

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:	Adults, Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 22 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 Adults, Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:

- i) That the report is published on the Council's website.
- ii) 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. This is the recommended option	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

	2019/20	2018/19
Adult complaints	11	27
Children complaints (statutory)	14	19
Children complaints (corporate)	36	35
Complaints about other services	354	317
Total complaints	415	398

Complaints to services considered by Adults, Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The number of complaints received for services considered at Adults, Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel is shown below in table 3. See Appendix 1, 6.3, figure 13.

Table 3: Breakdown of Adults and Children’s complaints

	Upheld or partially upheld
Adults	45%
Children’s statutory	71%
Children’s corporate	68%

Themes of complaints

- 2.5 The reason for the highest number of complaints for both adult services and children’s statutory was ‘Situation/incident handled incorrectly’. This covers three complaints and the two partially upheld or upheld it related confusion over council involvement over arrangement of care and a need to improve practice when working with people who lack capacity. Both these situations have led to practice improvement measures for the overall service. See Appendix 1, 3.5, figure 4 and 5.3, figure 9.

Timeliness of complaint responses

- 2.6 The percentage timeliness of responses for adult services was 64% in 2020/21, which has improved since the 2019/20 figure of 56%. Timeliness has improved as a result of the new processes that were introduced as a result of the public interest Ombudsman report in 2020. See Appendix 1, 3.7, figure 6.
- 2.7 Timeliness for children’s statutory services was 50% in 2020/21 and 37% in 2019/20, this is an improvement, in part due to a revised process for managing Stage 1’s, in order to be more streamlined. See Appendix 1, 5.5, figure 11.
- 2.8 However, timeliness for children’s corporate complaints was 49% in 2020/21 and 66% in 2019/20. It is envisaged that the improvements in the revised processes will lead to more timely responses in this area in 2021/22. See Appendix 1, 6.7, figure 16.

Outcomes of complaints

- 2.9 The number of adult complaints fully or partially upheld was 45% in 2020/21, which is lower than 2019/20, at 52%. See Appendix 1, 3.6, figure 5.
- 2.10 The number of children’s statutory complaints fully or partially upheld was 71% in 2020/21, which is also lower than 2019/20, at 84%. See Appendix 1, 5.2, figure 8.
- 2.11 However, the number of children’s corporate complaints fully or partially upheld was 68% in 2020/21, which is higher than 2019/20, at 57%. See Appendix 1, 6.3, figure 13.

Complaints made to and decisions made by the LGSCO

- 2.12 Table 5 compares the number of complaints made to the LGSCO in 2020/21 against those made in 2019/20. See Appendix 1, 2.10.

Table 5: 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

2.13 Table 6 compares the number of complaints decided by the LGSCO in 2020/21 against those decided in 2019/20. See Appendix 1, 2.12.

Table 6: Decisions by outcome

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

2.14 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.

2.15 Of the nine cases upheld in 2020/21, three of these were for adult services. See Appendix 1, 3.3, figure 3 and two were for children's services. See Appendix 1, 2.12. As well as specific feedback given by the Ombudsman on remedy and service improvement recommendations, the services' learnings from all upheld or partially upheld complaints are included in Appendix 1 3.9, 3.10, 4.5 and 4.6, these include the SEND team updating their processes to improve communication about cases which have to be paused within the complaint process and also financial awareness training being planned for all adult social care staff who undertake assessments.

Overview of all compliments to the council

2.16 Table 7 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 7: Compliments

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

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 8: 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 within timescales	0-60%	61%	62-75%	>75%	31 March 2022
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

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

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

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