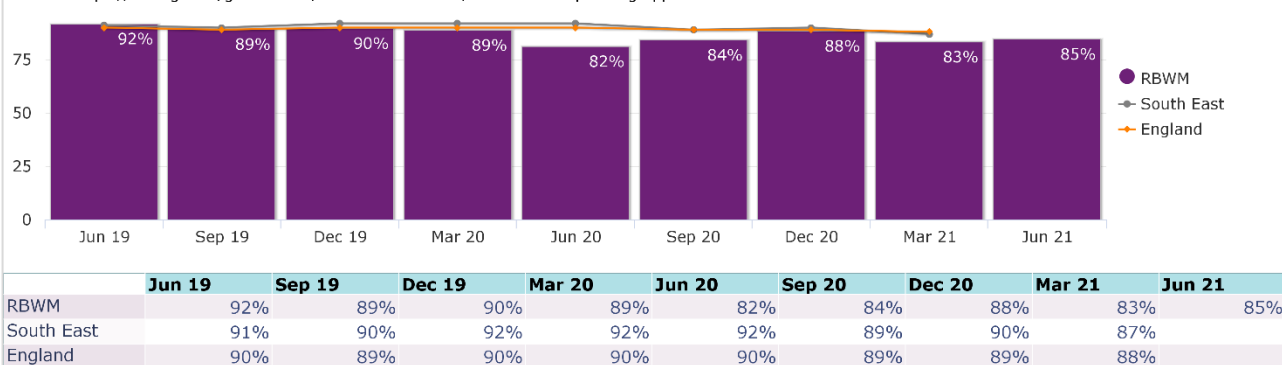


(P:3) No. Other planning applications processed in time (Monthly)



Benchmarking: Quarterly Figures (P:3) Percentage of Other planning applications processed in target timeframe

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>



## Q1 Commentary

*The target for this measure is 85% with red flag raised if performance is equal to or below 75%.*

At the end of Q1 year-to-date performance stands at 84.8% (347/409), marginally lower than target by 0.2 though within tolerance for this measure. Performance is however higher than 2020/21 Q1 (81.5%, 212/260). Period performance for April and May has been above target and dipped only in the month of June due to staff vacancies and absence due to sickness, consequently bringing the year-to-date performance short of target.

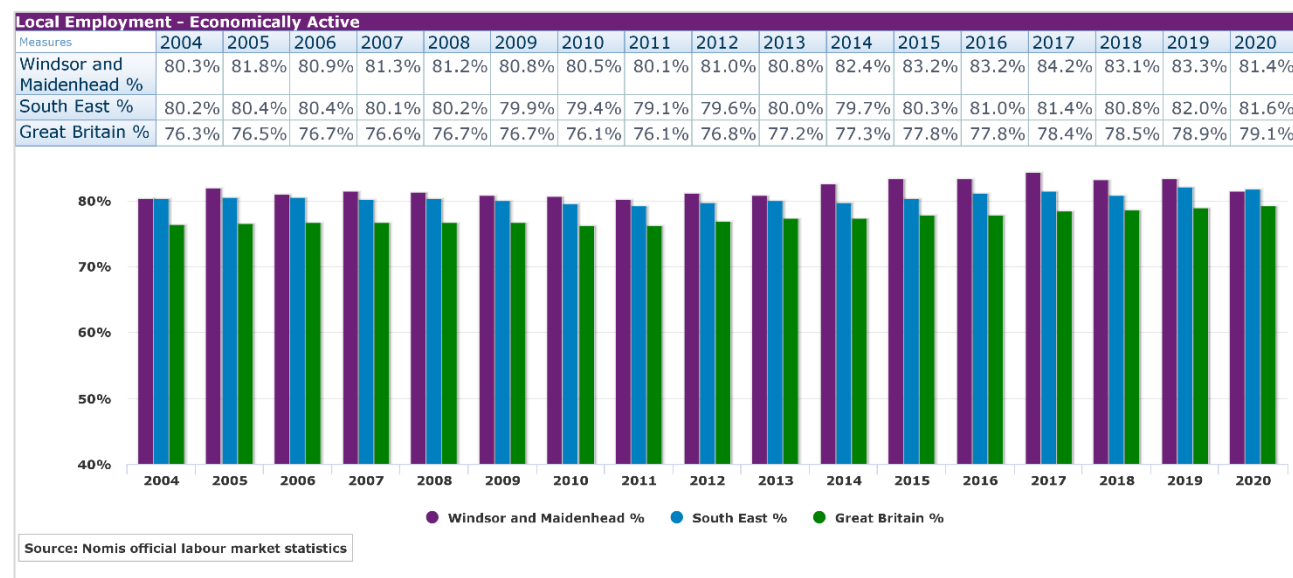
It must be noted that the volume of applications determined in Q1 (409) is higher by 57.3% than 2020/21 (260) again attributed to staff learning and adapting well to working from home.

Benchmarking data is available up to the end of 2020/21 Q4 shows that quarterly performance is lower than South East and England performance.

## 8. Business Intelligence: Local employment trends

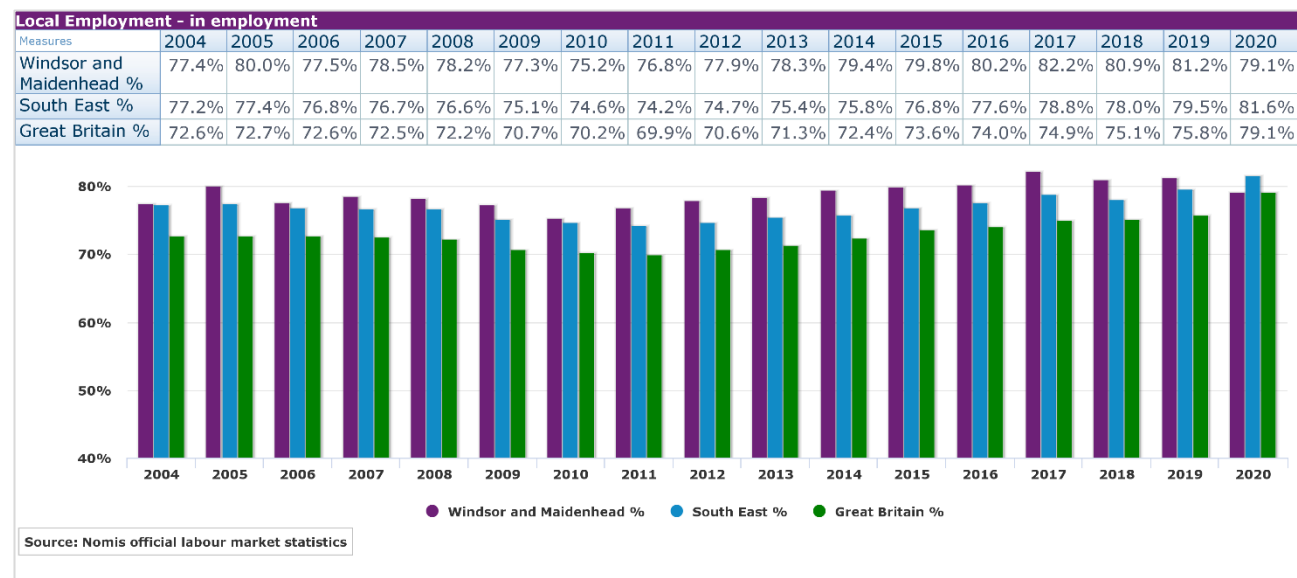
8.1 This section includes the most recent Local Employment data available from the Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics.

### Economically active

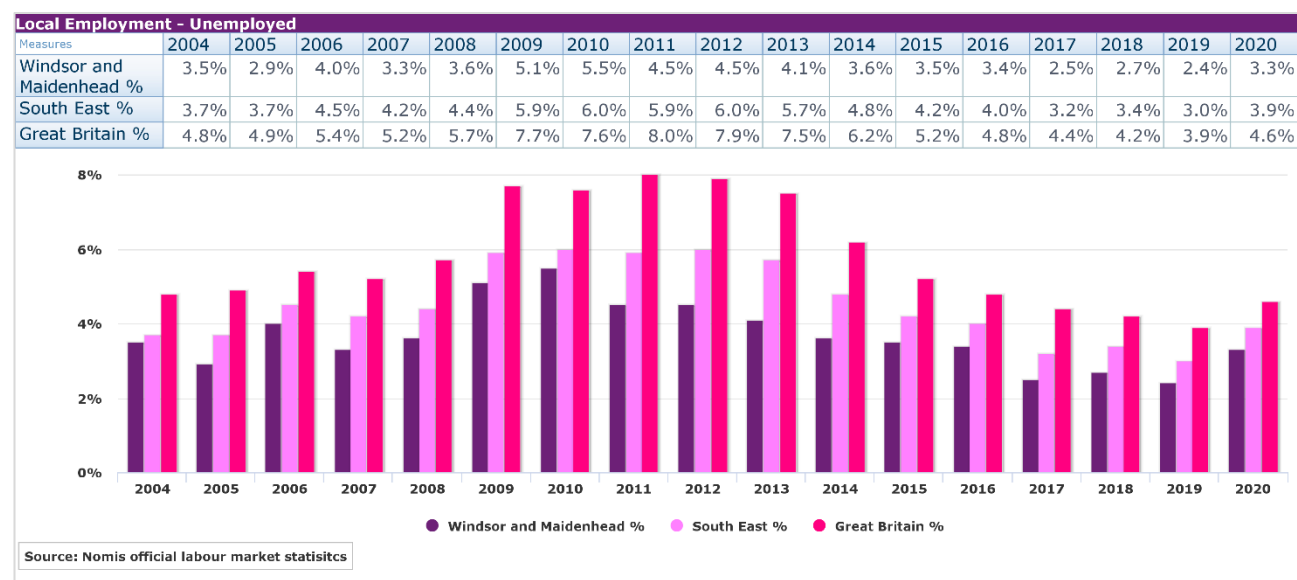


# Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Panel: Q1 2021/22 Performance Report

