

**Annual Complaints Report 2020-21**

1. The key stages for handling a complaint made to the council are described below.
  - 1.1. Stage 1 informal: these are dealt with by the relevant service areas. When a complaint spans several different service areas, the complaints officer coordinates the handling of the complaints and provides a single, substantive response. All Stage 1 complaints should be responded to within 10 working days. If additional time is required, the council will contact the complainant to explain why and inform them when they can expect a response. Details of the number of Stage 1 complaints received in 2020-21 and response times are shown in Table 1 and Chart 2.
  - 1.2. Stage 2 formal: If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a Stage 1 complaint, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2. The matter will be generally investigated by Head of Service responsible but could also be passed to another Head of Service for response when appropriate. This stage requires a more detailed investigation which can take up to 20 working days. If additional time is needed, the council will contact the complainant to let them know and to explain when they can expect a response. The investigation involves a review of all relevant correspondence and often incorporates separate discussions with both the complainant and relevant officers from the service department(s) concerned. Complainants who remain unhappy with the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation can refer their complaint to the PSOW. Details of the number of Stage 2 complaints received in 2020-21 and response times are shown in Table 2 and Chart 2.
2. The PSOW publishes the annual letters to all Councils on its website. The letter highlights activities undertaken by the Ombudsman's office during the year and the Council's performance (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the Ombudsman's letter). The Council submits quarterly returns of complaints data to the Ombudsman's office, which inform elements of this report.
3. The council takes complaints seriously and attempts to learn from any mistakes. Senior Management considers a summary of complaints quarterly and the

Performance Scrutiny Committee also considers the council's response to complaints. Key outcomes and lessons learned are summarised in Appendix 1.

4. Within the C360 database, specifically for complaints, there is a section where Lessons Learned would be recorded. Especially in the case of complaints upheld it follows the request of the Ombudsman to quantify service improvements. This is part of the complaints process that can be improved across the authority.
5. Further to 1.1 and 1.2 Service Departments would be able to improve their performance in relation to complaint responses by utilising the extension facility within the Complaints Policy.
6. Details of the number of compliments received are shown in Table 3 and Chart 4

**Your Voice information**

**Your Voice reporting periods**

The following periods are used for reporting data:

- Quarter 1: 1-Apr to 30-Jun
- Quarter 2: 1-Jul to 30-Sep
- Quarter 3: 1-Oct to 31-Dec
- Quarter 4: 1-Jan to 31-Mar

**Complaint response timescales**

The 'Your Voice' feedback policy states that the following timescales should be adhered to when responding to complaints:

- Stage 1: **10** working days
- Stage 2: **20** working days

Please note: Community Support Services and Children and Family Services complaints usually follow statutory timescales.

**Your Voice performance measures**

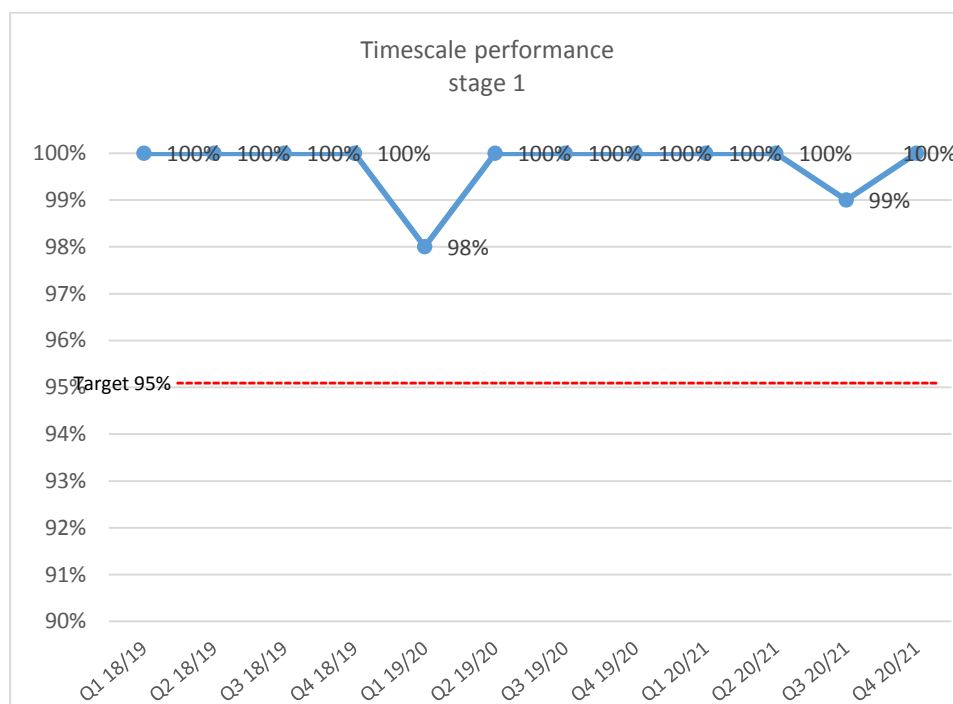
A traffic light system is used to highlight performance in relation to response timescales to complaints. Performance is rated according to:

