

## ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
16 February 2023

Key Decision: No

Ward(s) Affected: None

### **Half Year Summary of Customer Feedback (Complaints and Compliments) 2022-23**

#### **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 first half of the financial year 2022/23 (1 April 22 up to and including 30 September 22) and is an update to be shared with the annual report 2021/22. It includes trend analysis for the previous three financial years.
- It sets out an update on progress on improvements to the feedback process and policy and the steps that are planned for the rest of the financial year to embed a feedback driven culture.

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

- Members are asked to consider this Report which is for information only.

### **3. Context**

- 3.1. Customer feedback is important and an opportunity 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. This report provides an overview of formal complaints and compliments received by the councils for the first six months of 2022-23 as an update to the delayed annual report 2021-22 and should be read in conjunction to that report.
- 3.3. 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.
- 3.4. This report only looks at official complaints and compliments which are 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.
- 3.5. 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 correct information. They also aim to ensure that all responses are submitted in a timely manner. Further details about Ombudsman cases can be found later in this report.
- 3.6. The team consists of a 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. Training and guidance to officers across the organisation this is provided by the team as part of their role.

- 3.7. The feedback system was upgraded in January 2022 and it now enables more detailed analysis of complaints and compliments including themes and trends. This report does not look at these changes but the more detailed analysis will be in the annual report for 2022/23 later this year

#### 4. Customer Feedback in detail

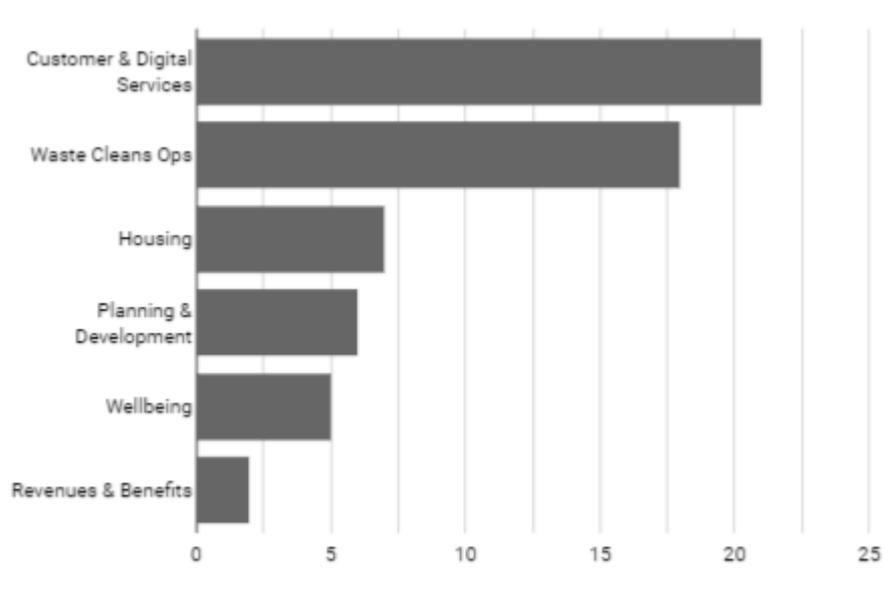
##### Compliments

- 4.1 Compliments are logged when an officer or service has gone over and above what the resident or service user 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.

Number of compliments logged per year per directorate				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 April - September
Communities	59	33	38	12
Digital & Resources	52	59	62	41
Economy	34	46	29	9
Total	145	138	129	62

- 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 acknowledge the work that is done by the councils in difficult circumstances.

## Compliments per service



## Complaints

- 4.3 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*”.
- 4.4 Council officers have thousands of interactions with residents on a daily basis. In the community, on the phone, in our receptions and via email. In this context the number of complaints we receive is low. However, we do need to respond properly and learn from all complaints.
- 4.5 Complaints can be about a process of interacting with us or about the outcome of a process. In both cases we can use the insight from complaints to see where something doesn't work for our customers and improve it. Particular areas we need to focus on are ensuring that we are clear about why we do something, ensuring responses are in plain english and fully answer the customers' concerns. Areas for improvement could include reviewing wording on the website or in letters and notifications.
- 4.6 Due to the sensitivity and importance of some of our services, some subjects are very emotive for example, housing, finances and environment and these complaints can be difficult to resolve.

- 4.7 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.