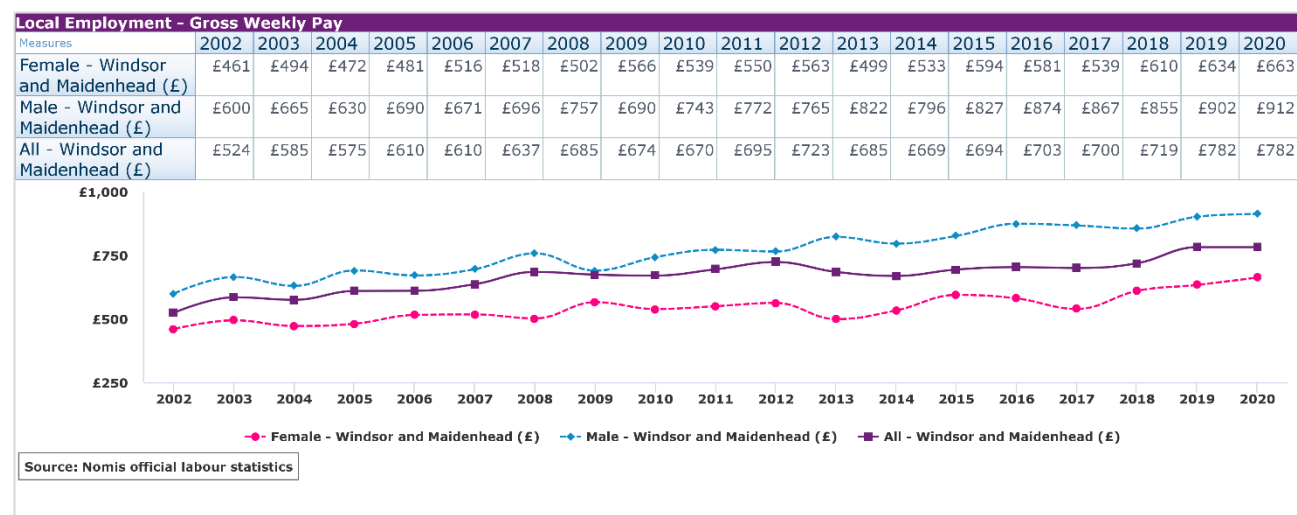
## In employment



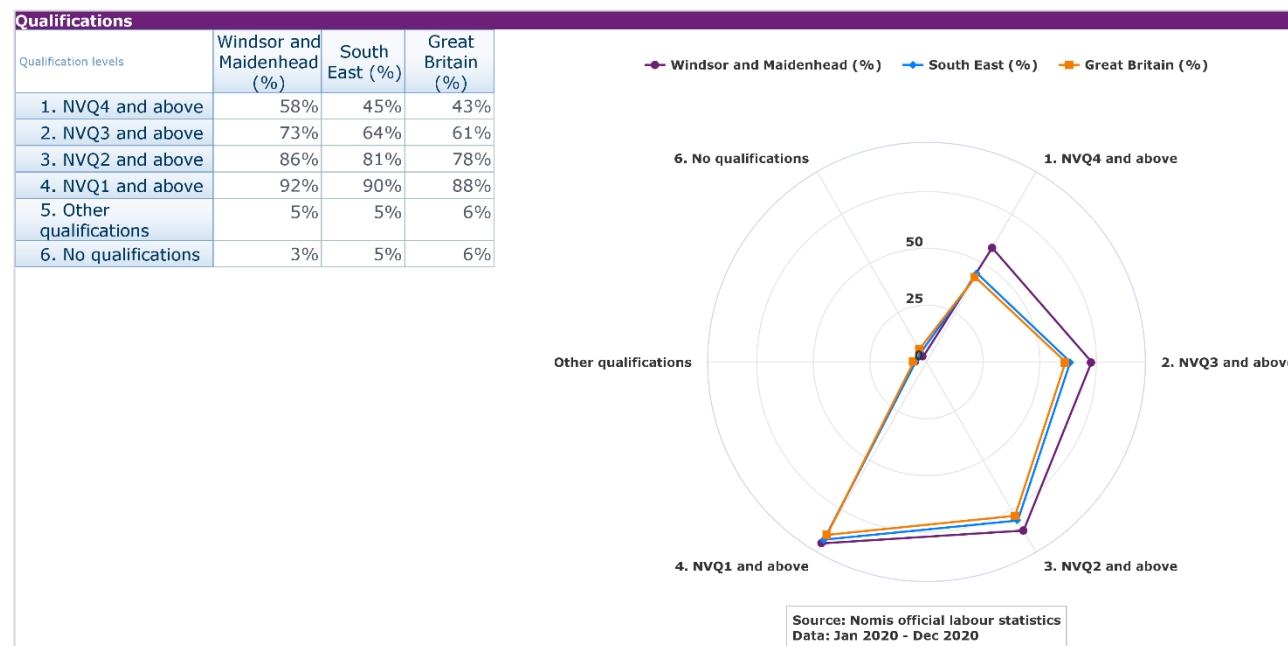
## Unemployed



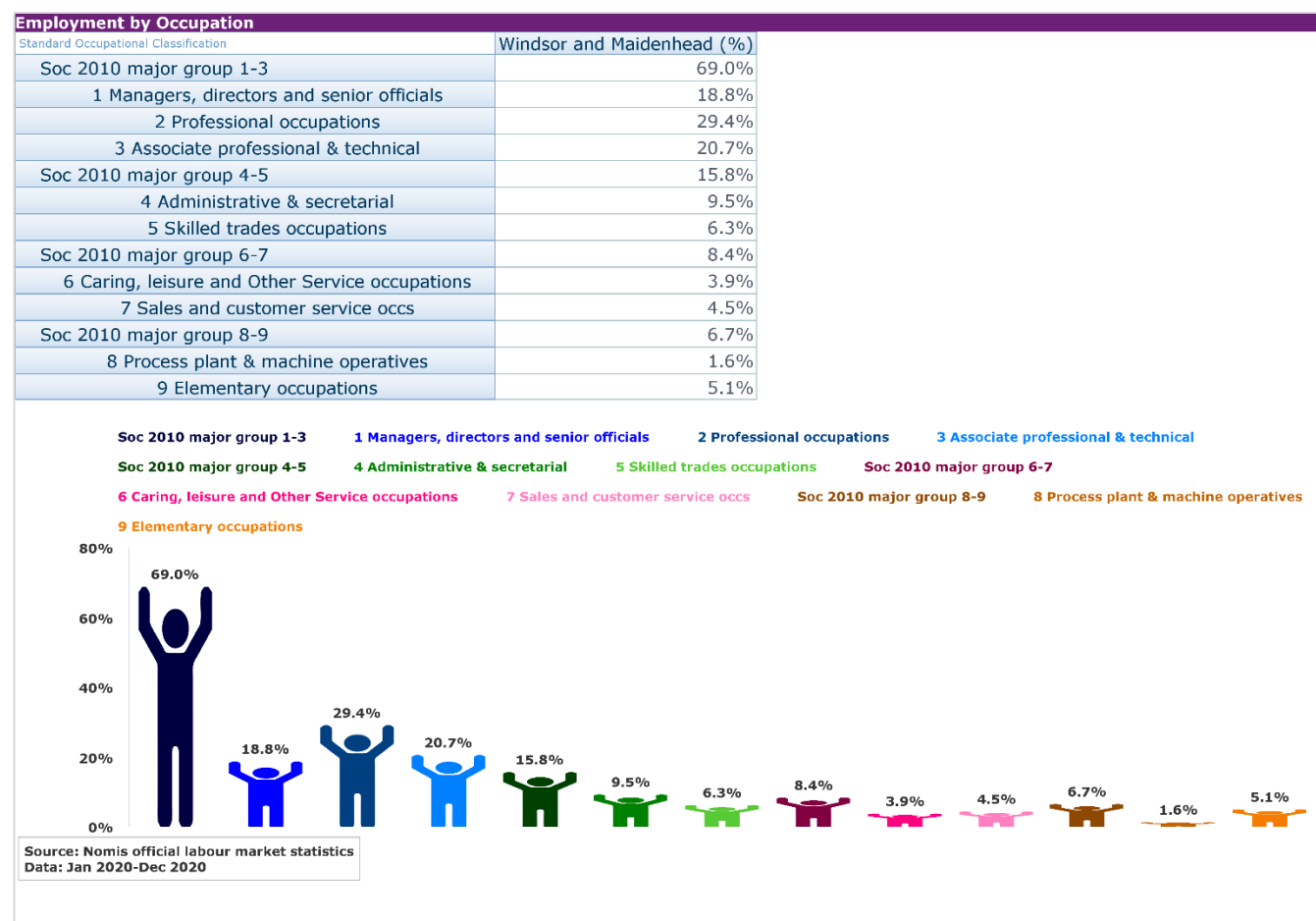
## Gross weekly pay



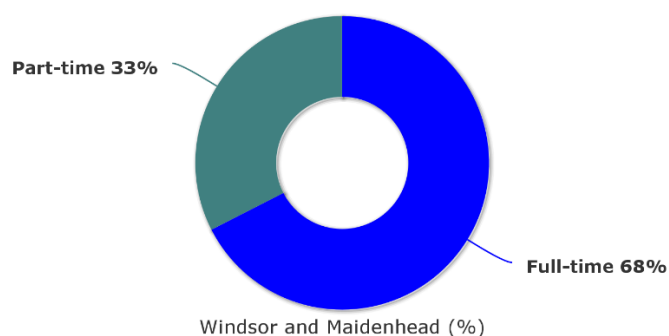
## Qualifications



## Employment by occupation and industry



**Windsor and Maidenhead: Employee jobs (2019)  
with percentage breakdown of full/part time**



Source: Nomis official labour market statistics

## Local Employment - employee jobs by Industry

| Measure  | Windsor and Maidenhead (%) | South East (%) | Great Britain (%) |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| B : Mining and quarrying   | 0.2%                       | 0.1%           | 0.2%              |
| C : Manufacturing  | 3.0%                       | 6.6%           | 8.0%              |
| D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply                  | 0.7%                       | 0.4%           | 0.4%              |
| E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities  | 0.5%                       | 0.8%           | 0.7%              |
| F : Construction   | 7.2%                       | 5.3%           | 4.9%              |
| G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles | 15.7%                      | 16.4%          | 15.0%             |
| H : Transportation and storage   | 1.5%                       | 4.5%           | 4.9%              |
| I : Accommodation and food service activities                            | 9.6%                       | 7.7%           | 7.7%              |
| J : Information and communication  | 10.8%                      | 5.7%           | 4.3%              |
| K : Financial and insurance activities                                   | 1.8%                       | 2.7%           | 3.5%              |
| L : Real estate activities   | 1.8%                       | 1.4%           | 1.7%              |
| M : Professional, scientific and technical activities                    | 13.3%                      | 9.1%           | 8.8%              |
| N : Administrative and support service activities                        | 6.0%                       | 8.4%           | 8.9%              |
| O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security        | 1.5%                       | 3.2%           | 4.4%              |
| P : Education  | 9.6%                       | 10.0%          | 8.7%              |
| Q : Human health and social work activities                              | 8.4%                       | 12.9%          | 13.1%             |
| R : Arts, entertainment and recreation                                   | 5.4%                       | 2.3%           | 2.5%              |
| S : Other service activities   | 3.0%                       | 2.4%           | 2.0%              |

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|   |   |
|---|---|
| Report Title:                               | Annual Complaints and Compliments report 2020/21  |
| Contains Confidential or Exempt Information | No - Part I   |
| Cabinet Member:                             | Cllr Rayner, Cabinet Member for Corporate & Resident Services, Culture & Heritage and Windsor                 |
| Meeting and Date:                           | Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 21 September 2021  |
| Responsible Officer(s):                     | Adele Taylor, Executive Director of Resources and S151 and Nikki Craig, Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT |
| Wards affected:                             | None  |



## REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to share with Overview and Scrutiny the annual compliments and complaints report for 2019/20 before it is published on the council's website. Local Authorities are not required to produce an annual report on complaints relating to corporate activities, they are only required to report complaints submitted on adults and children's services.

The complaints and compliments report is produced annually and details all compliments and complaints made by or on behalf of customers, that are investigated under the:

- Formal corporate complaints policy
- Statutory adults and children's complaints policies

NB: children's complaints taken under the corporate complaints policy are reported in Section 6 of the annual report (Appendix 1) with other information about children's complaints.

## 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:

- That the report is published on the Council's website.
- That the annual report continues to be produced and presented at Overview and Scrutiny panels

## 2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATIONS) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

**Table 1: Options arising from this report**

| Option  | Comments  |
|---|---|
| That the report is published on the Council's website and that the annual report continues to be produced and presented at Overview and Scrutiny panels.<br><b>This is the recommended option</b> | This is a requirement for children's and adults annual complaints information and good practice for other complaints areas. |

- 2.1 The council's complaints and compliments report is compiled annually. There is a statutory requirement to publish information on adult and children's complaints and compliments and the report for April 2020 – March 2021 will be published in October 2021 (appendix 1). While there is no requirement to publish information on complaints about other services provided by the council, the decision has been taken to include this information in the annual report. This captures all the information about complaints and compliments to the council, ensures transparency and provides an opportunity to ensure we maximise the learning opportunities from any outcomes from the complaints.
- 2.2 The report contains details of:
- numbers of compliments received
  - complaints received
  - themes of complaints
  - timeliness of complaint responses
  - outcomes of complaints
  - learning from complaints
  - number of complaints made to and decided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

### **Overview of all complaints to the council**

- 2.3 There are a number of complaints processes and which one is invoked will depend on the service and the reason for a complaint to be made. See appendix B of appendix 1.
- 2.4 Table 2 compares the number of complaints received across the council for 2020/21 with the figures for 2019/20.

**Table 2: All complaints received**

|                                 | 2020/21    | 2019/20    |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Adult complaints                | 11         | 27         |
| Children complaints             | 50         | 54         |
| Complaints about other services | 354        | 317        |
| <b>Total complaints</b>         | <b>415</b> | <b>398</b> |

### **Top 5 service areas for non adults and children's complaints**

- 2.5 Table 3 shows the top 5 service areas for customer complaints in 2020/21:

**Table 3: Top 5 service area complaints**

|                      |     |         |
|----------------------|-----|---------|
| Waste Management     | 34% | 120/353 |
| Highways             | 9%  | 33/353  |
| Planning Services    | 9%  | 31/353  |
| Revenue and Benefits | 9%  | 31/353  |
| Housing Services     | 8%  | 29/353  |



- 2.6 The number of complaints received for services across the council is 354, of which 58% were upheld or partially upheld at stage 1, compared to 2019/20 when 63% were upheld or partially upheld.

### **Themes of complaints**

- 2.7 Across the council, the reason for the highest number of Formal Corporate complaints received in both 2019/20 and 2020/21 was 'lack of action'. More detailed information is included in the annual report. See Appendix 1, 7.7, figure 20.

### **Timeliness of complaint responses**

- 2.8 Across the council, timeliness of Formal Corporate complaint responses being provided at Stage 1 has improved from 60% in 2019/20 to 62% in 2020/21. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescales at Stage 2 is 88%, less than 2019/20 at 94%. More detailed information is included in the annual report. See Appendix 1, 7.9, figure 22.

### **Outcomes of complaints**

- 2.9 Across the council, the number of Formal Corporate complaints fully or partially upheld at Stage 2 has fallen from 50% in 2019/20 to 44% in 2020/21. More detailed information is included in the annual report. See Appendix 1, 7.14, figure 23.
- 2.10 In terms of timeliness and outcomes, Housing Services, Planning Services and Highways will all review their employee training and customer communication with the intention of improving services delivered.

### **Complaints to services considered by Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

- 2.11 From the Service areas in table 3, Highways, Planning Services and Housing Services are covered by the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel, all of which are within the top 5 service area complaints, and the learnings are detailed in appendix 1, 7.17, 7.18, 7.22, 7.23, 7.26 and 7.27.

### **Complaints made to and decisions made by the LGSCO**

- 2.11 Table 4 compares the number of complaints made to the LGSCO in 2020/21 against those made in 2019/20. See Appendix 1, 2.10.

**Table 4: Complaints to LGSCO**

| Year    | Adult Care Services | Benefits & Tax | Corporate & Other Services | Education & Children's Services | Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | Highways & Transport | Housing | Null | Planning & Development |
|---------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------|---------|------|------------------------|
| 2020/21 | 2                   | 3              | 1                          | 5                               | 8   | 4                    | 3       | 0    | 5                      |
| 2019/20 | 5                   | 2              | 2                          | 10                              | 8   | 7                    | 2       | 1    | 9                      |

- 2.12 Table 5 compares the number of complaints decided by the LGSCO in 2020/21 against those decided in 2019/20. See Appendix 1, 2.12.

| Table 5: Decisions by outcome |              |                                |                     |                                    | Detailed Investigation |            |                   |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Year                          | Advice Given | Closed after initial enquiries | Incomplete/ Invalid | Referred back for local resolution | Upheld                 | Not Upheld | Percentage Upheld |
| 2020/21                       | 1            | 7                              | 1                   | 11                                 | 9                      | 4          | 69%               |
| 2019/20                       | 0            | 16                             | 4                   | 14                                 | 7                      | 8          | 47%               |

2.13 The Ombudsman made 33 decisions in 2020/21 compared to 49 in 2019/20. This includes 10 enquires submitted to the LGSCO prior to 2020/21 and 23 enquiries submitted in 2020/21. Enquiries that were made to the LGSCO in 2020/21, but no decision made within that year will be included in the decisions reported in subsequent years.

2.14 Changes and initiatives that have been implemented include: Highways reviewing how changes to bus timetables are implemented. Planning Services – reinforcing customer service expectations to existing staff and Housing Services – introducing the completion of suitability of accommodation checklist in every case and record the reasons for making out of borough placements.

