



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Committee  
Date  
Agenda Item [...]

Key Decision: No

Ward(s) Affected: None

## **Annual Summary of Customer Feedback (Complaints and Compliments)**

### **Report by the Director for Digital and Resources**

#### **Executive Summary**

##### **1. Purpose**

- This report provides an overview of compliments and complaints received by the councils for the financial year 2021/22. It includes trend analysis for the previous two financial years.
- It sets out progress on improvements to the feedback process and policy and the steps that are planned for the next financial year to embed a feedback driven culture.

##### **2. Recommendations**

- This report is for information only
- There are no decisions or requests

### **3. Context**

- 3.1.** Customer feedback is important and a chance to learn both what we do well and what we could do better. Our customers deserve the best service possible and by looking at themes in both complaints and compliments we can improve services where needed and share best practice across the councils.
  
- 3.2.** Complaints can be about the process or about the outcome. If it is about the process we can use the insight from complaints to see where something doesn't work for our customers and improve it, however sometimes either due to legislation or policy we are unable to give a customer the resolution to their complaint that they would like. We should however be clear about why we do something and our responses should be in plain english and fully answer the customers' concerns. We may need to review our wording either on our website or in our notifications to make it clearer what we can or can't do and why. Some subjects are very emotive for example, housing, finances and environment and these complaints can be difficult to resolve.
  
- 3.3.** This report provides an overview of formal complaints and compliments received by the councils in 2021-22 as we slowly moved away from the worst impacts of the covid pandemic and started to feel the impact of increasing costs of living.
  
- 3.4.** In 2021-22 the volume of complaints increased from the previous year, 2020-21, which was the start of the pandemic. We believe we saw fewer complaints in 2020-21 as people were more aware of the pressures councils were under, and lowered their expectations. By 2021-22 as we moved to a 'new normal', customer expectation increased to pre-pandemic levels whilst the councils were still adapting to the long term impacts of the pandemic.
  
- 3.5.** Both quantitative and qualitative customer feedback is collected by many areas of the councils. Quantitative data is the most commonly collected (e.g. the number and types of calls received by the customer service team, and how long they take to answer and resolve). Qualitative data collected is often in the form of surveys that are used to ask our customers what they think of the service that they have received. For example surveys are automatically sent to customers who have called both the Adur Homes and the Waste Services phone line asking them about their customer experience. This data is collected and analysed by the specific services.

- 3.6.** This report only looks at official complaints and compliments which can be logged by customers verbally (both over the phone or face to face), online or in writing via the customer feedback team. Individual services are then responsible for reviewing and responding to respond to the customer in line with corporate deadlines and policies.
- 3.7.** When the councils' formal process has been completed any complainant who is still unhappy with the councils' response has the right to have their complaint looked at by the ombudsman. In the case of Adur and Worthing this is the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO). Responses to the HO and the LGO are dealt with by the complaints team to make sure that services have satisfactorily answered all questions and provided the corrected information requested and that all responses are in a timely manner. Further details about Ombudsman cases can be found later in this report.
- 3.8.** The team consists of approximately a day of the Senior Customer Insight and Performance Officer at 0.2 FTE and two Feedback and Request for Information Officers at 0.3FTE each who primarily work in the Information Governance team and spend approximately a third of their time working in Customer Feedback. There is no dedicated resource or a dedicated budget to provide training etc this is provided by the team as part of their role.
- 3.9.** The feedback system was upgraded in January 2022 and it now enables more detailed analysis of complaints and compliments including themes and trends. The previous system was not so well developed, and as a result the data presented in this report is still very high level. The report for 2022/23 will include a lot more detailed analysis.