4.8 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**

4.9 The number of complaints received in the first half of 2022-23 is higher than in 2021-22.

- 4.10 The three services receiving the highest number of stage 1 complaints are:
- Housing who are on course to have about the same number as in 2021-22 2)
  - Waste and cleansing who have received more complaints than in 2021-22 in part due to the industrial action and
  - Customer & digital services who have received a higher number of complaints. The main service is customer services who take up to 1,000 calls per day in busy periods in what has been a challenging first six months.

4.11 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	2022-23 April to September
Communities	170	96	186	97
Digital & Resources	109	42	142	119
Economy	44	42	75	27
Total	323	180	403	243

4.12 The table below shows that 30 complaints (out of 243) at stage 1 have not been updated on the customer feedback system. They are showing as not responded to and this may be because they have been answered outside of the system e.g. by letter or phone call, or still be within the system waiting to be dealt with. Some of them may also have been missed. These complaints sit within Housing and work is underway to improve use of the system to allow them to be tracked.

4.13

<b>Complaints at Stage 1 2022-23 April - September responded to per directorate</b>			
Responded	Yes	No	Total
Communities	67	30	97
Digital & Resources	119	0	119
Economy	27	0	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>243</b>

4.14 There are 214 complaints that are showing on the system as being responded to. When these were completed the officer dealing with it asked to log the outcome of the complaint (whether it was upheld, partially upheld or not upheld).

<b>Outcomes for Stage 1 complaints 2022-23 April - September</b>			
	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partially at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Communities	33	16	18
Digital & Resources	54	31	35
Economy	23	21	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>

4.15 Of the 214 stage 1 complaints with outcomes,

- 110 complaints (51.4%) were not upheld which is an increase on the 2021-22 annual report (43.6%),
- 49 (22.9%) were partially upheld which is slightly less than the annual report 2021-22 (24.4%) and
- 55 cases (25.7%) the complaint was upheld which is significantly less than in the previous annual report (32%).

- 4.16 The new system will enable us to report on the lessons learnt from these complaints so that we can improve our performance. We should be aiming for fewer stage 1 complaints, and of the ones we do receive, fewer being upheld.
- 4.17 For details on outcomes per service please see Appendix 3. Customer & Digital services had 10 complaints out of 32 logged upheld. This was 31.3% of the total for this service and significantly better than in the annual report 2021-2 when 45.5% were upheld. Admitting that something has gone wrong is not necessarily a bad thing if we learn from those mistakes. Waste and Cleansing Operations had the highest percentage of stage 1 complaints that were partially upheld with 27.8% of cases partially upheld (15 out of 54).
- 4.18 Corporately the aim is complete a stage one complaint within 10 working days from the date that the complaint is received.

<b>Response times for Stage 1 complaints</b>			
	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	38	59	60.8%
Digital & Resources	105	15	12.5%
Economy	21	6	22.2%
Total	164	80	32.8%

- 4.19 Overall 66.9% of Stage 1 complaints were answered within 10 days which is a slight improvement from the annual report for 2021-22 when 65.1% were answered within corporate timescales. However there were variations between the directorates with just 39.2% Stage 1 complaints in the Communities Directorate being answered within this time scale down from 53%. This may be because the complaints are more complex and require input from multiple services. In these instances, the customer should be informed of the delay and when they are likely to receive a response (the 10 day response time is only a guideline, and not appropriate in all instances). Please refer to Appendix 4 for further details.

## **Stage 2 complaints**

4.20

<b>Number of Stage 2 complaints logged per directorate per year</b>				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 April to September
Chief Executive	2	3	1	0
Communities	50	17	33	22
Digital & Resources	13	7	16	20
Economy	12	9	28	11
Total	77	36	78	53

- 4.21 The total number of stage 2 complaints logged in the first half of 2022-23 indicates that there is likely to be a slight increase in the total number for this year when compared to previous years. Roughly 22% of stage 1 complaints have been escalated to stage 2 this financial year so far compared to roughly 19% in the previous year. This is only an estimate as some stage 2 cases in 2022-23 actually refer to stage 1 complaints made in 2021-22 financial year.
- 4.22 Housing had the largest number of stage 2 complaints logged, followed by Customer and Digital Services and Wellbeing. The number of stage 2 complaints in the Digital and Resources directorate is higher for the first half of the year than the total for 2021-22, although total numbers are still low. 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. See Appendix 5 for service level detail.
- 4.23 Of the 53 Stage 2 complaints logged on to the system in the first half of 2022-23, 12 (22.6%) have not shown as being responded to. As with stage 1 complaints some of these may be responded to outside the system, or still be open.