#### Overview of all compliments to the council

2.15 Table 6 compares the number of compliments received across the council for 2020/21 with the figures for 2019/20, this was an 84% increase on 2019/20 See Appendix 1, 2.22, figure 1.

**Table 6: Compliments**

|                                  | 2020/21    | 2019/20    |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Adult compliments                | 16         | 21         |
| Children compliments             | 28         | 63         |
| Compliments about other services | 766        | 356        |
| <b>Total compliments</b>         | <b>810</b> | <b>440</b> |

### 3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are a number of indicators of success across the council. For last year to March 2021, given the impact of the pandemic only 1 was met and 2 were not. For the current financial year, improvements in all of these could indicate progress in delivery of solutions:

**Table 7: Key Implications**

| Outcome                                      | Unmet     | Met | Exceeded | Significantly Exceeded | Date of delivery |
|--|-----------|-----|----------|------------------------|------------------|
| Reduced percentage of upheld complaints      | 60 - 100% | 59% | 50-58%   | <50%                   | 31 March 2022    |
| Increased percentage of complaints completed | 0-60%     | 61% | 62-75%   | >75%                   | 31 March 2022    |

| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Unmet</b> | <b>Met</b> | <b>Exceeded</b> | <b>Significantly Exceeded</b> | <b>Date of delivery</b> |
|--|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| within timescales  |              |            |                 |                               |                         |
| Reduced percentage of complaints to the LGSCO are upheld | 70 - 100%    | 69%        | 50-68%          | <50%                          | 31 March 2022           |

#### **4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications in the publishing of the annual report. There are implications for the council in getting things wrong including resources within service being redirected to complaints handling, remedy payments and reputational damage.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The publishing of children's and adult complaints reports is statutory.

#### **6. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 None

#### **7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

- 7.1 Equalities. There are no implications under the equality act arising from this report.
- 7.2 Climate change/sustainability. There are no climate change or sustainability implications arising from this report.
- 7.3 There are no data protections/GDPR implications arising from this report as no personal data has been processed.

#### **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Consultation has happened with CLT in July and August 2021 and will happen with Overview and Scrutiny panels in September and October 2021.

#### **9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 9.1 N/A. The annual report will be published on the Council website in October 2021.

#### **10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 This report is supported by 1 appendix:
- Appendix 1 – Annual complaints report

## 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 This report is supported by LGSCO Annual Letter (see Appendix A of Appendix 1). These are the annual summary of statistics on the complaint on complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about the authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. The annual letters and corresponding data tables were published on LGSCO website on 31 July 2021.

## 12. CONSULTATION

| Name of consultee                                | Post held  | Date sent | Date returned |
|--|--|-----------|---------------|
| <i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputy)</i> |  |           |               |
| Adele Taylor                                     | Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer               | 06.09.21  | 13.09.21      |
| Emma Duncan                                      | Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer   | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| <i>Deputies:</i>                                 |  |           |               |
| Andrew Vallance                                  | Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)                      | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| Elaine Browne                                    | Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)                    | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| Karen Shepherd                                   | Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)             | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| <i>Directors</i>                                 |  |           |               |
| Duncan Sharkey                                   | Chief Executive  | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| Andrew Durrant                                   | Executive Director of Place                                | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| Kevin McDaniel                                   | Executive Director of Children's Services                  | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |
| Hilary Hall                                      | Executive Director of Adults, Health and Housing           | 06.09.21  | 08.09.21      |
| <i>Heads of Service</i>                          |  |           |               |
| Nikki Craig                                      | Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT                      | 06.09.21  | 08.09.21      |
| Louise Freeth                                    | Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Residents Services | 06.09.21  | 09.09.21      |

|   |   |     |
|---|---|-----|
| Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted | Cllr Rayner, Cabinet Member for Corporate & Resident Services, Culture & Heritage and Windsor | Yes |
|---|---|-----|

## REPORT HISTORY

| Decision type:  | Urgency item? | To follow item? |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| For information | No            | No              |

Report Author: Vanessa Faulkner, Service Lead – HR People Services,  
01628685622

# Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

## Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2020-21

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| <b>7. RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints Process .....</b>                          | <b>16</b> |
| <b>8. Compliments received.....</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>9. Appendices .....</b>  | <b>23</b> |
| Appendix 1 - A: LGSCO annual review letter 2021                                   |           |
| Appendix 1 - B: Council’s complaints process and procedures                       |           |
| Appendix 1 - C: National and legislative context – March 2021                     |           |

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The annual report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, and details all compliments and complaints made by or on behalf of customers that are investigated under the:
  - Adults Statutory Complaints process
  - Children's Statutory Complaints process
  - Children's Corporate Complaints process
  - RBWM's Formal Corporate Complaints Policy
- 1.2. Local Authorities are not required to produce an annual report on complaints relating to corporate activities. They are required under statute to report complaints submitted on adults and children's services. The compliments and complaints team produces an annual report detailing the volumes of all complaints and compliments, including insights into response rates and the reasons for complaints. This allows the council to assess how residents experience the council in its entirety and can inform service-improvement.

## 2. Summary of Activity

- 2.1. In 2020/21 the council received 2,268 contacts from customers that were initially logged as complaints. This is a 7.7% increase in contacts to the compliments and complaints team from 2019/20 (2,106 contacts). Contacts that were not progressed as complaints were signposted to an alternative means of resolution, for example a service request or via an alternative appeals process, such as parking appeals or statutory tribunals or were withdrawn.
- 2.2. The total volume of complaints progressed through Stage 1 of the specific complaints process that they followed was 415 in 2020/21, an increase on 2019/20 (398). Stage 2 and 3 complaints are escalations of Stage 1 complaints and so are not counted as new complaints.
- 2.3. Table 1 summarises the total volumes of complaints at Stage 1 and breakdown by outcome in 2020/21 in comparison to 2019/20 for each process (Adults, Children's Statutory, Children's Corporate and RBWM Formal Corporate). A green arrow indicates a positive outcome, and a red arrow indicates a less favourable outcome when compared to last year.
- 2.4. From Table 1 it can be seen that the percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld in 2020/21 has been less for all processes namely, Adults Statutory (45% in 2020/21, 52% in 2019/20), Children's Statutory (71% in 2020/21, 84% in 2019/20), RBWM Formal Corporate (58% in 2020/21, 63% in 2019/20) except Children's Corporate (68% in 2020/21, 57% in 2019/20). Overall, the percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld in 2020/21 was 59% and less than 2019/20 (63%).
- 2.5. The timeliness to respond within timescales has also improved across all processes namely, Adults Statutory (64% in 2020/21, 56% in 2019/20), Children's Statutory (50% in 2020/21, 37% in 2019/20), RBWM Formal Corporate (62% in 2020/21, 60% in 2019/20) except Children's Corporate (49% in 2020/21, 66% in 2019/20) making the

overall percentage of complaints responded to within timescales higher in 2020/21 (61%) when compared to 2019/20 (59%). (Table 1)

**Table 1: 2020/21 Summary of Complaints at Stage 1 by each process**

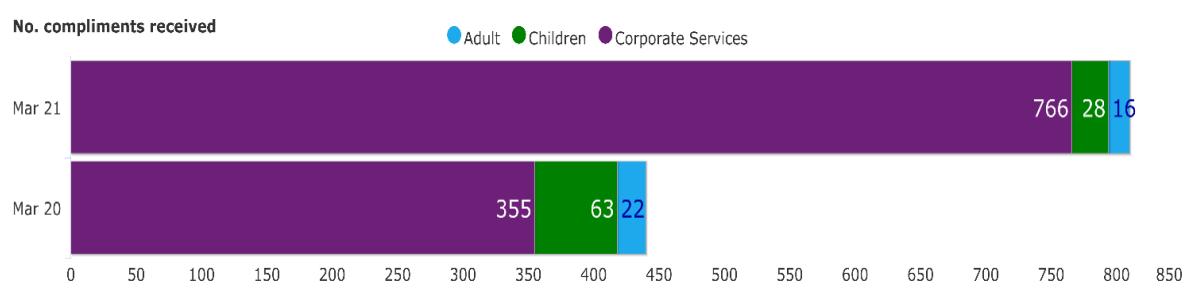
| Process               | No. of complaints      | Upheld                 | Partially Upheld       | Not Upheld             | No Finding           | In Progress at the time of reporting | Outcome not recorded* (No. of complaints) | Upheld or Partially Upheld | Responded to within timescales |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Adults Statutory      | 11 ↓<br>2019/20 (27)   | 18% ↓<br>2019/20 (22%) | 27% ↓<br>2019/20 (30%) | 36% ↓<br>2019/20 (48%) |                      | 18%                                  |   | 45% ↓<br>2019/20 (52%)     | 64% ↓<br>2019/20 (56%)         |
| Children's Statutory  | 14 ↓<br>2019/20 (19)   | 0% ↓<br>2019/20 (16%)  | 71% ↑<br>2019/20 (68%) | 21% ↑<br>2019/20 (16%) | 7%                   | None                                 |   | 71% ↓<br>2019/20 (84%)     | 50% ↑<br>2019/20 (37%)         |
| Children's Corporate  | 36 ↑<br>2019/20 (35)   | 11% ↓<br>2019/20 (20%) | 57% ↑<br>2019/20 (37%) | 23% ↓<br>2019/20 (40%) | 0%<br>2019/20 (3%)   | 9%                                   | 1   | 68% ↑<br>2019/20 (57%)     | 49% ↓<br>2019/20 (66%)         |
| RBWM Formal Corporate | 354 ↑<br>2019/20 (317) | 41% ↑<br>2019/20 (39%) | 17% ↓<br>2019/20 (24%) | 33% ↓<br>2019/20 (37%) | 1%                   | 8%                                   | 1   | 58% ↓<br>2019/20 (63%)     | 62% ↑<br>2019/20 (60%)         |
| Overall               | 415 ↑<br>2019/20 (398) | 36% ↑<br>2019/20 (35%) | 23% ↓<br>2019/20 (28%) | 32% ↓<br>2019/20 (37%) | 1%<br>2019/20 (0.3%) | 8%                                   | 2   | 59% ↓<br>2019/20 (63%)     | 61% ↑<br>2019/20 (59%)         |

2.6. There were 2 complaints where the outcome could not be extracted because of the transition from previous to current recording systems. These are excluded from the percentage breakdown by outcome and response within timescales in the table above and are not further referenced in the report.

## Compliments

2.7. Compliments are fed back to the relevant service areas to ensure that due recognition is given to staff and that learning is shared and disseminated across teams. In 2020/21 a total of 810 compliments were received, 84% increase on 2019/20 (440). Figure 1 shows the breakdown of compliments by major category (Adults, Children, Corporate Services). For the purposes of this report, "Corporate Services" refers to compliments that were received by services other than those within adult and children's services.

**Figure 1: Compliments received: Breakdown by major category**





### Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

- 2.8. The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) received 31 complaints and enquiries about the council in 2020/21, a reduction on 2019/20 (46).
- 2.9. Table 2 sets out complaints and enquiries received by LGSCO by different categories in comparison to last year.
- 2.10. Following the Covid pandemic, on 18 March 2020 the LGSCO temporarily suspended their central telephone line and complaint submissions via their website for all first-time complainants, this has since been reinstated.
- 2.11. It can be seen from the table below that complaints and enquiries received by LGSCO in 2020/21 have decreased or remained the same in all categories except in Housing when compared to 2019/20.

**Table 2: 2020/21 Complaints and enquiries received by LGSCO: Comparison with 2019/20 (data received from LGSCO in July 2021. Covering letter in Appendix A).**

| Year    | Adult Care Services | Benefits & Tax | Corporate & Other Services | Education & Children's Services | Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | Highways & Transport | Housing | Null | Planning & Development |
|---------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------|---------|------|------------------------|
| 2020/21 | 2                   | 3              | 1                          | 5                               | 8   | 4                    | 3       | 0    | 5                      |
| 2019/20 | 5                   | 2              | 2                          | 10                              | 8   | 7                    | 2       | 1    | 9                      |

- 2.12. The Ombudsman made 33 decisions in 2020/21 in comparison to 49 decisions in 2019/20. This includes 10 enquires submitted to the LGSCO prior to 2020/21 and 23 enquiries submitted in 2020/21. Enquiries that were made to the LGSCO in 2020/21, but no decision made within that year will be included in the decisions reported in subsequent years.
- 2.13. Table 3 breaks down the decisions made by outcome. After detailed investigations, 69% (9/13) of decisions were upheld an increase from 2019/20 (47% upheld). The 9 complaints that were investigated and upheld were in relation to:

- Adult Social Care (3)
- Benefits and Tax (1)
- Education and Children Services (2)
- Highways (1)
- Housing (1)
- Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation (1)

**Table 3: 2020/21 Decisions made by outcome: Comparison with 2019/20**

| Year    | Advice Given | Closed after initial enquiries | Incomplete/ Invalid | Referred back for local resolution | Detailed investigation Upheld | Detailed investigation Not Upheld | Percentage Upheld |
|---------|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2020/21 | 1            | 7                              | 1                   | 11                                 | 9                             | 4                                 | 69%               |
| 2019/20 | 0            | 16                             | 4                   | 14                                 | 7                             | 8                                 | 47%               |

### LGSCO Reports

- 2.14. One public interest report relating to adult social care was published in 2020/21. The requirements for publication and consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny

Panel and Cabinet were met and in November, the Ombudsman agreed that the council had taken the matter seriously, had delivered all the actions required and closed the case.

