

# **Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Annual Compliments and Complaints Report**

**1 April 2018 - 31 March 2019**

**“Building a borough for everyone – where residents and businesses grow, with opportunities for all”**

**Our vision is underpinned by six priorities:**

*Healthy, skilled and independent residents*

*Growing economy, affordable housing*

*Safe and vibrant communities*

*Attractive and well-connected borough*

*An excellent customer experience*

*Well-managed resources delivering value for money*

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#### **Frequently used acronyms**

LGSCO	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
RBWM	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution



## Complaints processes

	Adult services complaints	Children's services complaints	Corporate complaints	Not within the formal complaints process
Incoming concern	Received via online form, email, telephone call or face to face contact. However received, all complaints are logged on the complaints database (Jadu) 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			
Stage 1	<b>Statutory</b> No specific timescale but aim to respond within 10 working days. Response from Service Manager or higher.	<b>Statutory</b> Up to 10 working days. Can agree extension for a further 10 working days. Response from Head of Service.	Up to 10 working days. Can agree extension for a further 10 working days. Response from Head of Service.	N/A
Stage 2	N/A	<b>Statutory</b> 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. Review of stage 1 complaint and response by Director.	N/A
Stage 3	N/A	<b>Statutory</b> 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
LGSCO	Can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman			N/A
Alternative appeal process	N/A	N/A	N/A	Customer given timescales for response

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The annual report covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 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.
- 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 complaints and compliments team produce an annual report capturing all complaints and compliments. This allows the Council to assess how residents experience the Council in its entirety. Learning taken from compliments and complaints informs the services for improved operational satisfaction and could feed into the training needs analysis.
- 1.3 The council is a multi-faceted business, for instance council activity during 2018-19 included:
- 65,897 phone calls, 12,307 emails and 72,033 face-to-face enquiries.
  - 697,516 library loans from 913,711 visits.
  - 614 births / birth declarations and 903 deaths registered.
  - 704 marriages conducted and 960 notices of marriage/civil partnership taken
  - 432 people conferred British Citizenship
  - 85,375 visits to museums.
  - 67,577 tonnes of waste collected from residents, from over five million collections.
  - 315 referrals to children's safeguarding.
  - 57 families supported through the Troubled Families Program.
  - 185 adult transfers into long term care.
  - 668 support plan assessments
  - 353 adult safeguarding concerns investigated.
  - 1,908 planning applications determined.
  - 98.0% of council tax and 96.92% of business rates collected.
- 1.4 In 2018/19 the Council received 555 compliments an increase on the 463 received in 2017/18 and 437 complaints, significantly lower than in 2017-18 when 664 were received. The 437 complaints received is relatively low compared to the amount of activity and interactions with residents.
- 1.5 This report summarises the number and themes of compliments and complaints received. It provides details of compliments and complaints split by service area and response rate. For ease, the report is organised into sections:
- Section 2 Council's complaints processes and procedure.
  - Section 3 National and legislative context.
  - Section 4 Summary of activity.
  - Section 5 Formal corporate complaints and compliments.
  - Section 6 Adult services complaints and compliments.
  - Section 7 Children's services complaints and compliments.

## **2. COUNCIL'S COMPLAINTS PROCESS AND PROCEDURES**

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 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**
- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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.

### 3. NATIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

#### **Formal corporate complaints**

- 3.1 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**

- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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**

- 3.4 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).
- 3.5 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.'
- 3.6 Under the regulations, the council is required to produce and publish an annual report.

#### 4. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY

- 4.1 In 2018-19, the council received 1,638 contacts from customers that were initially recorded as complaints. This compares to 1,809 in 2017-18; a 10% decrease in contacts year-on-year.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 The total number of complaints that were progressed through stage 1 of the specific complaints process that they followed was 437.
- 4.4 Stage 2 and 3 complaints are escalations of stage 1 complaints and so are not counted as new complaints. Information on these will be shown separately in this report.
- 4.5 This report will look at complaints according to whether they were made under the formal corporate, the statutory adult or the statutory or corporate children's complaints processes, see table 1

**Table 1: complaints received**

		Adult	Children		
	Formal corporate	Statutory	Statutory	Corporate	Total
2018-19	380	19	28	10	437
2017-18	592	33	36		665

#### Children's services complaints

- 4.6 The reporting this year differentiates between children's statutory and children's corporate complaints. Both types of complaints are looked at within section 7.
- 4.7 A children's statutory complaint is invoked when the complaint is by or on behalf of a child in need or a child in care.
- 4.8 A children's corporate complaint covers all other complaints about children's services. The exception to this is complaints specifically regarding child protection conferences, which are taken under the Local Safeguarding Children's Board complaints process.

#### Themes

- 4.9 Complaints are captured as themes, see table 2.

**Table 2: themes of complaints 2018/19 and 2017/18**

	2018-19		2017-18	
Theme	Number	%	Number	%
Lack of action - did not do what we said we would	91	21%	150	23%
Require help, intervention or guidance	60	14%	30	5%

Theme	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
Attitude or behaviour of staff	48	11%	78	12%
Failed to follow timescales	43	10%	71	11%
Situation handled incorrectly	43	10%	54	8%
Services delivered at a lower standard than in our policy	42	10%	78	12%
Did not follow policy	38	9%	34	5%
Unhappy with the decision made	16	4%	61	9%
Failed to take all information into account	14	3%	10	2%
Did not answer all questions	9	2%	9	1%
Gave the wrong information	9	2%	24	4%
Inaccurate or wrong information recorded	7	2%	16	2%
Breach of data protection	6	1%	5	1%
Objecting to a policy	6	1%	15	2%
Safeguarding	5	1%	9	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 4.10 Complainants self-select the theme when they log their complaint via the council website. As this is the theme they feel is most relevant to their complaint the complaints and compliments team do not change this. Only one theme can be selected for each complaint and the information from themes is therefore an indicator only of the reasons behind often complex complaints.
- 4.11 As with 2017-18, the theme with the highest number of complaints received was lack of action. There are similarities between this theme and the theme of failed to follow timescales as they are both about actions not being taken by the council. Between them these two themes make up 31% of complaints.
- 4.12 It is notable that the number of complaints logged against the theme of require help, intervention or guidance has doubled in a year when the overall number has dropped. The majority of these (53) were recorded for complaints against corporate services. See table 10 for a further breakdown within this theme.

### Timescales

- 4.13 Each stage of the three individual complaint processes have indicative response times. However, these can be extended or alternative timescales agreed from the outset with the complainant. In 2018-19, there was an improvement in complaints responded to within agreed timescales compared to 2017-18, see Table 3.