<b>Complaints at Stage 2 2021-22 responded to per directorate</b>			
Responded	Yes	No	Total
Communities	14	8	22
Digital & Resources	18	1	19
Economy	9	2	11
Total	41	12	52

4.24 See Appendix 6 for service level detail. Housing had the highest number not responded to with 8 out of the 13 complaints

4.25 There are 41 Stage 2 complaints on the system that are showing as being responded to. Of these over half were still not upheld (23) 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>			
	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partially at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Communities	7	7	0
Digital & Resources	9	5	4
Economy	7	2	0
Total	24	14	4

4.26 For service level detail please see Appendix 7. Customer and Digital Services has the highest number of cases being upheld at stage 2 with 2 out of 7 cases with an outcome logged falling into this category. Given the low numbers, it is not possible to read any meaningful trends in this data.

4.27 The councils' aim to complete a stage 2 complaint within 15 working days from the date that it was received. In the first half of 2022-23 this occurred in 51.2% of stage 2 complaints logged on the system as completed. This is slightly lower than the 55.6% for the annual year 2021-22. 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.

<b>Response times for Stage 2 complaints</b>		
	Responded in 15 working days or under	Responded in longer than 15 working days
Communities	9	5
Digital & Resources	8	10
Economy	4	5
Total	21	20

4.28 For service level detail please see Appendix 8.

### **Ombudsman complaints**

4.29 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

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

4.31 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

4.32 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.

4.33 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 will not see the full impact on the ombudsman cases of increase in the number of stage 1 complaints in 2021-22 until the full annual report 2022-23 or beyond.

**Ombudsman reporting**

4.34 All cases are calculated from the date that the ombudsman case was closed on the complaints system. This may not align with the ombudsman's own dates as they use a different system but for consistency and accuracy in reporting and to show trends, this report is based on the dates in our system.

**Local Government Ombudsman cases**

4.35 The LGO received 18 cases to investigate and the decisions are summarised in the table below. Only two were partially upheld and one was upheld.

Service	Incomplete invalid	Closed after initial enquiries	Not upheld	Partially upheld	upheld	Total
Bereavement services	0	1	0	0	0	1
Environmental services/health	0	1	0	0	0	1
Housing	0	1	0	0	0	1
Parking	0	0	0	1	0	1
Parks & Foreshore	0	0	1	0	0	1
Planning & Development	0	5	0	0	0	5
Revenues & Benefits	0	1	0	1	1	3
Waste Ops and Management	0	2	0	0	0	2
Wellbeing	0	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	0	12	1	2	1	16

4.36 Please refer to Appendix 9 for details around the cases that were partially upheld or upheld by the LGO.

4.37 LGO decisions are summarised in the table below.

LGO Decisions	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	April - Sept 2022-23
Incomplete/Invalid	0	0	1	0
Closed after initial enquiry	8	7	18	11
Not upheld	1	0	2	1
Partially upheld	0	1	1	2
Upheld	0	3	2	1
Total	9	11	23	13

4.38 As can be seen in the chart above, 2021-22 saw complaints to the LGO more than double from 2020-21. Part of this was due to the backlog created by the pandemic when the LGO stopped accepting cases for a

period. However, even with this increased number of cases the number of cases either partially upheld or upheld reduced from the previous year.

- 4.39 When looking at the first half of the current year the number of cases has been lower in total however the number of cases that have been either upheld or partially upheld has already reached the number for the whole year in 2021-22 and there are currently 11 cases in the system since 1 October 22 two of which have been closed after initial enquiry whilst 9 are awaiting a final decision.

### **Housing Ombudsman Cases**

- 4.40 The HO did not issue an annual report 2021-22 for Adur Council (the HO only makes determinations on landlords - Adur Homes cases) as the number of cases where a determination was made was only 2. A report is only created if there have been more than 5 cases. However in December 22 the council received a letter from the HO concerning the organisation's high maladministration rate which was 66%, although this was calculated across only 2 cases. Details of these cases can be found in Appendix 10.