### **Improvements in working with LGSCO and other parties**

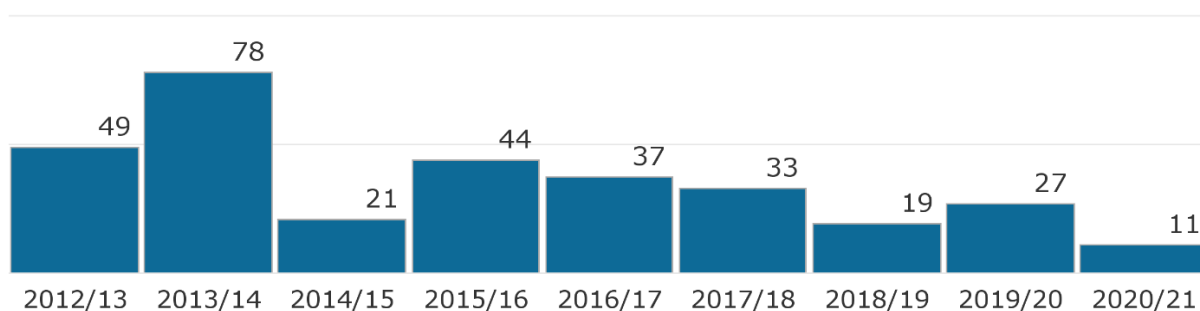
- 2.15. The compliments and complaints team attended a webinar on complaints handling in 2020/21. They are members of SRCMG (South Region Complaints Manager Group) which meets quarterly and is used to raise concerns or queries and support each other on a need basis.

## **3. Statutory Adults Complaints Process**

### **Complaints received**

- 3.1. Figure 2 shows the volumes of adults' complaints in the last 9 years. With the exception of 2019/20 there has been a sustained decrease in the number of complaints received since 2015/16. Only 11 complaints were received in 2020/21, a 59% reduction on 2019/20. This has also been the lowest volume of complaints received in the last 9 years.
- 3.2. Following the Ombudsman's public interest report received in 2020, the approach to managing complaints within the service was radically overhauled. Emphasis has been placed on proactive management of issues before they escalate into formal complaints which is reflected in the numbers below. Where formal complaints are received, the Director of Statutory Services within Optalis is personally responsible for liaising with the complainants throughout the process to ensure that the process is transparent, and the outcome of the complaint is understood and accepted.

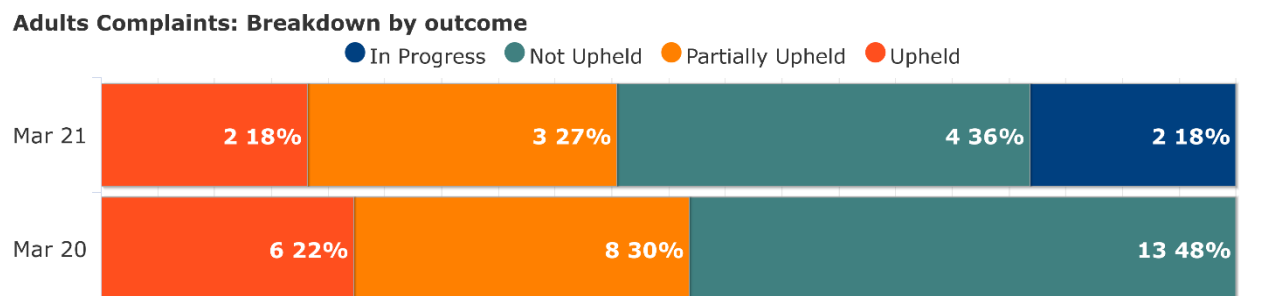
**Figure 2: Adults' complaints volumes: Annual trends**



- 3.3.  
3.4.  
3.5.

- 3.6. **Figure 3** shows the breakdown of adults' complaints by outcome in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20. In 2020/21 both the percentage of complaints upheld (18%) and partially upheld (27%) are less than 2019/20 (upheld 22% and partially upheld 30%).

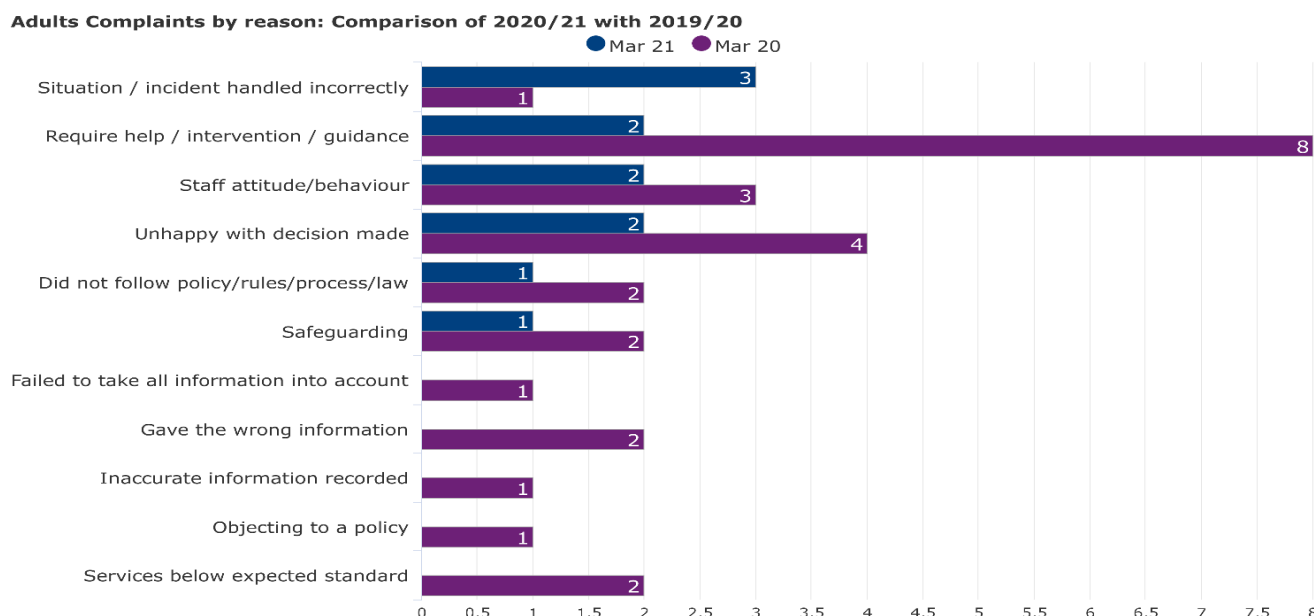
**Figure 3: Adults complaints by outcome**



### Reasons and outcomes

- 3.7. When logging their complaint via the council website, complainants self-select the reason for their complaint and the compliments and complaints team does not change this categorisation. When a complaint is logged by a member of the team or the Customer Contact Centre on behalf of a complainant, the staff member will select the reason they believe is most appropriate. Only one reason can be selected for each complaint.
- 3.8. Figure 4 sets out the volume of adult's complaints made by reason in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20. It is encouraging to note that in 2020/21 complaints have been recorded by fewer reasons (6) in comparison to 2019/20 (11). Additionally, in 5/6 reasons, the number of complaints made in 2020/21 is less than 2019/20.

**Figure 4 Adults complaints by reason**



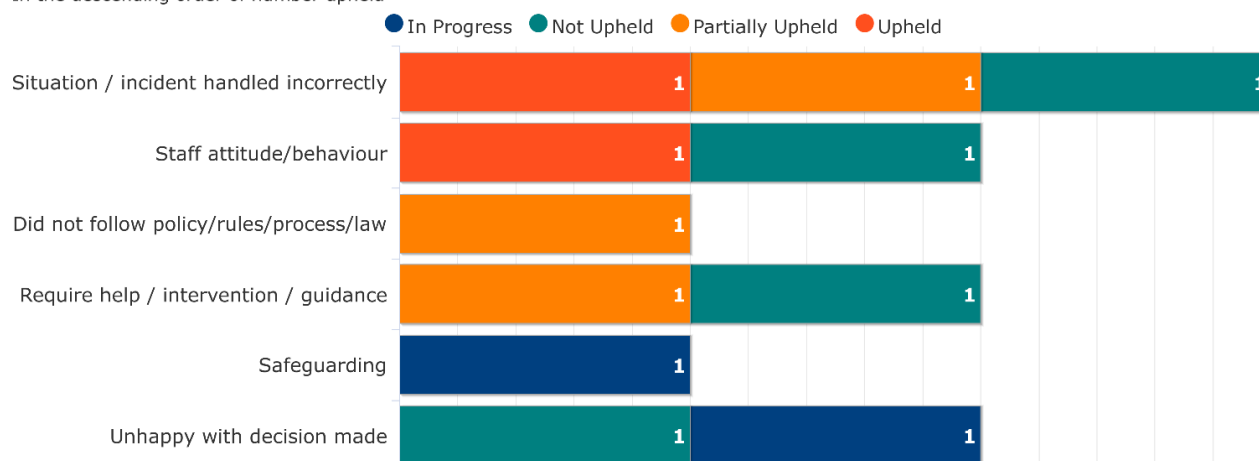
- 3.9. At the time of data extraction for preparation of this report out of 11 complaints, 9 complaints had an outcome recorded and 2 were in progress and an outcome had not yet been reached. Figure 5 shows the outcome of adult's complaints by reason. It can be seen that 67% (2/3) of the complaints against the 'Situation/incident handled

incorrectly' (top reason) were upheld/partially upheld. It may be helpful to clarify what led to the two complaints that were upheld/partially upheld. In one case there was confusion over whether the person was asking the Council to arrange their care which triggers a fee or was setting up and funding his own care. The complaint was that Optalis requested the arrangement fee inappropriately. This was then corrected, and managers have been reminded that this needs checking. The other case was about a need to improve practice when working with people who lack capacity. This led to practice improvement measures for the overall service and also the worker.

**Figure 5: Adults complaints outcome by reason**

**Adults Complaints: Outcome by reason**

In the descending order of number upheld

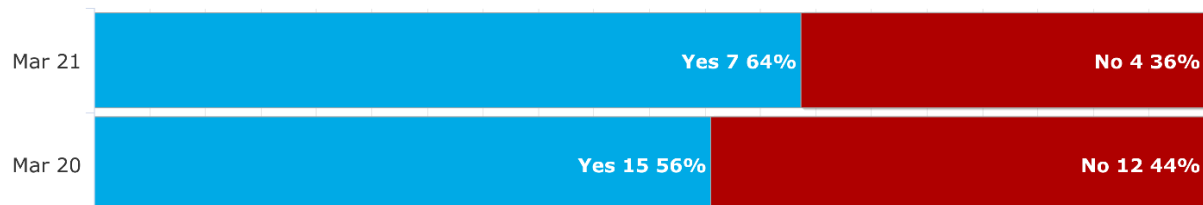


### Timeliness

3.10. Although there is no specified time limit for statutory complaints about adult social care, the council's target for responding to adult services complaints is 10 working days which can be extended to 20 working days. If a response is not provided within 20 working days, the complaint will be informed and provided with a response timeline. Figure 6 shows that in 2020/21 the percentage of complaints responded to within timescale is 64% (7/11), an improvement on 2019/20 (56% 15/27). This improvement reflects the changes made to the way in which Optalis manages complaints.

**Figure 6: Percentage of adults' complaints responded within timescales**

**Adults Complaints within timescales: Number and Percentage**



### Compliments

3.11. In 2020/21 adults' services received 16 compliments, 6 less than 2019/20 (22). Staff sometimes fail to record the compliments they receive; however they do receive them and are regularly encouraged to log them. It is encouraging however that overall there have been more compliments (16) than complaints (11) in adults services in 2020/21. Due to the pandemic there had been limited contact between staff and customers, which we think has reduced the number interactions which generate compliments.

## Learnings from complaints







- 3.12. Adult Services are constantly learning from their complaints and striving to improve the quality of services provided. Below are some of the key learnings from the complaints made.
- 3.13. The Adult Services complaints upheld in 20/21 comprised a mixture of one case of confusion in care arrangements which led to an arrangement fee being levied incorrectly, as a result financial awareness training is being planned for all social care staff who undertake assessments. The second was concerning staff attitude which led to formal action. In another case there was some confusion how a couple who lacked capacity were supported, this resulted in increased support to a member of staff and a revised practice guidance note. Another was a limited error of communication where one family was feedback to, but not the other. One complaint was regarding services provided by a domiciliary care company as a result of the complaint staff training took place regarding communication between staff and families.

## 4. Children's Complaints Processes Summary (Statutory and Corporate)

### Summary

- 4.1. 2020/21 saw a total of 50 children's complaints. Table 4 summarises the volume of children's complaints (both statutory and corporate) received and the Stage 1 outcome in comparison to 2019/20. 2020/21 saw 69% of complaints upheld or partially upheld marginally higher than 2019/20 (67%) and 49% of complaints responded to within timescales (56% 2019/20) (*Table 4*). Details on Children's Statutory and Children's Corporate complaints can be found in sections 5 and 6.

**Table 4: Children's Complaints (Statutory and Corporate): Summary of Complaints at Stage 1**

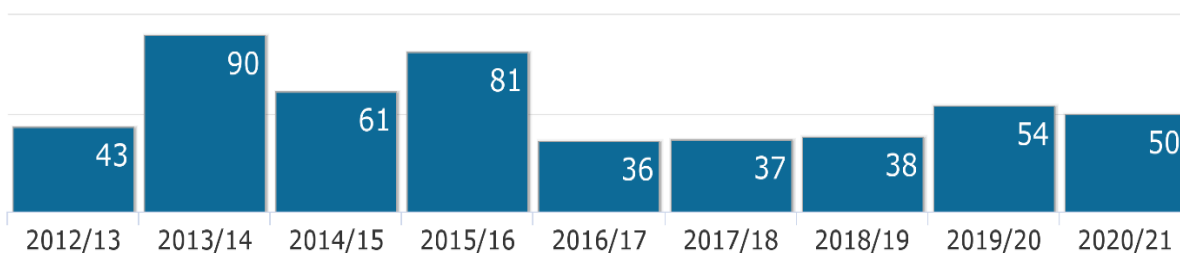
| No. of complaints   | Upheld   | Partially Upheld  | Not Upheld   | No Finding      | In Progress at the time of reporting | Upheld or Partially Upheld  | Responded to within timescales  |
|---|--|---|--|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 50  2019/20 (54) | 8%  2019/20 (19%) | 61%  2019/20 (48%) | 22 %  2019/20 (31%) | 2% 2019/20 (2%) | 6%                                   | 69%  2019/20 (67%) | 49%  2019/20 (56%) |

### Complaints received

- 4.2. Figure 7 shows the total volume of children's complaints in the last 9 years. There has been some fluctuation in volumes since the peak in 2015/16 (81) and in 2020/21 50 complaints were received, a 7% reduction on 2019/20 volumes (54).
- 4.3. Of the 50 complaints, 28% (14/50) were statutory and 72% (36/50) were corporate.