**Table 3: Percentage of complaints responded to within timescale**

Year	Progressed complaints	Responded to within timescale	% within timescales
2018-19	437	280	64%
2017-18	644	329	51%

- 4.14 Processes are embedded to monitor the timeliness of responses more robustly, including weekly reports to services of outstanding complaints. Use of the council's performance management software InPhase continues to be refined and will give a further tool for service areas to monitor their complaints.

### Decisions

- 4.15 The outcome of complaints is recorded, see table 4.

**Table 4: Outcome of complaints**

	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Not yet concluded*	% Partially or fully upheld
2018-19	169	124	137	7	67%
2017-18	346	130	133	35	74%

\*It should be noted that the category 'not yet concluded' means that the complaint response had not been finalised at the time that the data snapshot was taken for this report.

### Local Government Social Care Ombudsman

- 4.16 The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) received 44 complaints and enquiries about the council in 2018-19, compared to 54 in 2017-18, see table 5.

**Table 5: complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO**

	Adult Care services	Benefits and Council Tax	Corporate and other services	Education and Children's services	Environment services	Highways and transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
2018-19	13	2	5	9	4	1	5	4	1	44
2017-18	14	4	4	12	5	3	4	11	1	58

- 4.17 The Ombudsman made 46 decisions during 2018-19 compared to 54 in 2017-18. This includes decisions on 14 enquiries submitted to the LGSCO in 2017-18 and 32 enquiries submitted in 2018-19. 12 enquiries made to the LGSCO in 2018-19 will be included in the decisions reported in 2019-20. See table 6.

**Table 6: LGSCO decisions 2018-19**

	Incomplete or invalid	Advice given	Referred back for local resolution	Closed after initial enquiry	Detailed investigations		Uphold rate of detailed investigations	Total
					Not upheld	Upheld		
2018-19	3	0	15	11	5	12	71%	46
2017-18	4	0	18	19	4	9	69%	54

See appendix 1, for full details of decisions as per the 2018-19 LGSCO annual letter on cases upheld and not upheld.

- 4.18 If we were to include those investigations closed after an initial enquiry to the council, then the upheld rate for 2018-19 is 42%. This is higher than in 2017-18 when under this calculation 28% would have been upheld.
- 4.19 The 12 complaints that were investigated and upheld were:
- Adult social care 8.
  - Children's 1.
  - Highways and transport 1.

- Planning and development 2.  
See sections 5.17, 6.17 and 7.16 for further details.

4.20 The upheld rate for detailed investigations remains similar to 2017-18.

### **LGSCO reports**

4.21 No public interest reports for the council were published in 2018-19.

### **Improvements in working with the LGSCO**

4.22 LGSCO enquiries are now logged on the complaints section of the customer contact database (Jadu) using a bespoke module. They can then be monitored more efficiently, improving the response times to the LGSCO.

### **Learning and improvements from complaints**

4.23 Understanding why complaints are made, establishing root causes, changing processes and delivering training as a result is essential to help drive improvements across the council. Listening to customers and reflecting on examples of where we did not get it right can highlight opportunities for improvement and increase satisfaction, fulfilling our strategic priority to provide an excellent customer experience.

4.24 Learning from complaints can be found in sections 5.18, 6.18 and 7.21.

### **Compliments**

4.25 In 2018-19, 555 compliments were recorded for teams or individuals across the council, see table 7. Compliments received 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 the directorate.

**Table 7: Compliments received**

	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Corporate *	446	303
Adult	19	50
Children's	90	103
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>456</b>

\* For the purpose of this report corporate services refers to compliments that were received by services other than those within adult and children's services.

4.26 There is overall a continuing improvement in compliments recorded in 2018-19, which have risen by 20% from 2017-18. This may be because of improved services, the ability for customers to record compliments themselves via the council's website and the readiness of services to share compliments that they have received. The exception to this is adult services, which has dropped from 50 to 19 compliments recorded. See section 6.17 for a commentary on this.

4.27 Examples of compliments received can be found in sections 5.20, 6.17 and 7.19.

## 5. FORMAL CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

### Overall corporate complaints summary

- 5.1 In 2018-19, there were 380 corporate complaints compared to 574 in 2017-18. This represents 87% of all complaints progressed. This compares to 2017-18 when 89% of all complaints progressed were formal corporate complaints

#### Internal process

- 66% were either fully or partially upheld.
- 54% were responded to within timescales.
- 446 compliments were received.

#### External process

- 26 corporate complaints or enquiries were decided by the LGSCO, of these:
  - 7 were investigated.
  - 2 were upheld.
  - 5 were not upheld.

### Complaints received

- 5.2 Table 8 details the number and percentage of stage 1 complaints received by service area.

**Table 8: Corporate complaints received by service**

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number of complaints	%	Number of complaints	%
Communities, Enforcement & Partnership	25	7%	34	6%
Communications	14	4%	2	0%
Finance	0	0%	3	1%
Housing Services	53	14%	59	10%
HR & Corporate Projects	0	0%	1	0%
Law & Governance	7	2%	5	1%
Library & Resident Services	38	10%	101	18%
Planning	39	10%	63	11%
Property Services	2	1%	3	1%
Revenues & Benefits	41	11%	34	6%
* Waste management	69	18%	100	17%
* Highways Includes Highways, Volker, street lighting and permitting & licensing	55	14%	106	18%
* Parking	33	9%	53	9.2%
* Outdoor facilities	4	1%	10	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Teams within Commissioning – Communities

- 5.3 Commissioning – Communities service area delivers the largest volume of resident facing services which impact upon every resident, household, business and visitor to the Royal Borough (for example: waste collections; highways; management of road works, parking and parks). 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.
- 5.4 As a result the number of complaints received by teams within this service area would be expected to be high when compared to other service areas. Despite this the service area as a whole reduced the number of complaints received by 40% with 108 fewer complaints. This accounts for 56% of the drop in complaints across corporate service areas. Commissioning – Communities, and Library and Resident services (see 5.6) together make up 88% of the total drop seen in formal corporate complaints.
- 5.5 The reduction in Commissioning – Communities complaints received is significant when considering that the recorded enquiries went up 13% in a comparable period. This is largely due to the introduction and wider use of the ‘report it’ function which allows someone to report a range of enquiries through the RBWM website and through Library & Residents Services. Once logged, enquiries are automatically generated for services providers to action and a notification is sent to the person who logged the concern. This ensures they are kept up to date with the progress of their enquiry. This has resulted in a more efficient customer centred service.
- 5.6 Library and Resident Services achieved a 62% drop in the number of complaints received. To achieve this a 100 Day Action Plan was put in place, focussing on building a high functioning team and reassessing recruitment practices which concentrated on skill, will and fit. Staff training was prioritised and steered by feedback from customers and staff. Further development of positive working relationships with back office council staff and commissioned services has enabled a more streamlined customer centred approach and delivery by Library and Resident Services.
- 5.7 Revenues and Benefits saw a slight rise in the number of complaints made to them during 2018-19. While there was nothing obvious to account for this, for instance no changes in legislation that would impact, this was the first year in some time that there was a rise in council tax; this may have indirectly affected the number of complaints received.
- 5.8 In mid-April 2018 the current interim Head of Housing commenced in post. At this time there was a backlog of some 28 complaints that were already past the due date. These were subsequently completed and the housing service began a process of improving its customer service.
- 5.9 There remains a legacy of complaints for the Housing service as a result of previous working practices which are still being dealt with. However, with the improved methods of working and an increased focus on complaints, the issues are being given the focus they need.