Service	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	April - September 2022-23
Adur Homes	3	2	1	1
Housing	2	4	3	5
Totals	5	6	4	6

- 4.41 As can be seen in the table above the number of cases referred to the HO has increased in the first half of 2022-23 and there are 10 cases where decisions have been made since October 22 or a decision is still awaited (2 not upheld, 3 closed after initial enquiry and 5 awaiting a determination). When the annual report for 2022-23 is reported the number of cases will be at least 16 for the current financial year which is a significant increase.

HO Decisions	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	April to Sept 2022-23
Incomplete/Invalid	0	0	0	0
Closed after initial enquiry	3	1	3	3
Not upheld	0	0	0	0
Partially upheld	0	0	1	1
Upheld	3	4	0	2
Total	6	5	4	6

4.42 All three of the cases with a determination in the first half of 2022-23 have either been upheld or partially upheld compared to one in the annual year 2021-22. Detail of all three cases can be found in Appendix 11

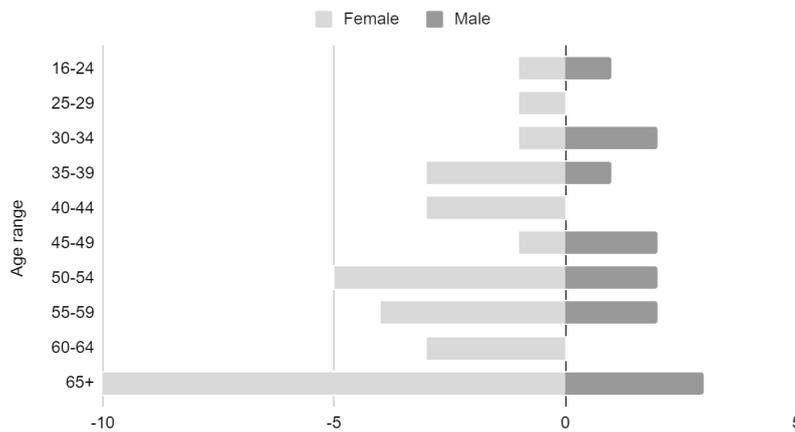
#### **Equalities Reporting**

4.43 Equalities questions were added to the complaints process in week commencing 9 May 22 to improve our understanding of the people who submit complaints, and whether there are any groups in the community who have more reason to complain. This section provides an early overview, a more detailed analysis will be included in the annual report for 2022-23. The equalities questions are optional and some people choose not to complete them.

4.44 The total number of those making a complaint who started an equalities form from 9 May 22 up to 30 September 22 was 48. The total number of complaints received during this period was 196 giving a percentage who completed the equalities form of 24.5%. Looking at other equivalent organisations who publish their response rate for the completion of equalities monitoring forms this appears to be around the average.

Service	Number of complaints received 9-5-22 to 30-09-22	Number of Equalities questionnaires completed	Percentage who completed a questionnaire
Customer & Digital Services	26	6	23.1%
Director for Communities	2	0	0.0%
Director for Digital & Resources	2	0	0.0%
Facilities & Technical Services	2	0	0.0%
Finance	4	0	0.0%
Housing	61	11	18.0%
Legal Services	1	1	100.0%
Parks & Foreshore	4	4	100.0%
Place & Economy	3	1	33.3%
Planning & Development	6	1	16.7%
Revenues & Benefits	27	7	25.9%
Waste Cleans Ops	42	15	35.7%
Wellbeing	16	2	12.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>24.5%</b>

#### Gender per age bracket



4.45 As can be seen in the above chart the largest group are those age 65+ who accounted for 28.3% and more respondents were female (66.7%) than male (33.3%). One customer aged 25-29 preferred not to enter their gender.

Marital status	Number	Percentage
Civil partner	2	4.2%
Married (opposite sex)	25	52.1%
Single	14	29.2%
Cohabiting	4	8.3%
Prefer not to say	3	6.3%
Total	48	100.0%

4.46 As we can see in the chart above just over half are married and just under a third are single.

Service	Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
	Yes	No
Customer & Digital Services	3	3
Housing	7	3
Legal Services	1	0
Parks & Foreshore	4	1
Place & Economy	0	1
Planning & Development	0	1
Revenues & Benefits	2	5
Waste Cleans Ops	1	14
Wellbeing	2	0
Total	20	28

4.47 Out of the number of people who filled in the questions 20 stated they had a disability (41.7%). Housing, Parks and Foreshore and Wellbeing all have high percentages of those who completed forms saying they had a disability. At this stage the total number of forms completed is very small, again making it difficult to identify trends, but services should be looking to see if certain sections of our communities are adversely affected and therefore submitting more complaints.