**Figure 7: Children's Complaints Volumes: Trends over the years**

**Total volume of complaints (Children's Corporate and Statutory)**



### **Compliments**

- 4.4. In 2020/21 the children's services received 28 compliments 35 less than 2019/20 (63). It is not clear why this is, however, teams within the organisation will continue to be encouraged to share compliments they receive with the compliments and complaints team so that they can be logged. Without a doubt, the pandemic has had an impact on this. This includes schools not being open for all of the time, staff sickness and self-isolating, as well as people not being focused on this aspect of work, as they have been firefighting.

### **Learnings from complaints**

- 4.5. Listed in 4.6 are some of the learnings from the children's complaints which be embedded to constantly improve on the service delivered.
- 4.6. The processes which involve Customer Service colleagues are reviewed on an annual basis or when a gap is identified. A number of Customer Service colleagues have been established as 'Super users' and have received additional training with teams such as school admissions and school transport to enhance their knowledge and improved their ability to offer support to residents. The Call Back system is being successfully used by both school admissions and school transport. This system avoids parents having to repeatedly contact the Customer Service centre and avoids multiple communications to teams regarding the same issue.

### **Social Care and early help:**

- Have revised the process for managing Stage 1's, in order to be more streamlined, and anticipate seeing an improvement in timeliness as a result.
- Have introduced a new process for quality assuring assessments, based on feedback about factual inaccuracies.
- Parents/carers are now required to sign assessments to say they are factually accurate.

### **SEND Team:**

- The SEND team have updated their processes to improve communication about cases which have to be paused in the complaint process if taken to Tribunal for resolution.
- Long-running concerns are now put into the complaints processes earlier to help drive increased clarity for residents.

## 5. Statutory Children's Complaints

5.1 Most complaints about children's social care must follow a series of steps set out in law, known as the children's statutory complaints procedure. The statutory guidance, 'Getting the best from complaints' sets out which of a council's children's social care functions can be considered under the procedure. Generally, assessments and services in the following areas should be considered under the statutory procedure:

- Children in need
- Looked after children
- Special Guardianship support
- Post-adoption support

5.2 In 2020/21 there were 14 statutory complaints which is 26% less than 2019/20 (19).

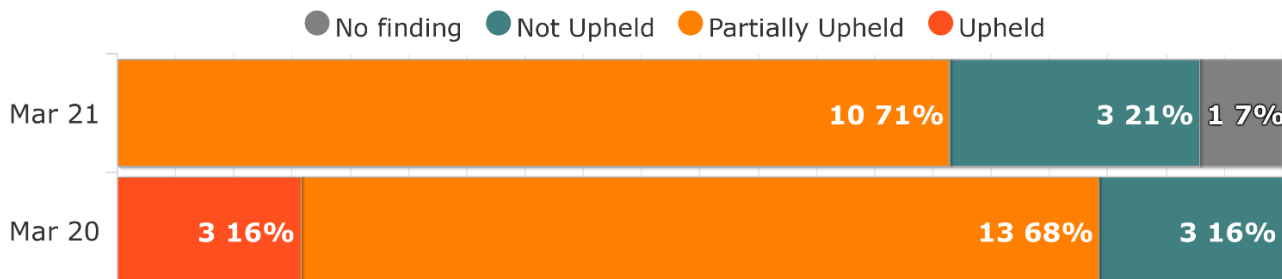
### Stage 1 Outcome

5.1. At the time of data extraction for preparation of this report all 14 children's statutory complaints had an outcome recorded. Further breakdown of children's statutory complaints shows that none were upheld, 71% (10/14) partially upheld, 21% (3/14) not upheld and 7% (1/14) with no finding (Figure 8).

5.2. From Figure 8 it can be seen that 71% of the complaints were upheld/partially upheld in 2020/21 which is less than 2019/20 by 13 (84% complaints upheld/partially upheld).

**Figure 8: Children's Statutory Complaints by Stage 1 outcome**

Children's Statutory Complaints where Stage 1 Outcome has been recorded

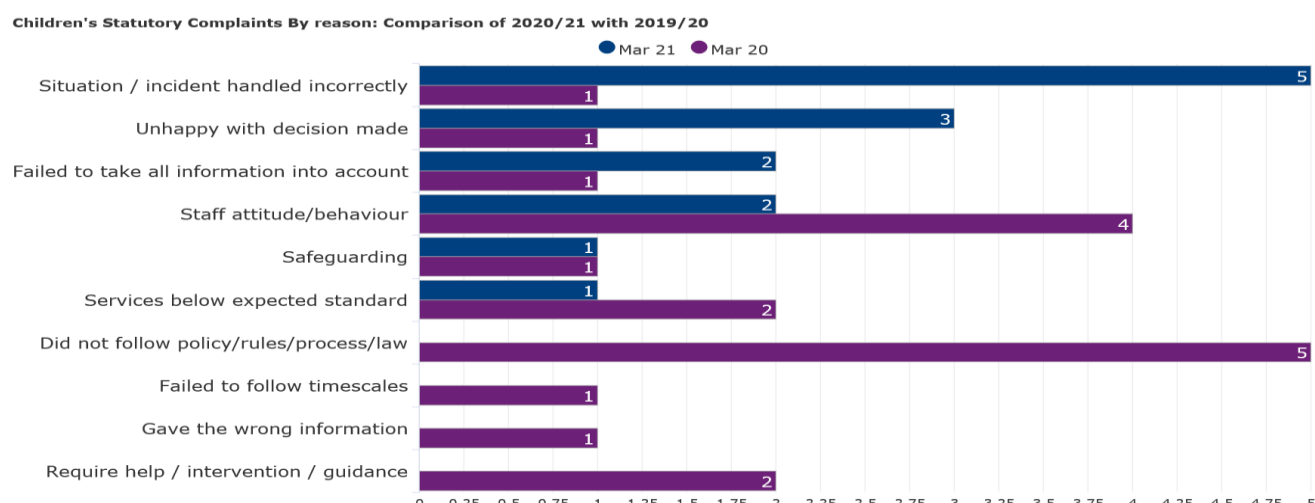


### Reasons and outcome

5.3.

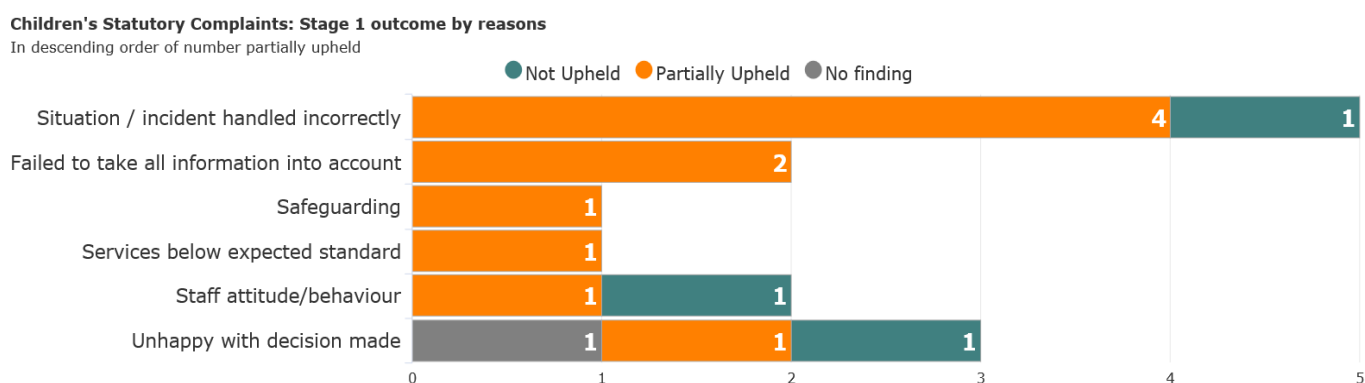
5.4. Figure 9 shows the breakdown of children's statutory complaints by reasons. 2020/21 saw statutory children's complaints being recorded by fewer reasons (6) when compared to 2019/20 (10) and with only 5 or less complaints recorded by each of the reasons. The reason with most complaints was "Situation/incident handled incorrectly" (36% 5/14).

**Figure 9: Children's Statutory complaints: Breakdown by reason**



5.5. Figure 10 breaks down Stage 1 outcome by reasons for children's statutory complaints. It is noteworthy that none of the complaints were upheld. Out of the 10 partially upheld complaints, "Failed to take all information into account", "Safeguarding" and "Services below standards" are the three reasons where 100% of complaints made were partially upheld. However, it should also be noted that very few complaints (1 or 2) were made against these reasons.

**Figure 10: Children's Stage 1 Statutory Complaints outcome by reason**



### Stage 1 Timeliness

5.6. The timescale for dealing with children's statutory Stage 1 complaints is 10 working days. However, this can be extended to 20 working days for more complex complaints or if additional time is required. The timeliness of response for statutory complaints in 2020/21 was 50% (7/14) an increase from 2019/20 by 13 (37% 7/19) (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Percentage of Children's Statutory Complaints responded with timescales**



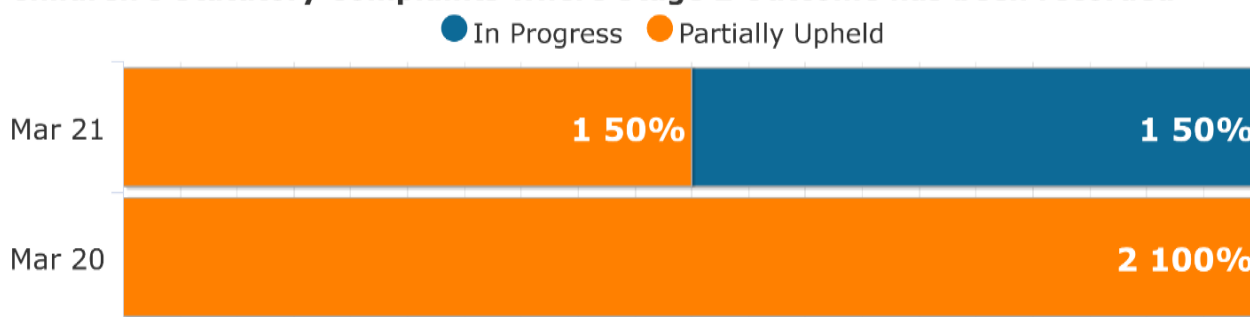


### Stage 2 Outcome

- 5.7. At Stage 2, the complaints are investigated by an independent investigating officer (IO) who will work with an independent person (IP).
- 5.8. In 2020/21 only 2 complaints (14% 2/14) had progressed to Stage 2 which is the same number as in 2019/20 (11% 2/19).
- 5.9. Out of 2 complaints that had progressed to Stage 2, 1 had been partially upheld and 1 in progress at the time of data extract for preparation of this report. (Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Children's Stage 2 Statutory Complaints by outcome**

#### Children's Statutory Complaints where Stage 2 Outcome has been recorded



### Stage 2 Timeliness

- 5.10. The timescale for dealing with children's statutory Stage 2 complaints is 25 to 65 working days. At the time of data extraction for preparation of this report, 1 complaint had been responded to within timescale and 1 was in progress making timeliness to respond 50% in 2020/21 when compared to 100% in 2019/20 (2/2). N.B. these are very low numbers, which clearly skew the percentages.

### Stage 3

- 5.11. At Stage 3, complaints are reviewed to ensure the processes were followed at each stage by a panel comprising of three people, one of which will be appointed as the chair who is independent of the service that the complaint is about. The Panel produces a written report of what was discussed and provides recommendations for the resolution of the issues. One complaint progressed to Stage 3. This was a Stage 1 complaint made in July 2019 and the Stage 3 Panel review meeting took place in July 2020.

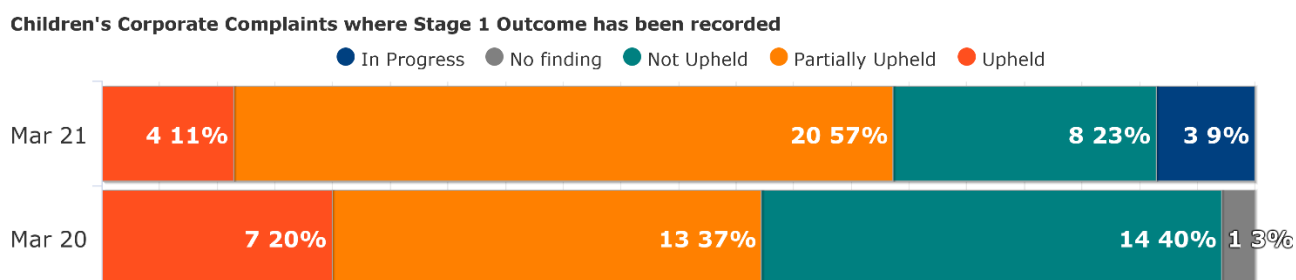
## 6. Children's Corporate Complaints

- 6.1. Children's complaints that are not taken through the statutory process will follow the corporate complaint route. In 2020/21 there were 36 corporate complaints 1 more than 2019/20 (35).

### Stage 1 Outcome

- 6.2. At the time of data extraction for preparation of this report, 32 complaints had a Stage 1 outcome recorded and 3 were in progress.
- 6.3. Further breakdown of children's corporate complaints shows 11% (4/35) were upheld, 57% (20/35) partially upheld, 23% (8/35) not upheld, 9% (3/35) in progress.
- 6.4. Figure 13 shows breakdown of complaints at Stage 1 by outcome. There has been lesser proportion of children's corporate complaints upheld (11%) when compared to 2019/20 (20%), however a higher proportion of complaints partially upheld 57% (2019/20 37%).