## Themes

- 5.10 Table 9 details the number and percentage of complaints received by theme during 2018-19.

**Table 9: Corporate complaints received by themes**

Type of complaint	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
Lack of action <sup>1</sup>	83	22%	141	24%
Require help or intervention	53	14%	23	5%
Attitude or behaviour of staff <sup>3</sup>	41	11%	68	12%
Failed to follow timescales <sup>2</sup>	40	11%	69	12%
Situation or incident handled incorrectly <sup>4</sup>	31	8%	46	8%
Services delivered below standard	40	11%	65	11%
Did not follow policy	28	7%	27	5%
Unhappy with a decision that has been	13	3%	54	9%
Failed to take all information into account	13	3%	9	2%
Gave the wrong information	8	2%	22	4%
Did not answer all questions asked	9	2%	9	2%
Inaccurate information recorded	7	2%	14	2%
Believe our policy to be incorrect	6	2%	15	3%
Breach of data protection	5	1%	4	1%
Safeguarding	3	1%	2	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 5.11 Themes of complaints are in the main self-selected by the person making a complaint and not all complaints fit neatly into a single category. Of the 15 themes available however, complaints that were broadly to do with delays or a lack of timely action<sup>1&2</sup> make up 31% and those to do with the customer's experience of dealing with staff<sup>3&4</sup> make up 21%. Together these two areas make up over 50% of all complaints.
- 5.12 As noted in the summary of complaints (section 4) the number of complaints with a theme of require help or intervention has risen markedly. The split across corporate services is shown in table 10 (with a further breakdown for teams in Commissioning – Communities, as the largest service area).

**Table 10: complaints by service received against theme require help, intervention or guidance**

Service area	Number	%
Communities, Enforcement & Partnerships	4	8%
Communications	8	14%
Housing Services	3	6%
Law & Governance	3	6%
Libraries and Resident Services	2	4%
Planning	6	11%
Revenues & Benefits	4	8%
* Parking	2	4%

Service area	Number	%
* Highways Includes Highways, Volker, street lighting and permitting & licensing	15	28%
* Waste	6	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Teams within Commissioning – Communities

- 5.13 Highways received the highest number of complaints logged against this theme. Within this, the majority (11) were logged against permitting and licensing. However, of these, eight were not upheld, two were partially upheld and one upheld. None of these complaints was escalated to stage 2.
- 5.14 Significant investment in infrastructure is currently being undertaken by or on behalf of the council through teams included in Highways. The increased volume of complaints in this category is likely to reflect the impact of this work on residents, businesses and visitors leading to increased complaints activity and requests for information.

### Timescales

- 5.15 Table 11 details the number and percentage of stage 1 complaints responded to within timescales for each service.

**Table 11: Stage 1 corporate complaints responded to within timescale**

Teams	2018-19			2017-18		
	Number of complaints	In timescales	%	Number of complaints	In timescales	%
Communities, Enforcement & Partnerships	25	19	76%	34	20	59%
Communications	14	10	71%	2	1	50%
Finance	0	0	N/A	3	2	67%
Housing Services	53	28	53%	59	11	19%
HR & Corporate Projects	0	0	N/A	1	0	0%
Law & Governance	7	7	100%	5	3	60%
Libraries and Resident Services	38	33	87%	101	47	47%
Planning	39	20	51%	63	20	32%
Property Services	2	2	100%	3	0	0%
Revenues & Benefits	41	36	88%	34	18	53%
* Parking	33	28	85%	53	47	89%
* Highways Includes Highways, Volker, street lighting and permitting & licensing	55	21	38%	106	64	60%
* Waste management	69	38	55%	100	62	62%
* Outdoor facilities	4	2	50%	10	3	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>52%</b>

\* Teams within Commissioning – Communities

- 5.16 Most services that received complaints have improved their timescales since 2017-18.

- 5.17 Library and Resident Services improved the percentage of complaints that were responded to in timeframes from 47% to 87%. Complaints are prioritised as they are received. All complaints are reviewed by the Library and Resident Services management team to track the robustness and timeliness of complaints and ensure that any lessons arising are included in training. The reduction in complaints has enabled colleagues within the team to give greater attention to those received so that mistakes are corrected quickly.
- 5.18 Response times in the highways and waste areas have declined which is an area for focus. This is recognised and dedicated service specialist customer support is now in place. In addition, the 'Report It' function is in place which enables customers to report issues online whereby progress updates are automatically issued to improve feedback and communications.
- 5.19 Revenues and Benefits saw a good increase in the number of complaints responded to within timescales, with a rise from 53% in 2017-18 to 88% in 2018-19. A restructure took place in September 2018 and a change was made to the way in which complaints are allocated within the service area. This means that the service lead takes into account workloads and availability to ensure more timely responses.
- 5.20 There has been a marked improvement in timescales for responses to complaints to housing services, owing to improved service methods. It is anticipated that this will continue until a point is reached where only exceptionally complex complaints will have the potential to take longer than the usual timeframe.
- 5.21 Complaints about Communities, Enforcement and Partnerships service area that were within timescale have also risen. There has been a concerted effort both from teams and from support to ensure timescales are being addressed.
- 5.22 Planning has also seen an increase in complaints completed within timescales, rising from 32% in 2017-18 to 51% in 2018-19
- 5.23 Numbers of complaints and responses within timescales are shared in service area team meetings. Weekly email updates of current open complaints are sent to all service areas and work is ongoing with the policy and performance team to enable monitoring of performance through InPhase.

### Decisions

- 5.24 The outcome of complaints is recorded, see tables 12 and 13.

**Table 12: Outcome of complaints**

	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Not yet concluded*	% Partially or fully upheld
2018-19	158	92	124	6	66%
2017-18	328	108	117	21	76%

\*It should be noted that the category 'not yet concluded' means that the complaint response had not been finalised at the time that the data snapshot was taken for this report.