#### **4. Customer Feedback in detail**

##### **Compliments**

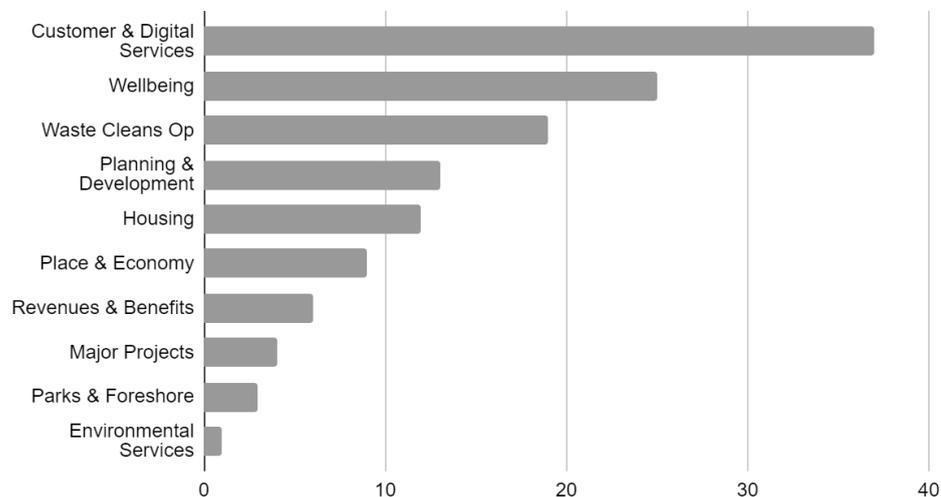
- 4.1 Compliments are logged when an officer or service has gone over and above what the resident expected. Thank you messages for doing the day to day job are not logged although these expressions of appreciation are also collated and passed to the teams.

<b>Number of compliments logged per year per directorate</b>
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	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Communities	59	33	38
Digital & Resources	52	59	62
Economy	34	46	29
Total	145	138	129

4.2 External customer facing teams are much more likely to receive compliments than services which have less direct customer contact. A lack of compliments is not an indicator of poor service or performance. Compliments are often about good service from individual officers and often acknowledge the work that is done by the councils in difficult circumstances ie. a compliment to a Wellbeing team officer said that “without him I don’t know what tomorrow would look like” and that he “was a gem and brilliant” and a complement to Housing team stated “We are aware that constituents’ expectations can often be incredibly challenging particularly when their need is so great and when we are not in a position to be able to offer a fast solution.” it continued “Thank you for what you have done to prevent that and know that the family are eternally grateful to you and all who helped bring about this positive outcome”

#### Compliments per service 2021-22



4.3 In 2019-20 the Customer Service team led on the Effortless Project and as part of this the team did detailed user research asking our residents what was important to them. The themes that came out of this were that our residents thought clarity of communication, honesty, respect, speed/convenience and warmth of approach were what mattered to them and these themes can be seen reflected in the

compliments received ie a compliment to the AWES team when collecting a three piece suite acknowledged the men were “very cheerful, polite and efficient” and a compliment for a Customer Services team member complimented him for being “lovely, very calm and patient” and for having “sorted it all out”.

## **Complaints**

- 4.4 A complaint is defined as “*an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents*”.

When looking at complaints it is important to remember that the Councils’ have thousands of interactions with residents on a daily basis. There are officers out in the community, customers phone the contact centre or visit our receptions, emails are received and responded to and these are just some examples, there are many more ways that our customers interact with us.

- 4.5 The council’s have a two stage process for complaint handling.
- Stage 1 - when the complaint is initially received and is passed to the service to respond. Corporately we aim to respond to stage 1 complaints within ten working days.
  - Stage 2 - if a customer is not happy with the Stage 1 response then this is referred to a different senior officer to review the complaint and the Stage 1 response. We aim to respond to stage 2 complaints within 15 working days.
- 4.6 If the customer is not satisfied with the Stage 2 response they can contact either the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman Service to ask for an independent review.

## **Stage 1 complaints**

- 4.7 The number of complaints received in 2020-21 was 44% lower than in 2019-20 for reasons set out above but increased significantly in 2021-22 as can be seen in the table below. Service level detail is set out in Appendix 1. In summary the majority of complaints were for Housing with 44% (88 cases) of these relating to Adur Homes, followed by Waste Service and Revenues and Benefits. These are all high profile frontline services and have the highest numbers of customer

interactions. The new system categorises complaints into five categories. These are poor communication, poor behaviour, poor product or service, long wait time and other. We will be able to report on these categories in the next report.