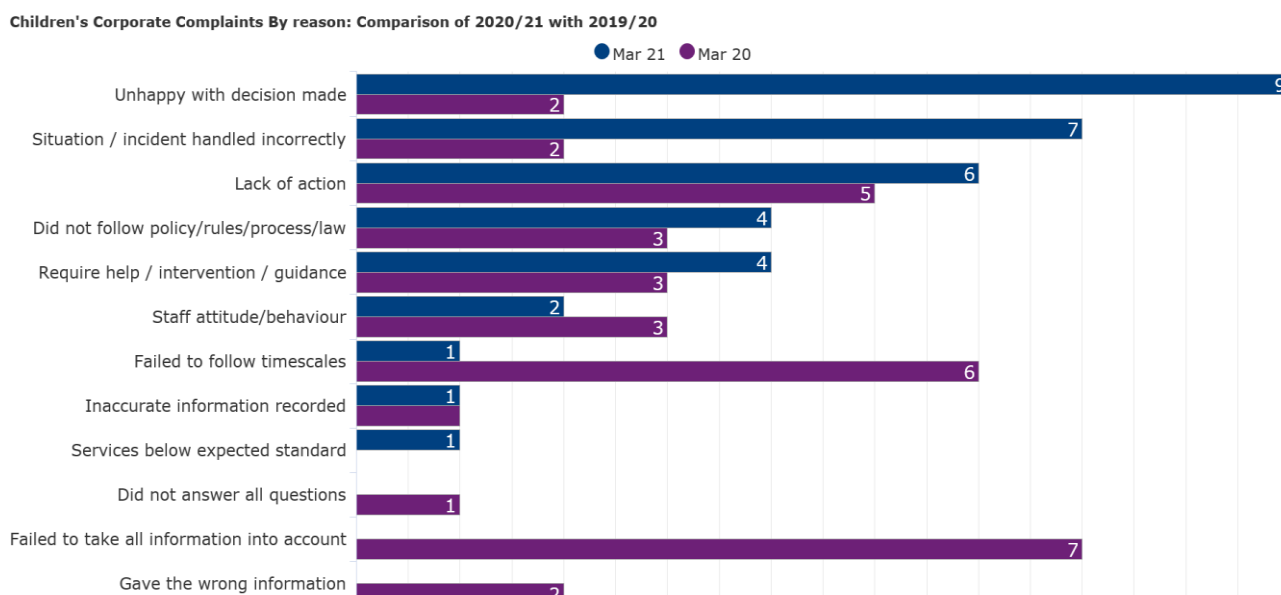
**Figure 13 Children's Corporate Complaints by Stage 1 Outcome**



### Reasons and Outcome

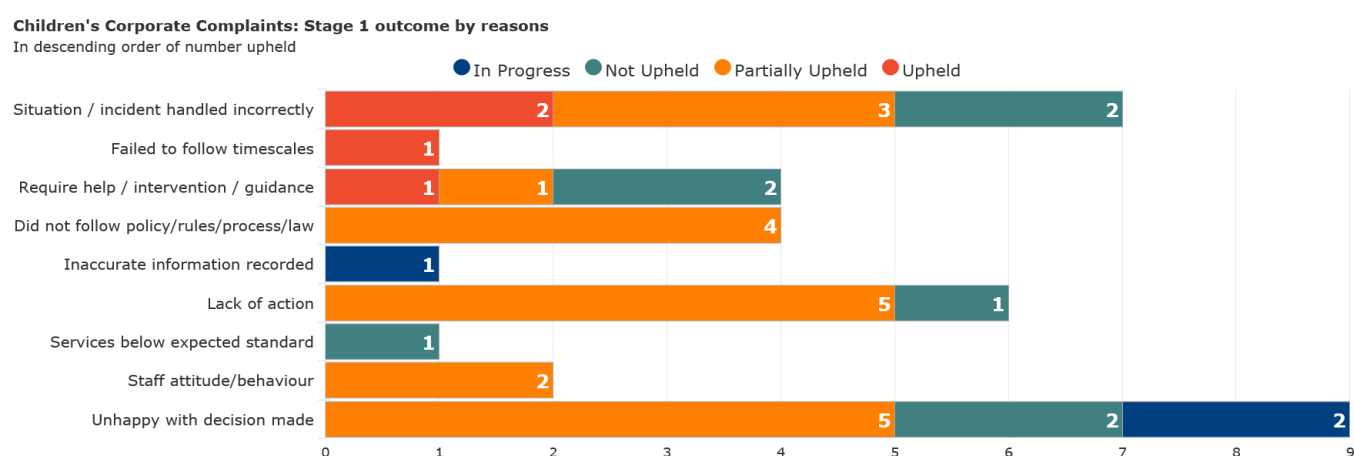
- 6.5. Figure 14 shows the breakdown of children's corporate complaints made by reasons. 2020/21 saw children's corporate complaints being recorded by fewer reasons (9) when compared to 2019/20 (11). The top 3 reasons in 2020/21 were "Unhappy with decision made" (26% 9/35), "Situation/incident handled incorrectly" (20%, 7/35) and "Lack of Action" (17% 6/35).

**Figure 14: Children's Corporate complaints: Breakdown by reason**



- 6.6.
- 6.7.
- 6.8.
- 6.9. **Figure 15** shows the breakdown of outcome at Stage 1 by various reasons. Looking at the number of complaints upheld/partially upheld for the top 3 reasons, 56% (5/9) were partially upheld against “Unhappy with decision made”, 71% (5/7) were upheld/partially upheld against “Situation/incident handled incorrectly” and 83% (5/6) were partially upheld against “Lack of Action”.

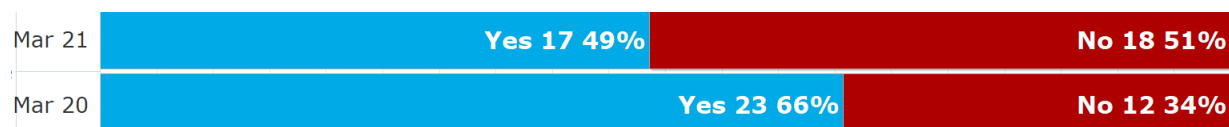
**Figure 15: Children’s Stage 1 Corporate Complaints outcome by reason**



### Stage 1 Timeliness

- 6.6 The timescale for dealing with children’s corporate Stage 1 complaints is 10 working days. However, this can be extended to 20 working days for more complex complaints or if additional time is required. There has been a decrease in timeliness of response for Corporate complaints in 2020/21 (49% 17/35) in comparison to 2019/20 (66% 23/35). This decrease was an impact of the pandemic with staff self-isolating, being off sick etc, for example not being able to speak to particular individuals to process the complaint. Also there were issues with the process, which have resulted in the development of a revised process for dealing with Stage 1 complaints.
- 6.7 The decrease in timeliness in 2020/21 was because a significant number of the complaints were those where the resident was not happy with the decision made so efforts were made to find alternative solutions, particularly with SEND related complaints. The deadlines were not extended to ensure there was the shortest possible delay for these families.

**Figure 16: Percentage of Children's Corporate Complaints responded to within timescales**



### Stage 2 Outcome

6.8 Out of the 35 children's corporate complaints 11 (31%) had progressed to Stage 2 which is 6 more than 2019/20 (14% 5/35).

6.9

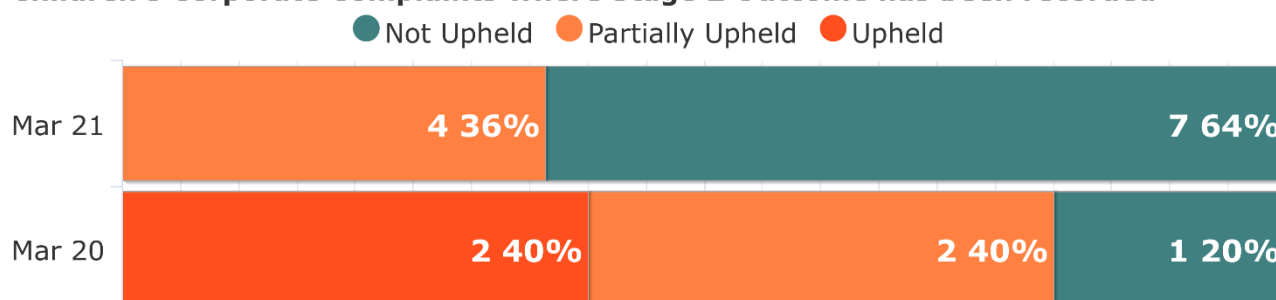
6.10

6.11

6.12 **Figure 17** breaks down the Stage 2 children's corporate complaints by outcome showing that none were upheld, 36% (4/11) partially upheld and 64% (7/11) not upheld. This is very positive outcome when compared to 2019/20 where 80% of Stage 2 complaints were upheld/partially upheld.

**Figure 17: Children's Stage 2 Corporate Complaints by outcome**

#### Children's Corporate Complaints where Stage 2 Outcome has been recorded



### Stage 2 Timeliness

6.13 The timescale for dealing with children's corporate Stage 2 complaints is 20 working days. The percentage of Stage 2 children's corporate complaints responded to within timescale was 91% (10/11) a considerable increase from 2019/20 (80% 4/5). This increase in timeliness to respond at Stage 2 when compared to Stage 1 could be attributed to lesser number of complaints progressing to Stage 2 and an increase in the timescale at Stage 2.

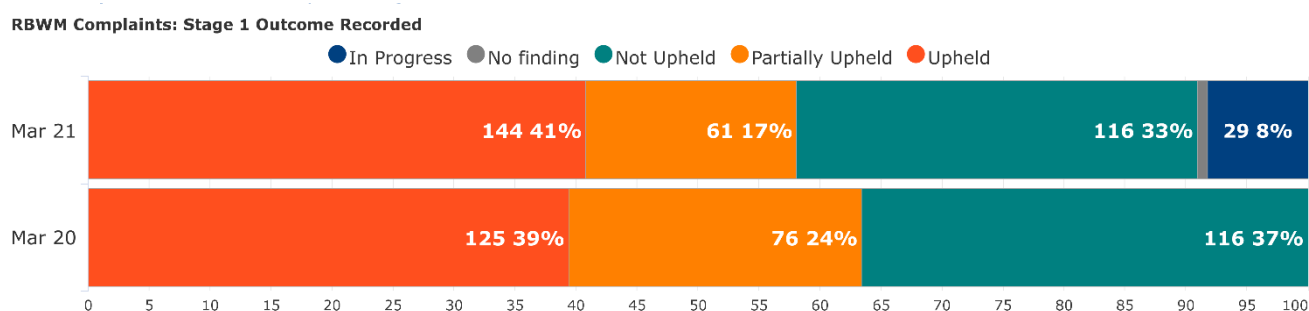
## 7. RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints Process

7.1. In 2020/21 85% (354/415) of all complaints were progressed as complaints under the formal corporate complaints process. This is an increase on 2019/20 (80%, 317/398).

### Stage 1 Outcome

- 7.2. At the time of data extraction for preparation of this report, 324 complaints had a Stage 1 outcome recorded, 29 were in progress and an outcome had not yet been reached.
- 7.3. Figure 18 shows the breakdown of Stage 1 complaints by outcome recorded. 41% (144/353) complaints were upheld (39% in 2019/20), 17% (61/353) partially upheld (24% in 2019/20), 33% (116/353) not upheld (37% in 2019/20), 1% (3/353) where there was no finding; insufficient evidence to make a decision and 8% (29/353) in progress.
- 7.4. 2020/21 saw less proportion of complaints upheld/partially upheld (57%) when compared to 2019/20 (63% upheld/partially upheld).

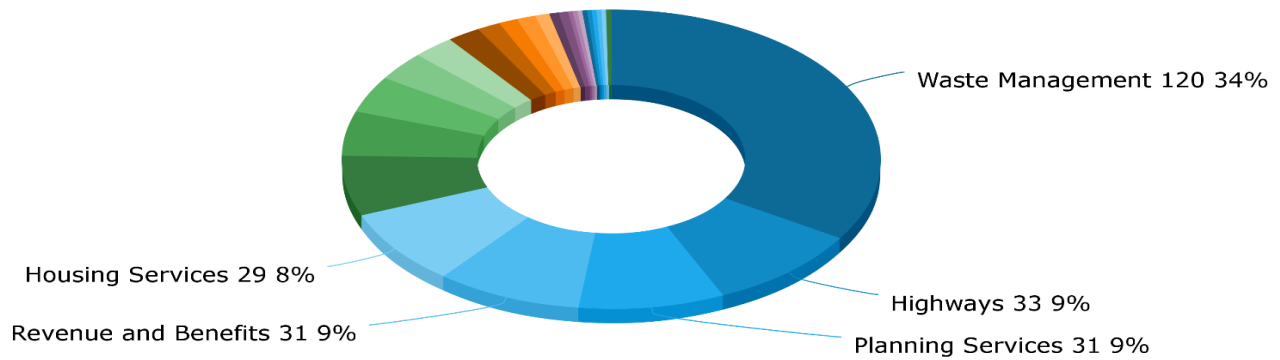
**Figure 18: RBWM Formal Corporate Stage 1 complaints by outcome recorded**



### Top 5 service areas for complaints

- 7.5. Figure 19 shows the top 5 service areas for customer complaints in 2020/21 of which Waste Management is the highest (34%, 120/353) followed by Highways (9%, 33/353), Planning Services (9%, 31/353), Revenue and Benefits (9%, 31/353) and Housing Services (8%, 29/353).
- 7.6. The impact of Covid on the community and the economy has been felt in a number of areas of the council's operations. Waste and recycling collections moved to alternate weekly collections from 6th April 2020 during the COVID-19 outbreak as there were reductions in staff availability due to ill health or needing to self-isolate. Weekly household waste and recycling collections resumed from 17 August 2020 with a review in collection routes to make them more efficient and environmentally friendly. However, this had significant and enduring problems causing disruption in waste collection mainly in the month of September 2020 leading to increase in the number of complaints. This also had a knock-on effect on the volume of calls to the Customer Contact Centre (18,671 in September) and total digital form submissions (16,649 in September).