**Table 13: Outcomes: breakdown by service area**

Area	2018-19			2017-18		
	Total	Fully or partially Upheld	%	Total	Fully or partially Upheld	%
Communities, Enforcement & Partnerships	25	13	52%	34	24	71%
Communications	14	9	64%	2	1	50%
Finance	0	0	N/A	3	3	100%
Housing Services	53	37	70%	59	43	73%
HR and Corporate Projects	0	0	N/A	1	1	100%
Law & Governance	7	5	71%	5	1	20%
Libraries and Resident Services	38	33	87%	101	86	85%
Planning	39	14	36%	63	25	40%
Property Services	2	1	50%	3	2	67%
Revenues & Benefits	41	25	61%	34	30	88%
* Highways Includes Highways, Volker, street lighting and permitting & licensing	55	32	58%	106	93	88%
* Parking	33	28	85%	53	47	89%
* Outdoor facilities	4	4	100%	10	7	70%
* Waste management	69	54	78%	100	74	74%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>76%</b>

\* Teams within Commissioning – Communities

5.25 Across corporate services there has been a drop in the percentage of complaints that were fully or partially upheld from 76% in 2017-18 to 67% in 2018-19.

### Stage 2 complaints

5.26 If a complainant remains dissatisfied after receiving a response at stage 1 of the corporate complaints process they may request a review by the service director.

5.27 The percentage of formal corporate complaints that was escalated to stage 2 rose from 4% in 2017-18 to 12% in 2018-19.

5.28 The timescale for response at stage 2 is within 20 working days. 71% of formal corporate complaints that went to stage 2 were answered within timescales. As with 2017-18, this is higher than the response rate in timescales at stage 1.

5.29 The number of upheld and partially upheld Stage 2 complaints is shown in table 14.

**Table 14: stage 2 corporate complaints 2018-19 – number upheld**

Teams	2018-19	Number upheld or partially upheld
Communities, Enforcement & Partnerships	4	4
Communications	3	2
Housing Services	7	3

Teams	2018-19	Number upheld or partially upheld
Libraries and Resident Services	2	1
Planning	10	2
Revenues & Benefits	6	2
* Parking	1	0
* Highways Includes Highways, Volker, street lighting and permitting & licensing	10	7
* Waste	6	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>18</b>

\* Teams within Commissioning – Communities

### Complaints to the LGSCO

- 5.30 The LGSCO made decisions about 25 complaints and enquiries for corporate services. Seven were decided following detailed enquiries and of these, two were upheld and five were not upheld. This leaves 18 that were not fully investigated. See appendix 1 for details on 2018-19 decisions.

### Learning from complaints

- 5.31 An important part of the complaints process is capturing the learning and embedding good practice across the council. Table 15 picks up some of the learning across corporate services during 2018-19.

**Table 15: Learning from corporate complaints**

Complaint area	Actions and learning
Communities, Enforcement & Partnerships – Environmental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are clearer when responding to an initial service request about the need for the required information to be provided so as to minimise the time before RBWM is able to visit. This will reduce the risk of any delays in the future.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All housing staff are receiving ongoing training on service standards and managing expectations to ensure a prompt response to enquiries and requests for updates.</li> <li>Customers have access to mobile numbers and email addresses for their case officers.</li> <li>Managers continue to closely manage cases.</li> </ul>
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The website and web form for van permits to be used at household waste and recycling centres has been updated to clarify the acceptable size and type of vehicle.</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Planning department has updated its enforcement policy and templates to better set expectations of timeframes for investigations and what we can and can't investigate.</li> <li>Performance with regards determination of applications is high due to investment and improvements in service delivery. This has reduced complaints with regards applications.</li> </ul>

## Compliments

- 5.32 Corporate services received 452 compliments during 2018-19. This is an increase from 2017-18 when there were 303 compliments received. Table 16 shows the breakdown of compliments across corporate services.

**Table 16: Compliments by service**

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number of compliments	%	Number of compliments	%
Communities, Enforcement & Partnerships	73	16%	25	8%
Communications	1	0%	3	1%
Housing Services	10	2%	3	1%
HR & Corporate Services	5	1%	8	3%
Law & Governance	0	0%	1	0%
Libraries and Resident Services	225	50%	140	46%
Planning	19	4%	22	7%
Property Services	1	0%	0	0%
Revenues & Benefits	7	2%	6	2%
* Parking	13	3%	3	1%
* Highways Includes Highways, Volker, street lighting and permitting & licensing	63	14%	70	23%
* Parking	27	6%	18	6%
* Outdoor facilities	2	0%	4	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Teams within Commissioning – Communities

- 5.33 Library and Resident Services received half of the compliments received by corporate services. Staff are encouraged to consistently exceed the expectation of the customer. Feedback cards are available in libraries to enable customers to say what they think about the service and to make suggestions. These are reviewed by the team leader and supervisors regularly, suggestions are implemented where possible and customer compliments for individual staff members are shared which boosts staff morale and encourages excellent levels of service.
- 5.34 Compliments to Communities, Enforcement and Partnerships have also risen this year. Of the 73 received, 47 were for the Community Safety team. This shows the very positive support for the Community Wardens who deal with lots of diverse issues, often in difficult circumstances.
- 5.35 Table 17 shows examples of compliments received across service areas. Front facing services that interact regularly with customers received the highest number of compliments in the same way as they also receive the highest volumes of complaints.

**Table 17: Examples of compliments received**

Service	Compliment received
Libraries and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The librarian on duty at Old Windsor provided a really good service. The next book club selection was not available in the</li> </ul>

Service	Compliment received
Resident Services	<p>afternoon of Friday but it appeared with a later delivery and she phoned me at 6pm to tell me it had arrived and that she would put a copy by for me. Picked it up this morning and I can't thank her enough. Excellent service as always from Old Windsor. I can't rate all the staff highly enough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank you very much for today's session. The girls enjoyed it very much &amp; loved their little bugs &amp; make a pet sheets. I thought you'd be interested to know that the mums I had helping today all commented on how nice the library is. They also said they intend to use it much more than they do currently and that they had forgotten what a tremendous service it is.</li> </ul>
Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would like to thank you for your time this morning. It was nice to be welcomed and have a pleasant and thorough update on the matters in hand. Your clarifications on the complexity of the matter and the procedures that each of the departments are following helped me understand the issues. Your reassurances that the departments involved are coordinating with each other and that you have spoken to each of them is heartening. Your involvement has been invaluable.</li> <li>• I am a tour guide and arrive at the coach park regularly. I wrote recently to mention the rubbish once you cross the footbridge on the right side beside the railway. I was pleased to see it had all been cleared!</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would like to personally thank you for the household items the Borough has purchased for me for my new flat. Without this help I was eating takeaways daily, not being able to store food in a fridge and sleeping in an inflatable bed. I now have a cooker to cook in, a fridge freezer and a bed to sleep in.</li> <li>• I would like to bring to your attention the excellent Service I was provided me with. My case worker has been extremely helpful, caring and approachable, and most of all, interested in my wellbeing. I feel very fortunate to have been under her care and service.</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A big word of thanks if I may to one of your younger planning officers who has been very efficient over the last year. Hang on to her if you can - a boro like Windsor needs bright sharp staff and she has been great!!!</li> <li>• Many thanks to the planning team with whom I have had contact.</li> <li>• I just wanted to drop you a line to say thank you. We live at X so this proposed airport parking was a real concern for us. I did object but I had prepared myself for the worst. We truly appreciate your involvement.</li> </ul>
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I wanted to say thank you to the cheerful crew doing the waste collection yesterday. I was getting ready for work when I heard the van and dashed out in my slippers to catch them and they kindly said don't come out in your slippers and come and got the bins from the door and put them back. So impressed it's not far, and I am not elderly, but really nice to have helpful and cheerful staff, please say thank you to them</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank you or organising such an interesting talk. It was very</li> </ul>