<b>Number of Stage 1 complaints logged per directorate per year</b>			
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Communities	170	96	186
Digital & Resources	109	42	142
Economy	44	42	75
Total	323	180	403

4.8 The table below shows that 58 complaints at a stage 1 have not been updated on the customer feedback system for 2021-22 currently shown as not responded to. This may be because they have been answered outside of the system either by letter or phone call, as well as the potential of having been missed. The new system makes it easier for services to reply to customers and track communications so this performance should improve in future.

4.9

<b>Complaints at Stage 1 2021-22 responded to per directorate</b>			
Responded	Yes	No	Total
Communities	134	52	186
Digital & Resources	141	1	142
Economy	72	3	75
Total	347	58	403

4.10 There are 347 complaints at Stage 1 in 2021-22 that are showing on the system as being responded to. When these were completed the officer responding to the complaint is asked to log what they believe the outcome of the complaint to be.

<b>Outcomes for Stage 1 complaints</b>				
	No outcome logged	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partially at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)

Communities	31	42	26	35
Digital & Resources	17	47	34	43
Economy	8	38	11	15
Total	56	127	71	93

4.11 As can be seen in the table above 56 complaints that show on the system as being answered have no outcome logged against them. This is 16.1% of the total number of complaints showing a response. In the new customer feedback system this is now a compulsory field and every complaint needs to have an outcome added before the case is closed which will hopefully mean more meaningful figures can be reported at the end of the next financial year. Of the 291 that had a response logged against them 127 complaints (43.6%) were not upheld, 71 (24.4%) were partially upheld and in 93 cases (32%) we were at fault. We need to learn from complaints that are upheld and the new system will enable us to report on the learnings from these complaints so that we can improve on this. A measure of our success should be to see less stage 1 complaints upheld as time goes by. For details on outcomes per service see Appendix 3. The service with the highest number of complaints that had no outcome logged was Housing with 29 (25%) cases not logged. Customer & Digital services had 10 complaints out of 22 logged upheld (45.5%) Admitting that something has gone wrong is not necessarily a bad thing if we learn from those mistakes. Customer & Digital service also had the highest percentage of stage 1 complaints that were partially upheld with 25.9% of cases partially upheld.

4.12 Corporately the aim is complete a stage one complaint within 10 working days from the date that the complaint is received.

Response times for Stage 1 complaints			
	Responded in 10 working days or under	Responded in longer than 10 working days	Percentage of cases responded to in longer than 10 working days
Communities	71	63	47%
Digital & Resources	98	43	30.5%
Economy	57	15	20.8%
Total	226	121	34.9%

- 4.13 Overall 65.1% of Stage 1 complaints were answered within 10 days however there were variations between the directorates with 53% Stage 1 complaints in the communities directorate being answered within this time scale. Some complaints are much more complex than others and may require input from multiple services which takes longer to respond to. So long as the customer is informed of the delay and when they are likely to receive a response this does not go against our policy as it is an aim to respond in 10 days and not a statutory requirement.
- See appendix 4 for Service detail. Housing had the highest number of complaints that were not responded to in 10 working days, 60 out of 114 cases but Housing complaints are also some of the more complex complaints.