## **Future reporting**

- 448 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.
- 4.49 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 disadvantageous to any group and enabling service improvement. Some of this data is in this report but there will be further reporting in the full year report for 2022-23
- 4.50 Other improvements of the system include:
- The ability to report on lessons learnt
  - Improved monitoring of and reporting on Ombudsman complaints which can be seen in some of the additional reporting in this report but will improve over time
  - 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**

- 4.51 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 interim report has been based on the 2021-22 report to allow a degree of comparison. In the full year report for 2022/23 we will be able to provide more detailed analysis of the data, including

ombudsman cases and equalities monitoring data. Next steps in the management of complaints are:

- Finalising tweaks to the system by the spring, based on user experience.
- Making complaints data more visible through dashboards in looker studio
- Continue the Problem Resolution Group to review complex complaints within Housing
- A review of the end to end complaints process is underway in Housing with a new complaints policy for Adur Homes residents and a new complaints handling approach being developed within the service
- Continued focus on avoiding complaints by building on the good services work that has already been completed.

### **Conclusions**

- 4.52 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.
- 4.53 This report shows a continued increase in the number of complaints in the first half year of 2022-23 and an increase in the number of residents taking complaints through to the ombudsman. 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.
- 4.54 Due to data limitations we have not been able to properly analyse reasons for complaints and trends and we have not 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 the annual report 2022-23.

## **5. Financial Implications**

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

Finance Officer: Sarah Gobey

Date: 08.02.2023

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 The Monitoring Officer is required to report to the Council in any case where the Ombudsman, after investigation, has reported that any proposal, decision or omission by the Council or any Committee, SubCommittee or Joint Committee of the Council, or any Member or Officer of the Council has given rise to maladministration or injustice, in accordance with section 5(2)(b) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 6.2 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Legal Officer: Joanne Lee

Date: 06/02/2023

### **Officer Contact Details:-**

Mandy Redman

Senior Customer Insight and Performance Officer

Mand.Redman@adur-worthing.gov.uk

## **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 throughout the process

### **3. Environmental**

- Matter considered and no issues identified

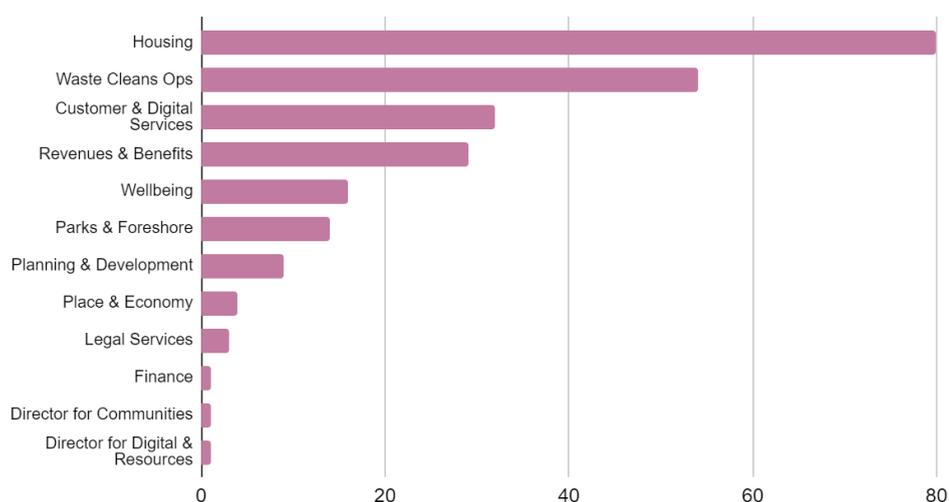
### **4. Governance**

- 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 243 stage 1 complaints logged in the first six months of 2022-23 80 (32.8%) were for Housing with more than half of these (43 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	30
Total	30

All cases that show no response on the system for Stage 1 are Housing complaints. These can be broken down per section as shown in the table below with 70% of these being for Adur Homes Repairs.