Service	Compliment received
wardens	<p>useful and with lots of excellent advice. It is really good to know we have somewhere to turn to advice on safety etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'd like to place on record my sincere thanks for the highly professional way in which you investigated our concerns and dealt with everyone involved. I've been trying to resolve this matter directly with my neighbour for some time now and wish I'd contacted the Borough at a much earlier stage. You've managed to achieve in just over one week what I've failed to do in several years.</li> </ul>
Registrars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I just wanted to say thanks for a wonderful ceremony yesterday with me becoming a British citizen. I thought the set up was great and to have a cup of tea and a biscuit after was fun. The Mayors kids had gone to my kids school and the Lord Lieutenant had spent a good chunk of his schools years in Adelaide so we had a chat about my previous homeland. Thanks again for making it a special day and as the last person to apply through your offices last year, a new chapter for all has started.</li> </ul>
Parks & Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident would like to compliment whoever has been maintaining Oakley Green Cemetery. The cemetery is in excellent condition and being kept very well maintained and trimmed.</li> <li>• Thank you so much for the support you provide to the Maidenhead Festival. We took our young daughter this year who enjoyed it immensely. Thank you also for the recent refurbishments to Oaken Grove Park, our daughter absolutely loves the park and hugely enjoys all the activities in the play area (the trampoline in particular!). Maidenhead's parks really make the town; as a fourth generation Maidenheadian thank you so much for continuing to make this town a great place to live.</li> </ul>

5.36 The variety of compliments highlights the breadth of work carried out across the council and helps celebrate the good work carried out by a wide range of officers.

## 6. ADULT SERVICES

### Overall adult complaints summary

6.1 In 2018-19 there were 19 adult complaints compared to 33 in 2017-18. This represents 4% of all complaints received by the Council.

#### Internal process

- 68% of complaints were either fully or partially upheld.
- 74% were responded to within timescales.
- 19 compliments were received.

#### External process

- 12 complaints or enquiries were decided by the LGSCO
  - Eight were investigated.
  - Eight were upheld.
  - Zero were not upheld.

#### Complaints received

6.2 There was a significant drop in the number of complaints received for adult services from the previous year, see table 18 for the volumes for the periods 2012-19. There has been a concerted effort by staff to resolve any issues at an early stage and therefore reduce the number of people making a complaint.

**Table 18: Total number of adult complaints, 2010-2019**

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	49	78	21	44	37	33	19

6.3 Table 19 details the number and percentage of stage 1 complaints received by each team.

**Table 19: Adult complaints received by service**

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
People with disabilities and older people's team	5	28%	17	51%
Community mental health team	1	5%	3	9%
Community team for people with learning Difficulties	1	5%	1	3%
Hospital team	1	5%	1	3%
Occupational therapy	0	0%	1	3%
Short term team	2	12%	1	3%
Adult financial assessments	2	12%	1	3%
Safeguarding	0	0%	1	3%
Partner agencies (including care homes)	6	33%	7	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 6.4 Most of the complaints to teams remained at a similar number to 2017-18 however complaints to the people with disabilities and older people's team fell from 17 to 5. This is a reduction of just over 70% of those received in 2017-18. This is largely due to teams within this area now identifying potential problems much earlier and addressing the issues and resolving them at an informal stage where this is possible.
- 6.5 The overall number of complaints for Adult Social Care is very low compared to the number of people that are supported. At any one time in the year 1,400 people are supported by the Physical Disabilities and Older People team.
- 6.6 The area receiving the highest number of complaints, 6 (33%), were external providers working with RBWM clients, such as care agencies and homes. These providers have their own complaints procedures, however if they are services procured by adult services then the complaint may be directed towards the local authority if the person prefers to do this.
- 6.7 The number of complaints received by the council relating to external providers is also low compared to the number of people being provided with ongoing support. All complaints received relating to providers are managed through the contract monitoring process.

### Themes

- 6.8 Table 20 details the number and percentage of complaints received by theme during 2018-19.

**Table 20: Themes of adult complaints received**

Type of Complaint	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
Unhappy with how a situation/incident was handled	5	26%	5	15%
Attitude or behaviour of staff	3	17%	4	13%
Unhappy with the decision made	2	11%	3	9%
Did not follow policy	2	11%	0	0%
Services being delivered at lower standard than is set out in our policy	1	5%	9	27%
Safeguarding	1	5%	5	15%
Lack of action - did not do what we said we would do	1	5%	3	9%
Failed to follow timescales	1	5%	1	3%
Require help or intervention	1	5%	1	3%
Failed to take all information into	1	5%	0	0%
Gave the wrong information	1	5%	0	0%
Breach of data protection	0	0%	1	3%
Inaccurate information recorded	0	0%	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 6.9 The highest number of complaints received were recorded under the theme of 'unhappy with how a situation/incident was handled'. It is difficult, given an overall low number of complaints and a high number of themes, to say how meaningful these figures are.

### Timescales

- 6.10 Table 21 details the number and percentage of complaints responded to within timescales for each team.

**Table 21: Adult complaints responded to within timescales**

Teams	2018-19			2017-18		
	Number of complaints	In timescales	%	Number of complaints	In timescales	%
People with disabilities and Older people's team	5	2	40%	17	10	59%
Community mental health team	1	1	100%	3	0	0%
Community team for people with learning difficulties	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Hospital team	1	1	100%	1	0	0%
Occupational therapy	0	0	0%	1	1	100%
Short term team	3	3	100%	1	0	0%
Adult financial assessments	2	1	50%	1	1	100%
Safeguarding	0	0	0%	1	0	0%
Partner agencies (including care homes)	6	5	83%	7	5	71%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>55%</b>

- 6.11 Although there is no specified limit for statutory complaints about adult social care the council's target for dealing with adult services complaints is 10 to 20 working days. This timescale may be increased for complaints that are particularly complicated. Of the 19 complaints received during 2018-19, 74% were responded to within agreed timescales. This is a significant improvement on 2017-18 where 55% were responded to within timescales.
- 6.12 The complaints team and managers in Optalis have worked together to tighten the processes in place and this continues to have a positive impact on achieving timescales.
- 6.13 See table 22 for outcomes of complaints

**Table 22: Outcome of complaints**

	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	% Fully or partially upheld
2018-19	2	11	6	68%
2017-18	13	9	10	61%

### Complainants

- 6.14 The majority of complaints made in 2018-19 were by the son or daughter of the person receiving the service, followed by the person themselves, see table 23 for full breakdown.