### **Stage 2 complaints**

4.14

<b>Number of Stage 2 complaints logged per directorate per year</b>			
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Chief Executive	2	3	1
Communities	50	17	33
Digital & Resources	13	7	16
Economy	12	9	28
Total	77	36	78

- 4.15 The total number of stage 2 complaints logged in 2021-22 increased from the low levels in 2020-21. Roughly 19% of stage 1 complaints are escalated to stage 2. This is only an estimate as some stage 2 cases in 2021-22 actually refer to stage 1 complaints made in 2020-21 and some stage 1 complaints made at the later end of the 2021-22 financial year will not show as stage 2 complaints until the 2022-23 financial year. The number of stage 2 complaints in the communities directorate was lower than the pre-pandemic year 2019-20, whereas this number increased for the economy directorate. This appears to have been driven by an increase of stage 2 complaints across all services in the directorate. Limitations of the previous feedback system means we can not easily drill down further at this stage. With the new system we will be able to do so in 2022-23. However, across the board the total number of stage 2 complaints is relatively small, taking into account the

breadth of our services and the number of people we provide services to.

See Appendix 5 for service level detail. Housing had the largest number of stage 2 complaints logged, followed by Parks & Foreshore and Planning & Development.

- 4.16 Of the 78 Stage 2 complaints logged on to the system in 2021-22, 15 (19.2%) have not shown as being responded to. This is likely to be due responses being sent outside of the system, something that has been addressed with the new system.

<b>Complaints at Stage 2 2021-22 responded to per directorate</b>			
Responded	Yes	No	Total
Chief Executive	1	0	1
Communities	22	11	33
Digital & Resources	13	3	16
Economy	27	1	28
Total	63	15	78

See Appendix 6 for service level detail. Housing had the highest number not logged with 11 out of the 15 complaints

- 4.17 There are 63 Stage 2 complaints on the system that are showing as being responded to on the system. Of these just under half were still not upheld (31) and 18 were either partially or fully upheld. If a complaint that was not upheld at stage 1 is upheld at stage 2 this can be due to the customer providing additional information, or the senior officer reviewing it taking a different view.

<b>Outcomes for Stage 2 complaints</b>				
	No outcome logged	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partially at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Chief Executive	0	1	0	0
Communities	6	6	3	7

Digital & Resources	3	6	2	2
Economy	5	18	2	2
Total	14	31	7	11

For service level detail please see Appendix 7. Housing has the highest number of cases being upheld or partially upheld at stage 2 with 9 out of 13 cases with an outcome logged falling into this category.

- 4.18 The councils' aim to complete a stage 2 complaint within 15 working days from the date that it was received. In 2021-22 this occurred in 55.6% of stage 2 complaints logged on the system as completed. Complex complaints can take longer to provide a detailed response to, and in these cases customers should be provided with an explanation and a revised response date. Again the new system allows for better tracking and analysis of complaint responses.

Response times for Stage 2 complaints		
	Responded in 15 working days or under	Responded in longer than 15 working days
Chief Executive	1	0
Communities	11	11
Digital & Resources	7	6
Economy	16	11
Total	35	28

For service level detail please see Appendix 8.

### **Ombudsman complaints**

- 4.19 Customers who are not satisfied with a stage 2 response can contact the ombudsman to review their complaint in a fair and independent way. There are two ombudsmen that a customer can go to and they can potentially ask both to investigate in certain circumstances. These are the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO). They each deal with different types of service complaints.

The LGO investigates:

- Planning and Building Control
- Some housing issues
- Housing benefit
- Council tax
- Environment and waste
- Neighbour nuisance and antisocial behaviour
- Transport and highways
- Social care
- Some education and schools
- Children's services

4.20 The LGO will not generally not investigate until the council has had the opportunity to try and resolve the complaint.

4.21 The HO investigates:

- Disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of social landlords
- Leasehold services
- Rent/service charges
- Moving to a property - tenancy/transfer/mutual exchange
- Tenant behaviour
- Repairs/housing standards
- Environmental health issues at a property
- Complaints about housing staff
- Councils' handling of the complaints process

4.22 A complaint can be referred to the HO eight weeks after a final stage 2 response has been received. This requirement is no longer part of the process from 1 October 22 and a complainant can refer a complaint as soon as the formal process from the councils has been completed after this date.