<b>Red</b>	less than 90% of complaints responded to within timescale
<b>Amber</b>	when more than 90% but less than 95% of complaints are responded to within timescale
<b>Green</b>	95% or more of complaints responded to within timescale

**Table 1: Overall complaint response times for stage 1 complaints – Q4 2020/21**

Service	Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Total Stage 1		
	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%
Business Improvement & Modernisation	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-			-	0	0	-
Legal, HR and Democratic Services	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	2	2	100%
Customers, Communication and Marketing	1	1	100%	7	7	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	10	10	100%
Finance - including Revs and Bens (Civica)	7	7	100%	5	5	100%	10	10	100%	7	7	100%	29	29	100%
Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services	35	35	100%	43	43	100%	37	37	100%	35	35	100%	150	150	100%
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside	3	3	100%	6	6	100%	18	17	94%	3	3	100%	30	29	97%
Community Support Services	2	2	100%	3	3	100%	2	2	100%	0	0	-	7	7	100%
Education and Childrens Services	1	1	100%	5	5	100%	3	3	100%	0	0	-	9	9	100%
<b>Corporate Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>99%</b>

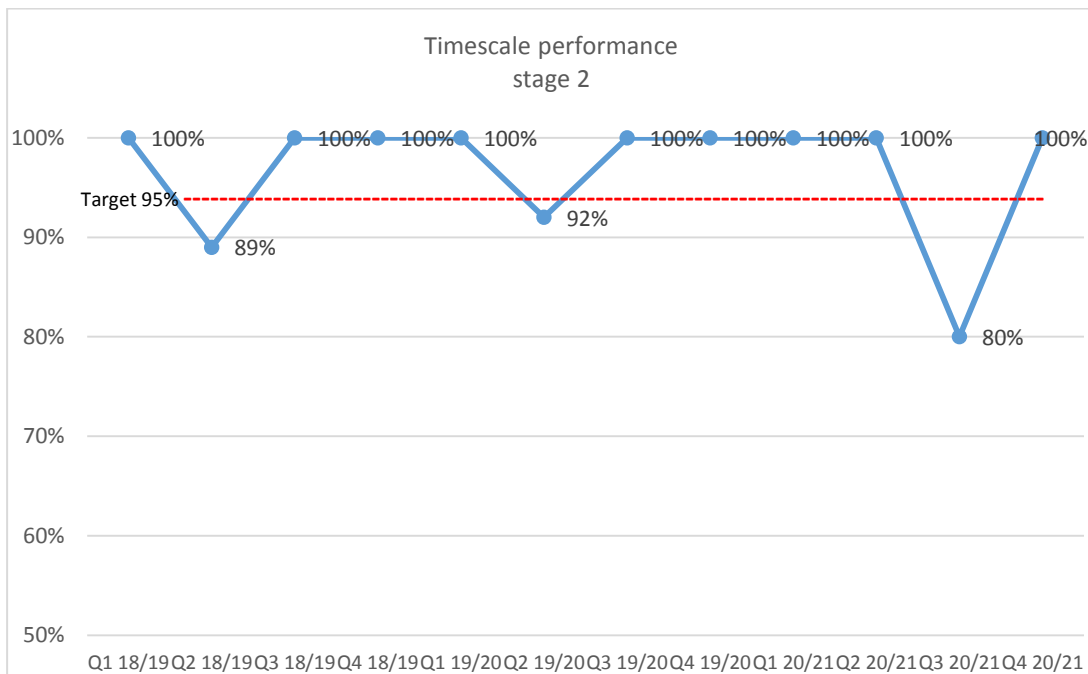
**Chart 1: Stage 1 complaint response times**



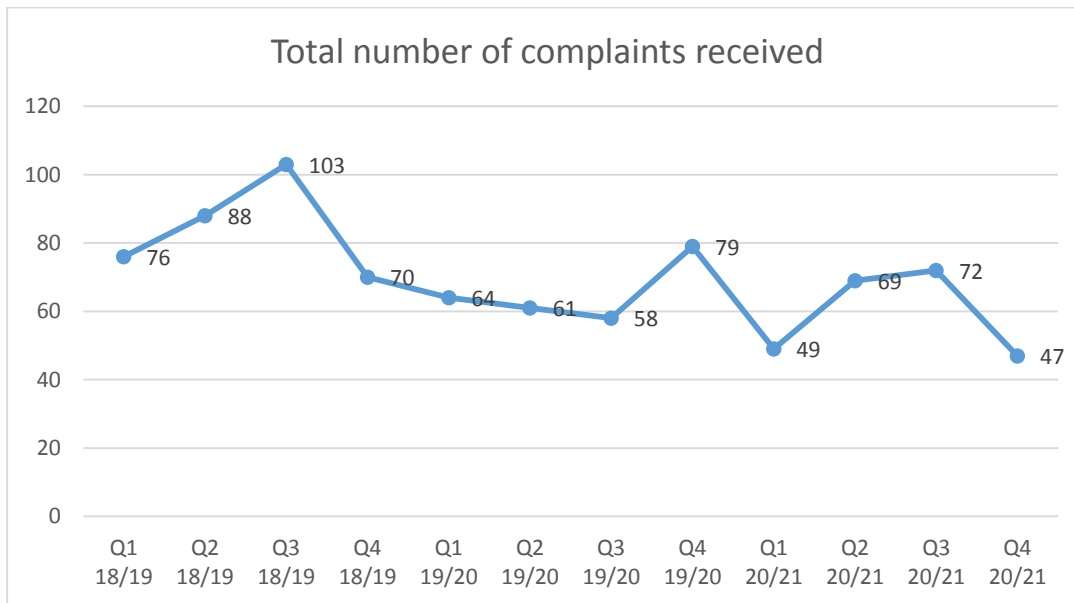
**Table 2: Overall complaint response times for stage 2 complaints – Q4 20/21**