**Table 23: People making adult complaints**

Who made the complaint	Number	%
Son or Daughter of the person receiving the service	8	42%
Person receiving the service	4	21%
Spouse or partner	3	16%
Extended family	2	11%
Parent of person receiving the service	1	5%
Advocate	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Complaints and enquiries to the LGSCO**

6.15 The LGSCO made decisions about 12 complaints and enquiries for adult services that were referred to them following complaints that were made about services provided by or on behalf of adult social care. Eight were decided following detailed enquiries and of these, eight were upheld. The remaining four were closed without a full investigation. See appendix 1 for details on 2018-19 decisions.

6.16 Of the eight complaints upheld:

- 1 complaint related to concerns in 2015
- 2 complaints related to concerns in 2016
- 4 complaints related to concerns in 2017
- 1 complaint related to concerns in 2018

6.17 Although the original dates of the concerns spanned a wide range, all complaints regarding these were received by the complaints and compliments team between June 2017 and May 2018, with the exception of 2 which were first considered by care providers before escalation to the LGSCO. The LGSCO direct their enquiries to the council as the commissioning and procurement of those services was via the council and Optalis.

**Learning from complaints**

6.18 Table 24 picks up some of the learning across adult services during 2018-19.

**Table 24: Learning from adult complaints**

Complaint area	Actions and learning
Day centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service has been asked to re-look at their procedure when customers go into hospital, to ensure that the process is clear for all staff to follow, with a simple check list in place.</li> </ul>
Domiciliary care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council has implemented an action plan to improve the service from a care agency. This includes monitoring the care agency's daily records for three months to ensure it is delivering the service expected</li> </ul>
PDOPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training was delivered around duties under the Care Act 2014 and the</li> </ul>

Complaint area	Actions and learning
	Mental Capacity Act 2005.
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is ongoing training with staff to ensure that any issues are resolved at the earliest point to prevent complaints arising.</li> </ul>

### Compliments

6.19 Adult services received 19 compliments during 2018-19. This is a decrease from 2017-18 when there were 50 compliments received. Table 25 shows the breakdown of compliments across adult services.

**Table 25: Compliments by service**

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
People with Disabilities and Older People's Team	9	47%	24	41%
Short Term Team	6	32%	13	23%
Occupational Therapy	2	11%	3	5%
Hospital Team	1	5%	2	4%
Community Mental Health Team	1	5%	1	2%
Community Team for People with Learning Difficulties	0	0%	12	21%
Access Team	0	0%	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100%</b>

6.20 As with complaints, the highest number of compliments received were for the people with disabilities and older people's team.

6.21 This is a very low level of compliments for adult services, which has been higher in recent years. It is not clear why the number of compliments has fallen; but is possible that they are not being passed to the complaints and compliments team for logging. Reminders to send compliments on is being reiterated in team meetings so we have a more realistic level in future reports.

6.22 Table 26 shows examples of compliments received across adult services.

**Table 26: Examples of compliments received**

Service	Compliment received
PDOPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wanted to express my thanks for arranging this transfer from hospital for my mother. It was achieved so quickly and with few or no complications. I am so impressed with this service, which I know was orchestrated by yourself and the team at the care home.</li> <li>Thank you so much for all your hard work and helpfulness. I know that you have had to go far beyond the basic ordering of a chair for me and I appreciate it. You have done everything with cheerfulness and attention to detail. You are an inspiration and I'm sure that you brighten, not just mine</li> </ul>

Service	Compliment received
	but everybody's day when they see you.
Short Term Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The carers have given me a very useful and worthwhile service over the past few weeks. They were very pleasant and patient with me and have given enormous help in arranging aids within the house and advising on an exercise programme, all of which I have found of great benefit. I am very grateful to them and also to the RBWM for arranging this service.</li> </ul>
CMHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I just wanted to say thank you for all you have done to successfully get him into an environment where he can start a recovery. As you know this has not been easy, but I really appreciate what you have done, it is such a relief to Dad and myself. He was not in a good place as he left as I am sure Dad will have told you, so we are looking forward to hearing that he is making some progress.</li> </ul>

## 7. CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### Overall children's complaints summary

- 7.1 In 2018-19 there were 38 children's complaints, 28 of these followed the statutory children's complaints process and 10 followed the formal corporate complaints process. The distinction between statutory and formal corporate complaints was not made in 2017-18 so the figures are not directly comparable. Together these represent 6% of all complaints received.

#### Internal process

- 81% of complaints were either fully or partially upheld.
- 54% were responded to within timescales.
- 93 compliments were received

#### External process

- 8 complaints or enquiries were decided by the LGSCO; of these, none were investigated.
  - One was investigated
  - One was upheld
  - Zero were not upheld.

### Complaints received

- 7.2 The total number of complaints received for children's services during 2018-19 (both statutory and formal corporate) has remained at a similar level to 2017-18. See table 27 for a breakdown

**Table 27: Children Services overview**

Children's services statutory complaints	2018-19	2017-18
Stage 1	28	37

Children's services corporate complaints	2018-19
Stage 1	10

- 7.3 The number of complaints relating to children's social care services has varied over the last eight years, peaking at 90 in 2013-14, see table 28 for a breakdown for the period 2011-18.

**Table 28: Complaints received comparison 2011-18**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Stage 1	18	43	90	61	81	36	37	38

- 7.4 Table 29 give a breakdown by team of statutory complaints.

**Table 29: Complaints received in 2018-19 and 2017-18**

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
Children & Young People Disabilities Service (including SEND)	9	33%	6	16%
Pods (child protection, children in need and children in care)	8	30%	14	38%

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
School transport	3	11%	5	14%
Leaving care	3	11%	0	0%
Duty and assessment	2	7%	1	3%
Youth Services	1	4%	0	0%
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	1	4%	7	19%
Education	1	0%	0	0%
Family placement team (fostering)	0	0%	2	5%
Children's centres	0	0%	1	3%
Frontline	0	0%	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

7.5 In 2018-19, the majority of statutory complaints received related to CYPDS, In addition four of the corporate complaints were also within this team. There are approximately 900 children with Special Educational Needs Disabilities and there has been a significant national growth in the demand for EHCPs. A strong code of practice regarding parental choice causes disappointment and dissatisfaction for some families when we disagree with their preferences.