4.23 Either ombudsman can decide to reopen a case up to a year after it has been completed and can take up to a year to come to a final decision i.e. most of the cases in this report were initially stage 1 complaints in 2020-21 or earlier. We won't see the impact on the ombudsman cases of increase in the number of stage 1 complaints in 2021-22 until next years report.

### **Local Government Ombudsman cases**

#### **Adur District Council**

4.24 The LGO received 13 cases to investigate and the decisions were as follows:

Service	Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Council to investigate	not upheld	upheld	Total
Environmental Health	0	0	2	0	1	3
Housing	0	1	2	0	0	3
Revenues & Benefits	0	1	0	0	1	2
Planning & Development	0	1	0	0	1	2
Corporate & other services	0	1	0	0	0	1
Highways & transport	0	0	0	1	0	1
Other	1	0	0	0	0	1

4.25 There were 4 cases that were investigated and 1 was not upheld and 3 were upheld. Please refer to Appendix 9 for details around the cases that were upheld by the LGO.

#### **Worthing Borough Council**

4.26 The LGO received 10 cases to investigate and the decisions were as follows:

Service	Closed after initial enquiries	Referred back to the council	not upheld	upheld	Total
Environmental Health	3	1	0	1	5
Housing	1	1	0	1	3
Corporate & other services	1	0	0	0	1

4.27 There were 2 cases investigated and both of those were upheld. For full case details see Appendix 10

#### **Housing Ombudsman Cases**

4.28 The HO has not yet issued their annual report for 2021-22.

## **Future reporting**

- 4.29 In January 2022 a new system was launched for logging and processing customer feedback. The system was built in house in conjunction with the Digital team and with extensive user testing. The system has also been refined since its launch with ongoing support from the development team. It will enable more meaningful reporting next year, with greater analysis of the reasons for complaints, trends etc.
- 4.30 New functionality also gives people the option of submitting equalities data. Although the data is anonymised we can link it to the service that the complaint was about enabling us to see if we are disadvantaged to any group and enabling service improvement.
- 4.31 Other improvements of the system include:
- The ability to report on lessons learnt
  - Improved monitoring of and reporting on Ombudsman complaints
  - Direct communication with customers through the system, keeping all correspondence in one place making it easier to manage cases.
  - Monitoring where customers submit multiple complaints over a short or extended time period. This functionality is particularly helpful when dealing with complex complaints, which can involve multiple services at the same time.
  - The Problem Resolution Group has been set up to look at Housing cases in more detail.

## **Next steps**

- 4.32 The degree of analysis and interpretation of complaints and compliments data for 2021-22 has been limited as a result of the limitations of the old system. This has also made it harder to identify trends and learn from complaints in an evidence based manner. The new system has now been in place since January, is working well and is being refined. This will enable us to present much more meaningful data for the current financial year. Next steps in the management of complaints are:
- Finalising tweaks to the system by the autumn, based on user experience.

- Making complaints data more visible through dashboards in data studio
- Continue the Problem Resolution Group to review complex complaints within Housing
- The Complaints/Compliments Working Group will be starting this summer and will be looking at the whole process from start to finish to investigate the issues and recommend possible solutions
- Continued focus on avoiding complaints by building on the good services work that has already been done.

### **Conclusions**

- 4.33 Feedback in the form of complaints and compliments, and how we respond to it is extremely important both reputationally and to foster an environment of trust with our residents and businesses. A good organisation is trusted to respond objectively to that feedback and make changes if necessary. How an organisation responds when something goes wrong influences how an organisation is perceived to be performing. Feedback should be easy to make and we should be willing to accept and listen to it and respond accordingly.
- 4.34 This report shows that we have seen an increase in the number of complaints in 2021-22, due to a dip in complaints during the first year of the pandemic. Overall the number of complaints, as a percentage of our interactions, is very low and is a credit to our teams. The data also shows that at Stage 1 and Stage 2 we admit when we have not got things right, resulting in only a handful of LGO complaints being upheld.
- 4.35 Due to data limitations we have not been good at analysing reasons for complaints and trends and we haven't had an evidence based approach to learning from them. The new system launched in January of this year will greatly help with this and will result in a more meaningful report to this committee for 2022-23.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Finance Officer: Sarah Gobey