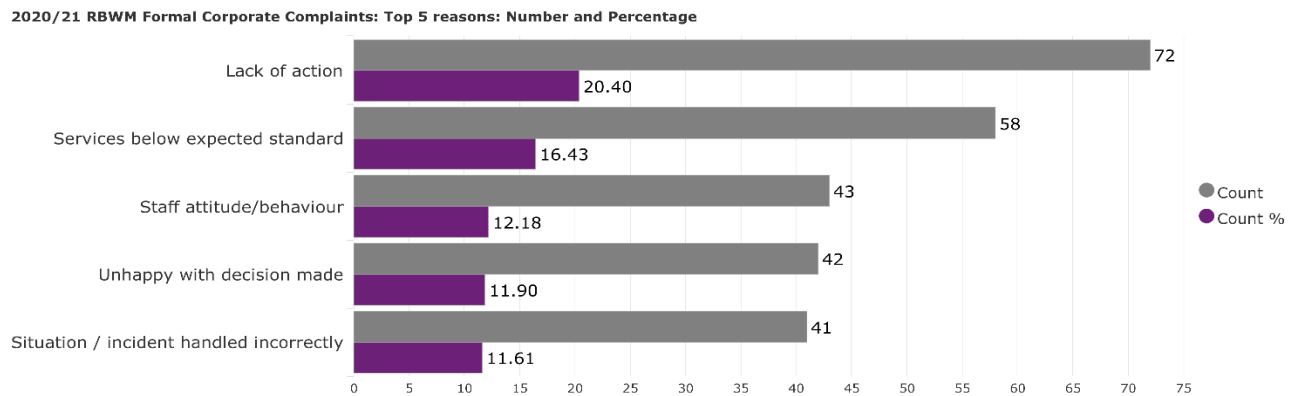
**Figure 19: Top 5 service areas for RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints received**



### Reasons and outcomes

7.7. Figure 20 highlights the top 5 reasons for customer complaints in 2020/21 with one-fifth of the complaints being recorded against “Lack of Action” (20% 72/353).

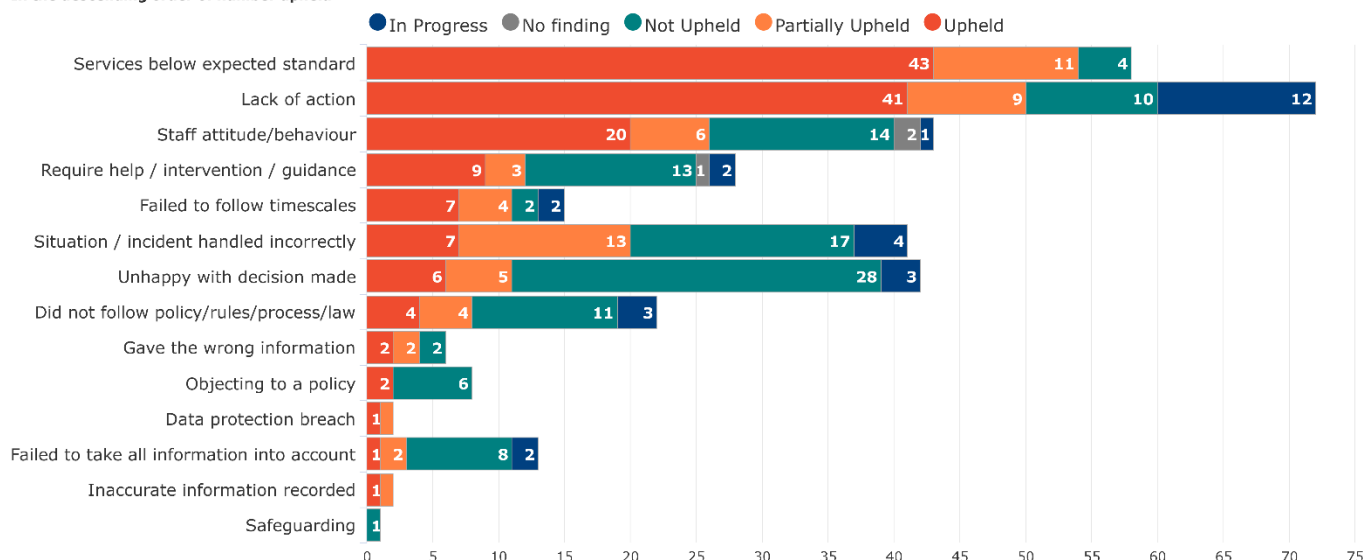
**Figure 20: 2020/21 Top 5 reasons for RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints**



7.8. Figure 21 shows the breakdown of Stage 1 complaints outcome by the reason for the complaint. The Top 3 reasons where the most complaints were upheld/partially upheld are “Services below expected standard” (54), “Lack of action” (50) and “Staff attitude/behaviour” (26).

**Figure 21: RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints Stage 1 outcome by reason**

**RBWM Complaints: Stage 1 Outcome by reason**  
In the descending order of number upheld

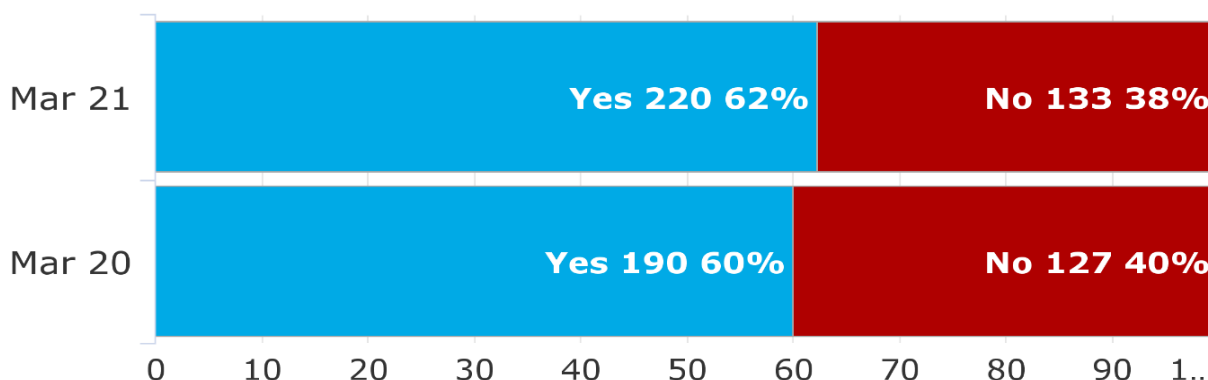


### Timeliness at Stage 1

7.9. The timescale for responding to a Stage 1 RBWM formal corporate complaint is 10 working days. Figure 22 shows an increase in the percentage of complaints responded to within timescale (62% 220/353 in 2020/21) in comparison to 2019/20 (60% 190/317).

**Figure 22: Percentage of RBWM Formal Corporate Stage 1 Complaints responded to within timescale**

**RBWM Stage 1 complaints responded to within timescale**  
Number and Percentage



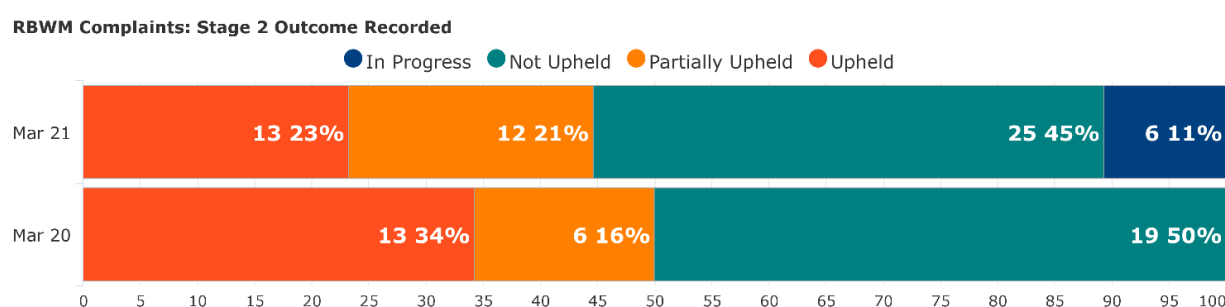
7.10. The previous complaints reporting system (JADU) would automatically send reminders to relevant teams or services with regard to any outstanding complaints or complaints due to expire soon. Since September 2020 a new complaint reporting system has been introduced and this facility is currently unavailable, however the compliments and complaints team continue to send a weekly report to relevant teams or services to ensure timescales are not missed.

7.11. A review of the timescales associated with Stage 1 of the RBWM formal corporate complaints process was undertaken in 2020/21 and from 2021/22 the timescales will be increased from 10 working days to 20 working days, with the ability to extend this by a further 20 working days if required. This change will allow officers more time to fully and robustly investigate complaints that are raised.

## Stage 2 RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints

- 7.12. If a complainant feels certain areas have not been addressed after receiving a response at Stage 1 of the corporate complaints process, they may request a review by the director of the service. In 2020/21 16% (56/353) of Stage 1 complaints progressed to Stage 2, an increase from 2019/20 (12%, 38/317).
- 7.13. Breaking down the 56 Stage 2 complaints, 13 (23%) were upheld, 12 (21%) were partially upheld, 25 (45%) were not upheld and 6 (11%) were “In Progress” (Figure 23).
- 7.14. Even though 2020/21 saw an increase in the volumes of complaints progressing to Stage 2, only 44% of them were upheld/partially upheld when compared to 2019/20 (50%).

**Figure 23: RBWM Formal Corporate Stage 2 complaints by outcome recorded**



## Timeliness at Stage 2

- 7.15. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescales at Stage 2 is 88% (49/56) 7 less than 2019/20 (94% 36/38). Timeliness of response at Stage 2 is better than at Stage 1 and this could be because there are fewer complaints progressing to Stage 2. Additionally, the timescale for response at Stage 2 is 20 working days whereas at Stage 1 is 10 working days.

## Key learning from RBWM Formal Corporate Complaints

- 7.16. An important part of the complaints process is capturing the learning and embedding good practice across the council. Following are the learning that have been identified by various services areas.

### Planning

- 7.17. A number of planning complaints tend to relate to customers who are dissatisfied with the decision for one reason or another, however the general theme emerging from complaints during this period is considered to be related to a lack of communication. This primarily appears to relate to lower staffing levels and more limited communications options during the period of remote working.
- 7.18. The service is seeking to address this emerging theme through a focus on recruitment. We are also reinforcing customer service expectations to existing staff, so that they communicate even if only to let customers know that more time is needed.

### Waste



- 7.19. This was a challenging year for waste and recycling services, with two major service changes. In April 2020 the service moved to alternate weekly collections as a result of staff shortages due to Covid 19, with some disruption to the service as a result. In August 2020, the weekly waste and recycling collections were reinstated, and a new collection model was put in place. This new model was not effective and resulted in high numbers of missed collections. In October further collection day changes were made and a collection service over 6 days, including scheduled Saturday collections, was implemented.
- 7.20. Staff have worked very hard with Serco staff and customer services to put in place systems to identify issues and provide feedback quickly, using a shared daily issues sheet which is updated by council staff and Serco daily to update on outstanding collections and resolutions. A new contract manager and operations manager at Serco have been put in place and have made changes to improve the number of missed collections, which has helped to reduce complaints caused by problems with the service. The collections are now running within the expected KPIs and complaints are at a lower level.
- 7.21. Customer service centre staff were giving additional training to handle calls related to waste correctly in the first instance. Calls to customer service centre were temporarily transferred from 1 October 2020 to 15 January 2021 to resolve waste collection complaints straightway and to ease pressure on them.

### **Housing**

- 7.22. Housing have recognised the challenges of the current telephony system and are working with the transformation team to ensure a streamlined process is made available to enable all calls to be captured and responded to in a timely manner.
- 7.23. The housing service also recognises the need for ongoing training, which is now factored into the working week and takes place every Wednesday afternoon, conducted by internal and external providers.

### **Revenues, Benefits, Libraries and Resident Services**

- 7.24. During 2020/21, as a result of the pandemic, a number of complaints were received in connection with the Registration Service's inability to conduct certain ceremonies such as weddings. This was not a service area which previously routinely received complaints, but couples were understandably frustrated at the restrictions imposed, either not being able to have any ceremony at all, or as a result of the limited numbers able to attend. RBWM chose to adapt policies covering this situation to be more flexible with regard to re-booking but did not offer refunds. The majority of complaints, associated with the Registration Service, were in connection with this.
- 7.25. Other areas within the Revenues, Benefits, Libraries and Resident Services area, such as Council Tax and Business Rates, had to adapt to the changing support announced by Central Government but the criteria for such support did not always meet the expectations of our residents.

### **Highways**

7.26. Highway Services deliver a number of resident facing services which impact upon every resident, household, business and visitor to the Royal Borough. Services are often delivered which cause disruption (for example road works), these are essential and widespread as the council continues to invest in infrastructure across the Borough.