### Themes

7.6 Table 30 sets out the themes of children's complaints during 2018-19.

**Table 30: Themes of complaints**

Type of Complaint	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number	%	Number	%
Did not follow policy	8	21%	7	19%
Lack of action - did not do what we said we would	7	18%	6	16%
Situation handled incorrectly	7	18%	3	8%
Require help, intervention or guidance	6	16%	0	0%
Attitude or behaviour of staff	4	11%	6	16%
Failed to follow timescales	2	5%	1	3%
Services delivered at a lower standard than in our policy	1	3%	4	11%
Unhappy with the decision made	1	3%	4	11%
Breach of DP	1	3%	0	0%
Safeguarding	1	2%	2	5%
Gave the wrong information	0	0%	2	5%
Failed to take all information into account	0	0%	1	3%
Inaccurate or wrong information recorded	0	0%	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

7.7 The highest number of complaints received were categorised as did not follow policy, process or the law followed by lack of action and situation handled incorrectly. While the number fully upheld is low the themes can, in themselves, give an indication of how it feels to be involved with Children’s Social Care and could indicate an opportunity for reflection by and with practitioners. For that reason, the complaints and compliments team leader attends the Performance Board, so that these themes can be discussed and actions taken accordingly.

**Timescales**

7.8 The timescale for dealing with a stage 1 complaint is 10 working days. However, this can be extended to 20 working days for more complex complaints or if additional time is required.

7.9 Table 32 details the number and percentage of complaints responded to within timescales for each service.

**Table 32: Response timescales**

Teams	2018-19			2017-18		
	Complaints	Number in timescales	%	Complaints	Number in timescales	%
Pods (child protection, children in need and children in care)	8	2	25%	14	4	29%
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	1	1	100%	7	0	0%
Children & Young People Disabilities Service	20	11	55%	6	2	33%
Duty and assessment	2	0	0%	1	0	0%
Family placement team	0	0	0%	2	1	50%
Children’s centres	0	0	0%	1	1	100%
School transport	2	1	50%	5	2	40%
Frontline	0	0	0%	1	0	0%
Education	1	1	100%	0	0	0%
Leaving care	3	2	67%	0	0	0%
Youth Services	1	0	0%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27%</b>

7.10 Of the 38 complaints that were received during 2018-19, 47% were responded to within timescales, which is an improvement from 2017-18, when 27% were responded to within timescales

7.11 The complaints and compliments team continue to send weekly reports of outstanding complaints to heads of services and directors. They also meet with the managers investigating complaints to clarify the complaint and ensure the scope of this is understood. This is having a positive impact not just on the timeliness but also the quality of complaints responses.

7.12 See table 33 for the outcome of complaints.

**Table 33: Outcome of complaints**

	Fully upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Not yet concluded	% Fully or partially upheld
2018-19	9	21	7	1	81%
2017-18	6	14	7	10	74%

\*It should be noted that the category 'not yet concluded' means that the complaint response had not been finalised at the time that the data snapshot was taken for this report.

### Complainants

7.13 The vast majority of complaints made in 2018-19 were by parents. One formal complaint was made by a young person, which is currently being investigated under stage 2 of the statutory children's complaints process, see table 31 for further detail.

**Table 31: People making children's complaints**

Who made the complaint	Number	%
Child/young person	1	3
Advocate	2	5
Parent/Step parent/Adoptive parent	34	89
Carer	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>

### Stage 2 complaints

7.14 Four stage 2 complaints were resolved in 2018-19. Two of these were investigated under the statutory children's complaints process and two under the children's formal corporate complaints process. In all cases the outcome was 'partially upheld'.

7.15 One statutory complaint was resolved at stage 3 in 2018-19. This was escalated from a stage 1 complaint made in 2016-17. Elements of the complaint were upheld by the stage 3 panel.

7.16 Complaints resolved under the formal corporate complaints process are reported within the children's services annual report to give an overview of all complaints about children's services.

### Complaints and enquiries to the LGSCO

7.17 The LGSCO made decisions on eight enquiries regarding complaints for children's services during 2018-19. One, which was started in a previous year was completed and upheld. The remaining seven were not investigated. See appendix 1 for details on 2018-19 decisions.

## Representations

- 7.18 Representations are comments by children and young people, normally within a child's review. These can be positive or negative and are acted upon by referring these comments to the social care team working with the child or young person so this can be acted upon and responded to by that team.
- 7.19 Children's services are now capturing views through 'My Say' and through the online feedback forms and will be reported upon within Achieving for Children's annual reports in 2019-20.
- 7.20 If a child or young person makes a complaint they are supported to appropriately use the compliments and complaints service.

## Case concerns

- 7.21 In addition to complaints under the children's services statutory complaints and the formal corporate complaints processes, we have captured information regarding case concerns. Case concerns are recorded when an issue has been raised with the complaints and compliments team but has been dealt with informally by children's services.
- 7.22 Figures for case concerns do not count towards the overall number of complaints but are useful to help identify issues and help promote timely resolutions. In addition they can show if there is a pattern if a complaint is raised later.
- 7.23 In 2018-19 there were 11 case concerns recorded. Table 35 shows the split across children's services for case concerns received.

**Table 35: Case concerns across children's services 2018-19**

Leaving care	Pods	Transport	CYPDS	MASH	School admissions
2	3	3	1	1	1

## Learning from complaints

- 7.21 Table 36 sets out learning from children's complaints

**Table 36: Learning from children's complaints**

Complaint area	Actions and learning
Children and young people disability service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration will always be given to each parent regarding sharing of email content and other information between separated parents without agreement, unless there are immediate safeguarding concerns.</li> <li>• Further documentation is being developed to clarify the difference between supported contact, rather than supervised contact for young people over 18 years of age.</li> </ul>
Leaving Care team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Local Authority now have a designated 16+/ Care Leavers team</li> </ul>

Complaint area	Actions and learning
	which will ensure that young people in care and young asylum seekers are given the right support and work is progressed as quickly as possible.
Pods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any Child in Need meetings or similar is now chaired by a Manager.</li> <li>Within Team Meetings we have discussed with the managers and staff the importance of agreed actions being followed up within timescales, alongside realistic timescales being initially set.</li> </ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions from responses are now being captured. Meetings are being put in place with the complaints team in order to ensure that all learning is captured and acted upon</li> </ul>
Business Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been significant learning around 'better communication' and our Business Support Staff have attended 'Customer Service' Training.</li> </ul>

### Compliments

7.19 93 compliments were recorded for children's service in 2018-19. This is a similar amount to the 97 compliments recorded in 2017-18, see table 37 for a full breakdown.

