

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Complaints Reports 2025/26

1. Purpose of Report

To provide Members with a summary of complaints made against the Council.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.

3. Detail

This report outlines the performance of the Council in dealing with complaints, including, at stage 1 those managed by the service areas, at stage 2, managed by the Complaints and Compliments Officer and at stage three passed to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) or Housing Ombudsman (HO).

- **Appendix 1** provides a trend analysis of complaints upheld at stage 2.
- **Appendix 2** provides a summary of the Council's internal complaints statistics.
- **Appendix 3** provides a summary of the complaints investigated by the Council formally under stage two of the Council's formal complaint procedure.
- **Appendix 4** provides a summary of the complaints determined by the Ombudsman.

2025/26

Of the 552 stage 1 complaints received overall, 102 were investigated under the stage 2 complaints procedure and 12 were investigated by the LGO. Under the stage 2 complaints procedure, 57 complaints (56%) were not upheld, 42 complaints (41%) were upheld and one was withdrawn (3%).

Further details can be found in **Appendix 2 and 3**. The Ombudsman investigated 12 complaints made against the Council. Seven complaints were recorded as not upheld, resulting in no further action being required by the Council, five complaints were upheld. Further details can be found in **Appendix 4**.

Included in **Appendix 1** is a trend analysis of the stage 2 complaints received that were upheld. Particular emphasis has been placed on identifying issues and reoccurring themes where complaint are upheld. Over the course of the 2026/27, the Complaints Team will further monitor these areas by department to embed learning and improve the Council's processes and practices.

2024/25

In 2024/25, for comparative data, 429 stage 1 complaints were received overall, 81 were investigated under the stage 2 complaints procedure and seven were investigated by the LGO. Under the stage 2 complaints procedure, 39 complaints (48%) were not upheld, 41 complaints (50%) were upheld and one was withdrawn (2%).

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

The cost of compensation is charged either directly to the service or recognised in a central corporate budget. There are no additional financial implications associated with this report. Any significant additional budgets required, above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Whilst there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, it is important to note that the Council's approach to handling complaints is within the parameters of the following key pieces of legislation: Part III of the Local Government Act 1974 and Chapter 6 of the Localism Act 2011 (for Housing Services complaints).

6. Human Resources Implications

The comments from the Human Resources Manager were as follows:

Not applicable.

7. Union Comments

Not applicable.

8. Climate Change Implications

Not applicable.

9. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

11. Background Papers

Nil.