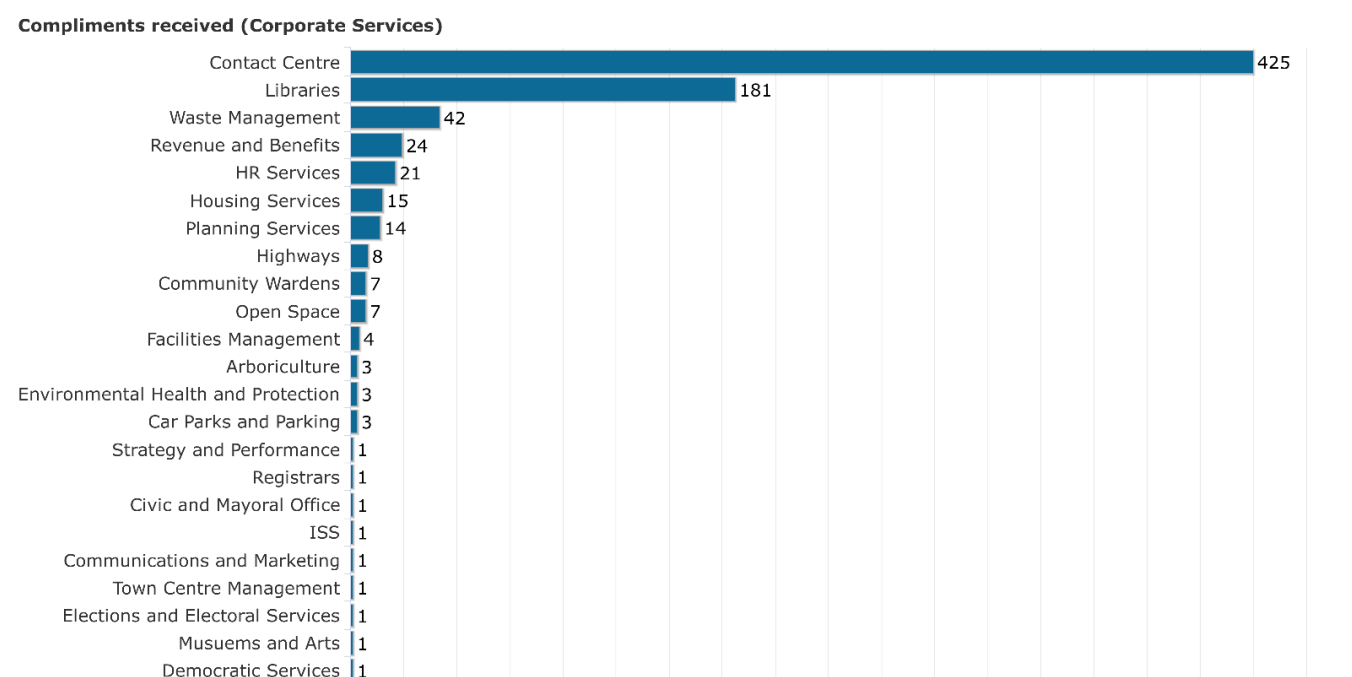
7.27. As a result, the number of complaints received by this service area would be expected to be high when compared to other service areas. In order to manage this, the Highways service area has worked closely with the Complaints team to streamline the allocation of complaints, regularly monitor progress and reduce the number of complaints not responded to within set timescales.

## 8. Compliments received

8.1. In 2020/21 RBWM Corporate services received 766 compliments which is a 116% increase compared to 2019/20 (355).

8.2. Figure 24 sets out the volume of complaints received by teams. The team in receipt of the most compliments was the Customer Contact Centre (56%, 425/766), followed by Libraries (24%, 181/766) and Waste Management (6%, 42/766).

**Figure 24: Compliments received by teams**



8.3. From the outset of the pandemic, call centre staff were engaged in setting up and training council staff in the use of new technologies to support engagement with local community groups and also local residents who may be shielded as a result of particular vulnerabilities to the virus. More than half of the compliments to Customer Contact Centre (56% 425/766) evidences a positive community engagement which was a key focus during the pandemic.

8.4. Libraries had a particular focus on the growth of the service's digital offer to support home-based leisure and learning and to mitigate the risk of a widening digital divide. The

introduction of “click and collect” and “click and deliver” services has maintained a physical link between the service and communities throughout the year. Libraries received nearly a quarter of the compliments (24% 181/766).

- 8.5. Waste management being in the top 3 teams receiving compliments (42) shows that despite disruption in waste collection for a short period of time the service was quick to recover to meet customer expectations.
- 8.6. The variety of compliments across different teams show the breadth of work carried out by the council and the positive difference it makes to the residents.
- 8.7. In general the overall response to the council’s management of the borough’s COVID response was outstanding. RBWM’s COVID-19 community response focused on supporting a network of dozens of local voluntary efforts, maximising the local help available to vulnerable and shielding residents. Our centralised call centre acted as a conduit for support, using both Amazon Connect and our Lyon 2.0 system to connect those looking for help to those readily delivering it in the community.
- 8.8. With a greater than 90% success rate of contacting residents in need of help, we received dozens of written and verbal compliments from residents on the helpfulness of staff and our ability to work closely with the community. Indeed many staff went above and beyond, personally helping residents well outside of working hours, which didn’t go unnoticed.
- 8.9. Such was the success of our facilitatory approach, partners at MHCLG asked us for written case-studies and interviews on how we’d worked successfully alongside our communities. There were articles in the Maidenhead Advertiser, the video sponsored by Amazon AWS on our approach, an invitation to submit written evidence to the Kruger Commission, an invite to speak at a national community learning event and even a phone-call with one of the MHCLG advisers in Downing Street who’d become aware of our work in RBWM. This feedback has since reminded us of the power of working in tandem with our local communities - not trying to enforce ‘command and control’, ‘top down’, bureaucratic interventions on communities, but instead working with local people, developing on local strengths, and instead taking a facilitatory role.

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix A: LGSCO Annual Review letter 2021



21 July 2021

By email

Mr Sharkey  
Managing Director  
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council

Dear Mr Sharkey

#### **Annual Review letter 2021**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

#### **Complaint statistics**

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

**Compliance with recommendations** - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

**Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority** - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

This year, we issued a public report about your Council after we found it did not do enough to consider a couple's circumstances who required social care support. Our investigation found the Council did not properly consider whether the couple could continue to live at home with live-in care workers after the woman had a stay in hospital. The woman was moved to a care home; a decision that was made permanent without any formal best interest decision and little regard to the couple's dignity or basic human rights. The man, left at home without visits to his wife, quickly deteriorated. The Council did not assess his needs properly and the care he received at home, from two care providers, was not adequate. He died before the Council belatedly responded to family concerns.

It was disappointing the Council initially failed to respond properly to our enquiries in this case, but I am pleased to note it accepted fault on receipt of our draft report and agreed to all our recommendations. The Council's response to the public report was excellent. As we recommended, it gave a fulsome and proper apology to the family and paid them £2,000 in recognition of the distress it caused and the time and trouble in bringing the complaint. It also provided evidence it had implemented the recommended service improvements. These included reviewing other cases where couples had been separated by their care needs, making sure assessment practice is consistent and Care Act compliant, reviewing commissioning practice, and following up to ensure care providers sustain improvements following complaints of poor practice.

I am pleased to note the Council gave clear public recognition that what had happened was unacceptable and welcome the Council's willingness to learn lessons from this case and complete the actions we agreed.

### **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget

and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

## **Appendix B: Council's complaints process and procedures**

The principle behind the council's complaints procedure is to ensure that every opportunity for resolution is sought through dialogue or local resolution before a complaint is submitted. Where agreement is not achieved someone has the right to complain and the complaints process has different stages dependant on the area of service the complaint is about.

Complaints made about the council's services are dealt with under three processes. The formal corporate complaints process for general council activity such as: council tax; housing; highways; communications; democratic services and so on; and the statutory adult and statutory children's processes.

The different complaint processes have different stages, however regardless of which policy a complaint is investigated under, or the outcome, the complainant still has the right to refer their complaint on to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The different stages are:

- The formal corporate complaints process contains two stages.
- The adult complaints process contains one stage
- The children's complaints process contains three stages.

Although customers can refer complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) at any stage, the LGSCO will not normally investigate until the council have exhausted their complaints processes.

Complaints are made by email, phone call, letter, face to face or by logging the complaint online. All complaints received, along with comments and compliments, are recorded on the council's complaints database (Jadu). The Jadu system provides for compliments and complaints to be captured by number, types, themes, postal address and timeliness of complaint.

The council's complaints policies are intended for use by service users, customers, residents, businesses and visitors or their chosen representatives, which may include councillors.

The council's complaints process is managed through one team. This means the team is independent of the two statutory adult and children's services, ensures independence from services, removes the possibility of conflicts of interest and secures impartial challenges.

### **Quality assurance**

Effective complaint management is crucial to allow confidence on the part of complainants to submit complaints in the understanding that the council will take these seriously and respond.

When a complaint is received the complaints and compliments team focus on ensuring:

- The process for investigating the complaint is followed and on time.
- Complaint responses answer the questions asked and are clear and easy to read.
- Lessons learned and recommendations are captured to secure continual improvement – this includes one to one training/advice/meetings with relevant employees providing them with support and guidance on how best to resolve a complaint.
- Any actions or recommendations are noted on Jadu and monitored.

## Complaints processes – March 2021

Initially once received via online form, email, telephone call or face to face contact all complaints are logged on the complaints database (Drupal) for monitoring and tracking.

Once logged the complaint is acknowledged within 3 working days and customer informed whether this will be taken as a complaint and if so, under which complaints process

### Internal process

|                                   | <b>Adult services complaints</b>   | <b>Children's services complaints</b>  | <b>Corporate complaints</b>   | <b>Not within the formal complaints process</b> |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Stage 1</b>                    | <b>Statutory</b><br>No specific timescale but aim to respond within 10 working days.<br>Response from Service Manager or higher. | <b>Statutory</b><br>Up to 10 working days. Can agree extension for a further 10 working days.<br>Response from Head of Service.  | Up to 10 working days. Can agree extension for a further 10 working days.<br>Response from Head of Service. | N/A   |
| <b>Stage 2</b>                    | N/A  | <b>Statutory</b><br>25-65 working days. Completed by independent complaints investigators and report produced. Adjudicating letter in response to report completed by Children's Director of Social Care.          | Up to 20 working days.<br>Review of stage 1 complaint and response by Director.                             | N/A   |
| <b>Stage 3</b>                    | N/A  | <b>Statutory</b><br>Stage 3 independent panel. Up to 70 working days. Panel of three independent members who produce a report. Letter in response to the report completed by the Directors of Children's Services. | N/A   | N/A   |
| <b>Alternative appeal process</b> | N/A  | N/A  | N/A   | Customer given timescales for response          |

### External process

**LGSCO** - Can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman



## **Appendix C: National and legislative context – March 2021**

### **Formal corporate complaints**

The council's formal corporate complaints policy is discretionary and has been developed based on the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's guidance 'Running a complaints system - Guidance on good practice'.

### **Adult services**

The council has a statutory duty, under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, to have in place a complaints procedure for Adult Social Care services and is required to publish an annual report relating to the operations of its complaints procedures.

The Local Authority Social Services and NHS Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 introduced a single approach for dealing with complaints for both the NHS and Adult Social Care, the key principles of which are:

- Listening - establishing the facts and the required outcome.
- Responding - investigate and make a reasoned decision based on the facts/information.
- Improving - using complaints data to improve services and influence/inform the commissioning and business planning process.

### **Children's services**

The procedure for dealing with children's statutory complaints and representations is determined by the following legislation:

- The Children Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.
- The Children & Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and
- The accompanying guidance 'Getting the Best from Complaints' (DfE July 2006).

Qualifying individuals are defined in national guidance as the child or young person, their parent, carer or foster carer or 'anyone who could be seen to be acting in the best interests of the child.'

Under the regulations, the council is required to produce and publish an annual report.

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## WORK PROGRAMME - INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

To include consideration of items scheduled on the [Cabinet Forward Plan](#).

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duncan Sharkey (Chief Executive)</li> <li>• Andrew Durrant (Executive Director of Place)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>LINK OFFICERS &amp; HEADS OF SERVICE</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simon Dale (Interim Head of Highways)</li> <li>• Tracy Hendren (Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service)</li> <li>• Chris Joyce (Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth)</li> <li>• Adrien Waite (Head of Planning)</li> </ul> |

### MEETING: 18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022

| ITEM                           | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Budget 2022/23 Report          | <b>Lead Officers &amp; Finance</b>                         |
| Q2 Performance Update Report   | <b>Andrew Durrant</b> , <i>Executive Director of Place</i> |
| Annual Scrutiny Report – Draft | <b>Chairman &amp; Lead Officers</b>                        |
| Work Programme                 | Panel clerk  |
| <b>TASK AND FINISH</b>         |  |
| TBC                            |  |

### MEETING: 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022

| ITEM   | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER  |
|--|--|
| Q3 Performance Update Report   | <b>Andrew Durrant</b> , <i>Executive Director of Place</i> |
| Annual Scrutiny Report (Final version for approval and submission to Full Council) | <b>Chairman &amp; Lead Officers</b>                        |
| Work Programme   | Panel clerk  |
| <b>TASK AND FINISH</b>   |  |
| TBC  |  |

### ITEMS SUGGESTED BUT NOT YET PROGRAMMED

| ITEM  | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER  |
|---|--|
| Homelessness Strategy and Homelessness Forum Update | <b>Tracy Hendren</b> , <i>Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service</i> |
| Junction Improvements                               | <b>Chris Joyce</b> ,   |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
|                                       | <i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>  |
| M Maidenhead Town Centre CIL          | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| New Schools Infrastructure Plans      | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i><br><b>Kevin McDaniel,</b><br><i>Executive Director of Children's<br/>Services</i><br><b>Ben Wright,</b> |
| Ascot Redevelopment                   | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| Public Transport Requirements         | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| Carbon-free Power Infrastructure      | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| Air Quality and Traffic Monitoring    | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| Annual Monitoring Report              | <b>Adrien Waite,</b><br><i>Head of Planning</i>  |
| Pedestrian road safety                | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| Affordable Housing                    | <b>Tracy Hendren,</b><br><i>Head of Housing and Environmental<br/>Health Service</i>   |
| 20 mph speed limit across the Borough | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| 5G Update                             | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i>   |
| Street Lighting Review                | <b>Simon Dale,</b><br><i>Interim Head of Highways</i>  |

| <b>TASK AND FINISH GROUP SUGGESTIONS</b> | <b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>   |
|--|--|
| CIL                                      | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i> |
| Homelessness and housing solutions       | <b>Tracy Hendren,</b>  |

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
|                        | <i>Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service</i>  |
| Digital Infrastructure | <b>Chris Joyce,</b><br><i>Head of Infrastructure,<br/>Sustainability &amp; Economic Growth</i> |

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