**Table 37: Number of compliments by children's services teams**

Teams	2018-19		2017-18	
	Number of compliments	%	Number of compliments	%
Youth services	33	36%	44	45%
Pods	25	27%	16	16%
CYPDS	8	9%	14	14%
Duty and assessment and MASH	1	1%	6	6%
Education and School admissions	11	12%	5	5%
Children's centres	3	3%	3	3%
Family placement team	2	2%	3	3%
Frontline student team	0	0%	3	3%
Educational psychology	1	1%	1	1%
Leaving care	2	2%	1	1%
School transport	2	2%	1	1%
LADO	1	1%	0	n/a
Youth Offending Team	4	4%	0	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>

7.20 Table 38 shows examples of compliments received across children's services.

**Table 38: Examples of compliments received**

Service	Compliment received
Youth Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't know whether you remember me, but you were my connexions advisor and much more about 10 years ago. I was shocked to see that you are still running Esteem, I'm glad that it has done so well and people speak so highly of it. Can I just thank you for all you've done for me, you managed to get me up, out, socialising and into education – I've finished my degree in Childhood and Youth at Sussex with a First!! I would never have been in this position had you not worked so hard.</li> </ul>
CYPDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We saw both staff members within about half an hour of you leaving our house and all equipment delivered to us by 4pm! That's what I call a brilliant service, couldn't fault it!</li> </ul>
Family placement team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am sole carer for the children. I am sure that without my supervising social worker's support and care I would find it much harder. It can be a very unsettling time when you have a change of Supervising Social worker that you have built a professional relationship with but immediately she just seemed to get an understanding of my situation and made a smooth transition. Ever since then she has gently guided me in regards with training, log keeping and is always ready with advice and encouragement. I believe she is a real asset to your organisation and hope you value her as much as I do.</li> </ul>
Leaving Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank you so much for your time and kindness without you I won't be where I am now you are big part of my life even if I don't keep in touch I always have you in my thoughts.</li> </ul>

## **Appendices**

LGSCO Annual Letter 2018-19

24 July 2019

*By email*

Duncan Sharkey  
Managing Director  
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council

Dear Mr Sharkey

### **Annual Review letter 2019**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2019. The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received about your authority, the decisions we made, and your authority's compliance with recommendations during the period. I hope this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

### **Complaint statistics**

As ever, I would stress that the number of complaints, taken alone, is not necessarily a reliable indicator of an authority's performance. The volume of complaints should be considered alongside the uphold rate (how often we found fault when we investigated a complaint), and alongside statistics that indicate your authority's willingness to accept fault and put things right when they go wrong. We also provide a figure for the number of cases where your authority provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached us, and new statistics about your authority's compliance with recommendations we have made; both of which offer a more comprehensive and insightful view of your authority's approach to complaint handling.

The new statistics on compliance are the result of a series of changes we have made to how we make and monitor our recommendations to remedy the fault we find. Our recommendations are specific and often include a time-frame for completion, allowing us to follow up with authorities and seek evidence that recommendations have been implemented. These changes mean we can provide these new statistics about your authority's compliance with our recommendations.

I want to emphasise the statistics in this letter reflect the data we hold and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include

enquiries from people we signpost back to your authority, some of whom may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside our annual review of local government complaints. For the first time, this includes data on authorities' compliance with our recommendations. This collated data further aids the scrutiny of local services and we encourage you to share learning from the report, which highlights key cases we have investigated during the year.

Last year I commented on the delay in your Council responding to our enquiries and my Assistant Ombudsman and I met with your senior officers to discuss this. I am pleased to say the changes the Council has made have resulted in a better position during the year. I welcome this improvement in your Council's liaison with my office and hope to see it continue.

### **New interactive data map**

In recent years we have been taking steps to move away from a simplistic focus on complaint volumes and instead focus on the lessons learned and the wider improvements we can achieve through our recommendations to improve services for the many. Our ambition is outlined in our [corporate strategy 2018-21](#) and commits us to publishing the outcomes of our investigations and the occasions our recommendations result in improvements for local services.

The result of this work is the launch of an interactive map of council performance on our website later this month. [Your Council's Performance](#) shows annual performance data for all councils in England, with links to our published decision statements, public interest reports, annual letters and information about service improvements that have been agreed by each council. It also highlights those instances where your authority offered a suitable remedy to resolve a complaint before the matter came to us, and your authority's compliance with the recommendations we have made to remedy complaints.

The intention of this new tool is to place a focus on your authority's compliance with investigations. It is a useful snapshot of the service improvement recommendations your authority has agreed to. It also highlights the wider outcomes of our investigations to the public, advocacy and advice organisations, and others who have a role in holding local councils to account.

I hope you, and colleagues, find the map a useful addition to the data we publish. We are the first UK public sector ombudsman scheme to provide compliance data in such a way and believe the launch of this innovative work will lead to improved scrutiny of councils as well as providing increased recognition to the improvements councils have agreed to make following our interventions.

### **Complaint handling training**

We have a well-established and successful training programme supporting local authorities and independent care providers to help improve local complaint handling. In 2018-19 we delivered 71 courses, training more than 900 people, including our first 'open courses' in Effective Complaint Handling for local authorities. Due to their popularity we are running six

more open courses for local authorities in 2019-20, in York, Manchester, Coventry and London. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Finally, I am conscious of the resource pressures that many authorities are working within, and which are often the context for the problems that we investigate. In response to that situation we have published a significant piece of research this year looking at some of the common issues we are finding as a result of change and budget constraints. Called, [Under Pressure](#), this report provides a contribution to the debate about how local government can navigate the unprecedented changes affecting the sector. I commend this to you, along with our revised guidance on [Good Administrative Practice](#). I hope that together these are a timely reminder of the value of getting the basics right at a time of great change.

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

**Local Authority Report:** Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council  
**For the Period Ending:** 31/03/2019

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our [website](#)

## Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
13	2	5	9	4	1	5	4	1	44

## Decisions made

Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Detailed Investigations			Total
				Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate (%)	
3	0	15	11	5	12	71	46

**Note:** The uphold rate shows how often we found evidence of fault. It is expressed as a percentage of the total number of detailed investigations we completed.

## Satisfactory remedy provided by authority

Upheld cases where the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman	% of upheld cases
0	0

**Note:** These are the cases in which we decided that, while the authority did get things wrong, it offered a satisfactory way to resolve it before the complaint came to us.

## Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations

Complaints where compliance with the recommended remedy was recorded during the year*	Complaints where the authority complied with our recommendations on-time	Complaints where the authority complied with our recommendations late	Complaints where the authority has not complied with our recommendations	
13	12	1	0	<b>Number</b>
	100%		-	<b>Compliance rate**</b>
<p><b>Notes:</b>            * This is the number of complaints where we have recorded a response (or failure to respond) to our recommendation for a remedy during the reporting year. This includes complaints that may have been decided in the preceding year but where the data for compliance falls within the current reporting year.            ** The compliance rate is based on the number of complaints where the authority has provided evidence of their compliance with our recommendations to remedy a fault. This includes instances where an authority has accepted and implemented our recommendation but provided late evidence of that.</p>				