Date: 3rd October 2022

## **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Officer: Geoff Wild

Date: 4 October 2022

**Officer Contact Details:-**

Mandy Redman

Senior Customer Insight and Performance Officer

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## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

- Matter considered and no issues identified

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

- A robust and easy to access feedback system gives a voice to those where things may not have gone as well as we would have liked

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

- We have recently started collecting equality data and this is likely to raise queries about access and participation and will be monitoring these and feeding to relevant services as more data becomes available

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- Better complaints handling and learning will ensure that procedures are robust adhered to council wide and this will mean that any community safety issues will be investigated and addressed if this is found to be necessary

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

- Matter considered and the human right to have concerns thoroughly investigated and addressed will be supported through out the process

### **3. Environmental**

- Matter considered and no issues identified

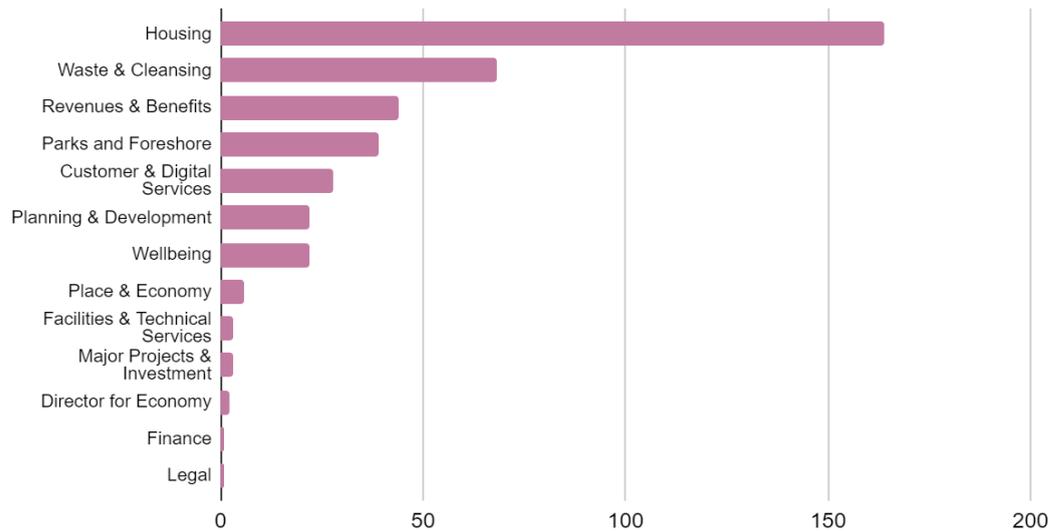
### **4. Governance**

- The customer feedback policy and process will be adhered to
- The only risk to the Councils' reputation is by not investigating complaints thoroughly or acting on the lessons learned

## **Appendix 1**

Of the 403 stage 1 complaints logged in 2021-22 164 (40.7%) were for Housing with more than half of these (86 cases) regarding Adur Homes Repairs.

### **Total number of Stage 1 complaints logged per service**



## **Appendix 2**

<b>Stage 1 complaints showing no response on system per service</b>	
Housing	50
Wellbeing	2
Major Projects	2
Director for Economy	1
Electoral Services	1
Total	56

89.3% of cases that show no response on the system for Stage 1 are in Housing complaints.