Service	Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			Total Stage 2		
	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%	Rec'd	Within	%
Business Improvement & Modernisation	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-			-	0	0	-
Legal, HR and Democratic Services	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	1	-			-	1	1	100%
Customers, Communication and Marketing	0	0	-	0	0	-	2	2	-	1	1	100%	3	3	100%
Finance - including Revs and Bens (Civica)	1	1	100%	0	0	-	0	0	-	1	1	100%	2	2	100%
Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services	4	4	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	7	7	100%
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside	1	1	100%	0	0	-	3	1	33%	2	2	100%	6	4	67%
Community Support Services	0	0	-	1	1	100%	2	2	100%	0	0	-	3	3	100%
Education and Childrens Services	1	1	100%	0	0	-	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	3	3	100%
<b>Corporate Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>92%</b>

**Chart 2: Stage 2 complaint response times**



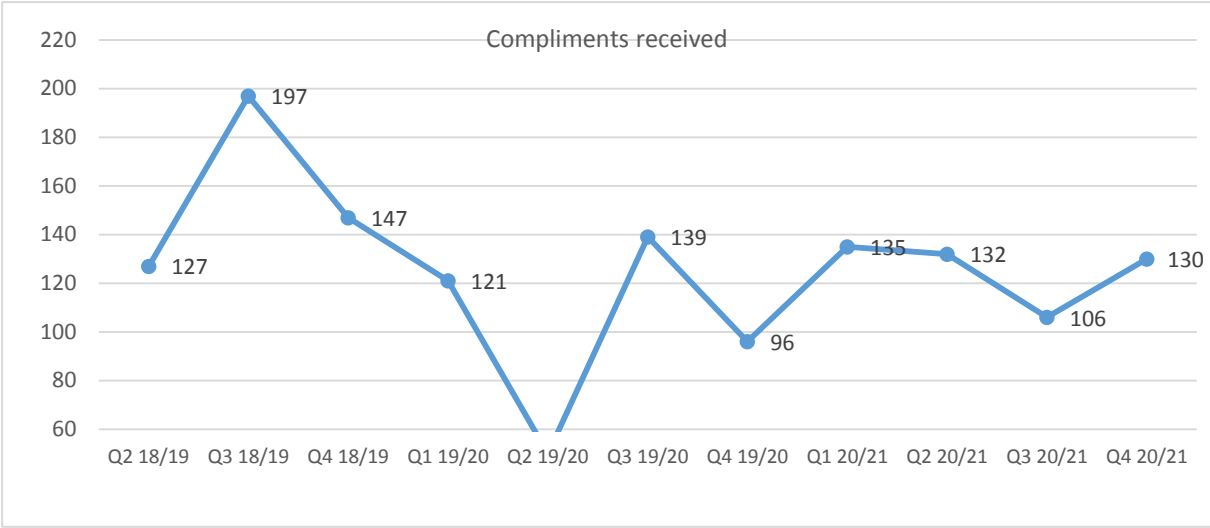
**Chart 3: Total number of Stage 1 complaints received**



**Table 3: Compliments received during 2020/21**

<b>Compliments 2020/21</b>					
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Total</b>
Business Improvement and Modernisation		1			1
Legal HR and Democratic Services	1				1
Customers, Communication and Marketing	19	24	19	20	82
Finance and Property (Inc Revs and Bens)	1	2	3		6
Education and Children's Services	19	13	14	35	81
Highways Facilities and Environmental Services	54	48	41	45	188
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside	2	6	2	2	12
Community Support Services	39	38	27	28	132
	<b>135</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>503</b>

**Chart 4: Compliments received**



**Example Compliment - Community Support Services**

to: Sophie Vaughan.

Hi Sophie I'm not sure if you are off for Christmas or not yet, but my wife and I have finally been able to get home. This has been a tough year and especially so for mum, but I have seen the work your team has done and I am very grateful. Mum continues to struggle with the stairs. Less so due to the new rail etc, naturally. A discussion over what more we can do might be worth a visit but that's not my point tonight. My point tonight is that whilst I am sure you and your team are well accustomed to delivering this work, most of us are not accustomed to being in a position of needing it. On behalf of my family can I please thank you unreservedly for your help at this time and ask you extend our thanks to the team for helping a dignified lady retain that dignity that bit longer. Your continued support is invaluable and we also wish you and your team a very happy seasons greetings.