### Appendix 3

<b>Outcomes for Stage 1 complaints</b>				
	No outcome logged	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partly at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Customer & Digital Services	5	6	6	10
Director for the Economy	0	0	1	0
Facilities & Technical Services	1	0	1	1
Finance	0	0	0	1
Housing	29	33	22	30
Legal	0	1	0	0
Major Projects & Investment	0	1	0	0
Parks & Foreshore	4	24	3	8
Place & Economy	1	1	1	3
Planning & Development	2	12	5	3
Revenues & Benefits	5	14	14	11
Waste Cleans Ops	7	26	14	21
Wellbeing	2	9	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>93</b>

Stage 1 complaints were either upheld or partially upheld in 164 (47.3%) cases with Place and Economy having the highest percentage of cases in this category with 4 out of 6 cases (66.7%) and Customer & Digital Services having 16 out of 27 cases (59.3%). Although these percentages seem high, admitting that something has gone wrong and explaining what has been done to make sure this doesn't happen again is exactly what the Ombudsman would recommend and good practice. The services with the highest percentage of complaints that were not upheld were Parks & Foreshore with 24 out of 39 cases ( 61.5%) and Planning & Development with 12 out of 22 cases (54.6%)

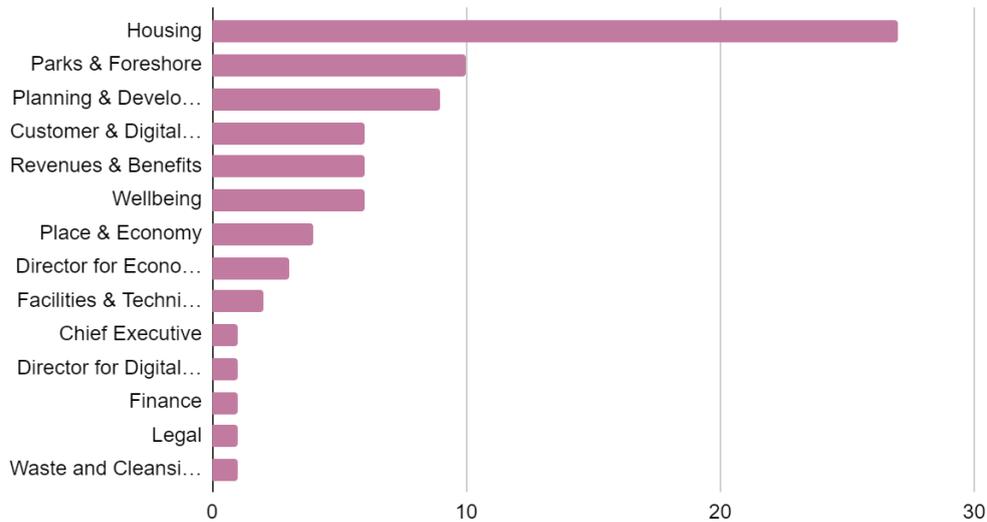
## **Appendix 4**

Response times for Stage 1 complaints per section		
	Responded in 10 working days or under	Responded in longer than 10 working days
Customer & Digital Services	22	5
Director for the Economy	0	1
Facilities & Technical Services	2	1
Finance	1	0
Housing	54	60
Legal	1	0
Major Projects & Investment	0	1
Parks & Foreshore	33	6
Place & Economy	5	1
Planning & Development	17	5
Revenues & Benefits	18	26
Waste Cleans Ops	56	12
Wellbeing	17	3

Legal and Finance responded to stage 1 complaints within the aim of 10 working days all of the time but only had 1 complaint each to answer over the whole year. Customer & Digital Services, Parks & Foreshore, Place & Economy, Waste & Cleansing Operations and Wellbeing all responded to stage 1 complaints in over 80% of cases. Revenues & Benefits responded to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days in 18 out of 26 cases (40.9%) and Housing did so in 54 out of 114 cases (47.4%)

## **Appendix 5**

### **Total number of Stage 2 complaints logged per service**



The Service with the largest number of stage 2 complaints was Housing with 27 (34.6%).

## **Appendix 6**

<b>Stage 2 complaints showing no response on system per service</b>	
Customer & Digital Services	2
Director for the Economy	1
Housing	11
Revenues & Benefits	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

73.3% of cases that have not been logged as responded to at a stage 2 are in Housing

## Appendix 7

	No outcome logged	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partially at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Chief Executive	0	1	0	0
Customer & Digital Services	2	1	0	1
Director for Digital & Resources	0	1	0	0
Director for the Economy	1	0	1	0
Facilities & Technical Services	0	0	1	1
Finance	1	0		0
Housing	3	4	2	7
Legal	0	1	0	0
Parks & Foreshore	2	8	0	0
Place & Economy	1	3	0	0
Planning & Development	1	7	0	1
Revenues & Benefits	0	3	2	0
Waste Cleans Ops	0	0	0	1
Wellbeing	3	2	1	0
Total	14	31	7	11

Stage 2 complaints are either upheld or partially upheld in 18 out of 63 cases (26.6%). The highest percentage of these cases was in Facilities and Technical Services where 2 out of 2 (100%) of stage 2 complaints were upheld or partially upheld and Housing where 9 out of 16 (56.3%) were either upheld or partially upheld. Chief Executive, Director for Digital & Resources, Finance, Legal, Parks & Foreshore and Place & Economy all had no stage 2 complaints upheld or partially upheld.

## **Appendix 8**

<b>Response times for Stage 2 complaints per service</b>		
	Responded in 15 working days or under	Responded in longer than 15 working days
Chief Executive	1	0
Customer & Digital Services	2	2
Director for Digital & Resources	0	1
Director for the Economy	1	1
Facilities & Technical Services	2	0
Finance	0	1
Housing	8	8
Legal	1	0
Parks & Foreshore	6	4
Place & Economy	2	2
Planning & Development	5	4
Revenues & Benefits	3	2
Waste Cleans Ops	1	0
Wellbeing	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>28</b>

The aim is to answer stage 2 complaints within 15 working days. Of the 63 cases logged as responded to on the system 55.6% are answered within this time. The Director for Digital & Resources and Finance both did not answer any cases within this time scale but both only responded to one stage 2 complaint. Customer & Digital Services, Director for the Economy, Housing, Place & Economy and Wellbeing answered 50% of complaints within this timescale.

## **Appendix 9**

### **Adur District Council LGO Cases upheld**

Case 1 - Mr X did not agree with the drafting of some conditions with his planning application. The LGO agreed that there was “some fault” in the drafting of conditions attached to the Permissions and supported the Council’s offer to settle the complaint by refunding 50% of the complainants planning application fee and a refund of £117 was issued.

**Remedy** - Financial redress for quantifiable loss

I Case 2 - Ms Y was not happy with the way that her benefit claim had been handled by the Revenues and Benefits department. The Council was aware that Ms Y wanted to claim housing benefit on the 6 August 2020 but did not advise her until September to claim universal credit causing anxiety and uncertainty and putting her to time and trouble. The LGO recommended that the Council pay Ms Y £500 in view of its failure to advise her to claim Universal Credit earlier.

**Remedy** - Financial redress for avoidable distress time and trouble

Case 3 - Mr Z was not happy about the Councils handling of a noise investigation and the antisocial behaviour of a neighbour. The LGO recommended a payment of £150 to recognise the stress and worry caused. The council to provide an apology and to provide Mr Z with information about the Community Trigger for future reference

**Remedy** - Apology, financial redress for avoidable distress time and trouble and provide further information and advice

## **Appendix 10**

### **Worthing Borough Council LGO Cases upheld**

Case 1 - Mr M was unhappy with the way housing had handled his complaint about outstanding issues raised over two years regarding his homelessness application.

The LGO found fault by the Council, causing an injustice to the complainant. The Council was required to apologise to Mr M for the frustration and uncertainty caused by its complaint handling and pay Mr M £200. The council was also required to remind officers who deal with complaints of the importance of adhering to the timescales set out in its complaints procedure.

**Remedy** - Apology, financial redress for avoidable distress, time and trouble and provide staff with training and/or guidance.

Case 2 - Ms P was unhappy with her housing application decision and would like it reassessed.

The LGO found that the Council was at fault with how it dealt with Ms P's housing application and would like the Council to reassess Ms P's application in line with its own policy

**Remedy** - New appeal/review or reconsidered decision