<b>Stage 1 complaints showing no response on system per section</b>		
Adur Homes Repairs	21	70%
Neighbourhood services	5	16.7%
Housing Needs	3	10%
Private Sector Housing	1	3.3%
Total	30	100%

### **Appendix 3**

<b>Outcomes for Stage 1 complaints</b>			
	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partly at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Customer & Digital Services	14	8	10
Director for Communities	0	1	0
Director for Digital & Resources	0	0	1
Finance	1	0	0
Housing	23	11	15
Legal	3	0	0
Parks & Foreshore	12	0	2
Place & Economy	3	1	0
Planning & Development	8	1	0
Revenues & Benefits	13	8	8
Waste Cleans Ops	23	15	16
Wellbeing	9	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>

Stage 1 complaints were either upheld or partially upheld in 104 (48.6%) cases with Waste and Cleansing Ops having the highest percentage of cases with 31 out of a total of 54 (57.4%) followed by Customer & Digital Services (56.3%), Revenues and Benefits (55.2%) and Housing (52%) (the directors for Communities and Digital and Resources each had 100% of cases either partially upheld or upheld but each had only 1 case). 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.

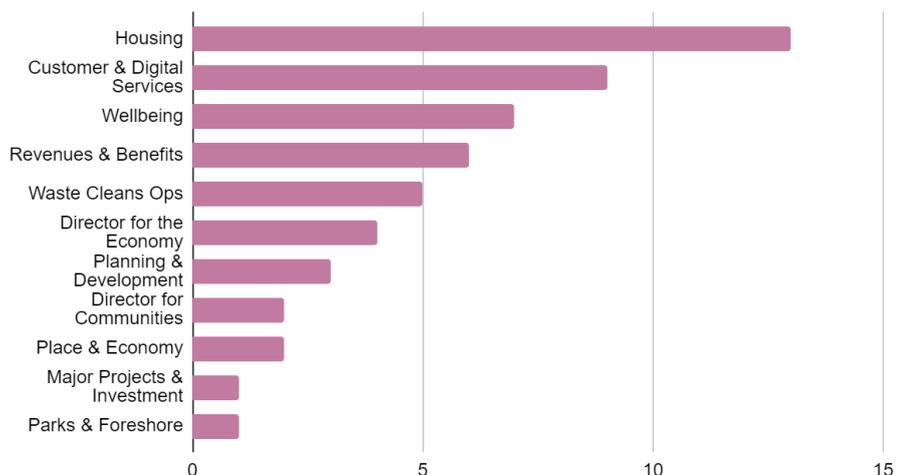
## **Appendix 4**

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	30	2
Director for Communities	0	1
Director for Digital & Resources	0	1
Finance	1	0
Housing	24	56
Legal	2	1
Parks & Foreshore	12	2
Place & Economy	3	1
Planning & Development	6	3
Revenues & Benefits	21	8
Waste Cleans Ops	51	3
Wellbeing	14	2

Finance responded to stage 1 complaints within the aim of 10 working days all of the time but only had 1 complaint to answer over the six month period. Waste and Cleansing ops (94.4%) & Customer & Digital Services(93.8%), both responded to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days in over 90% of cases. Housing responded to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days in 24 out of 80 cases (30%). Complaints within Housing tend to be complex complaints involving multiple issues and these can take time to investigate and resolve. So long as the customer is kept informed and understands why there is a delay this is not necessarily a bad experience.

## **Appendix 5**

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



The Service with the largest number of stage 2 complaints was Housing with 13 (24.5%). This is down from the annual report 2021-22 where Housing had 34.6% of the total amount.

## **Appendix 6**

<b>Stage 2 complaints responded to on system per service</b>		
	No	Yes
Customer & Digital Services	1	7
Director for Communities	0	2
Director for the Economy	1	3
Housing	8	5
Major Projects and Investment	0	1
Parks and Foreshore	0	1
Place and Economy	1	1
Planning and Development	0	3
Revenues and Benefits	0	6
Waste and Cleansing Ops	0	5
Wellbeing	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>

66.7% of cases that had not been logged as responded to at a stage 2 were in Housing. Some of these cases may still be ongoing at the current time

### **Appendix 7**

	Not upheld (we are not at fault)	Partially upheld (we are partially at fault)	Upheld (we are at fault)
Customer & Digital Services	3	2	2
Director for Communities	1	1	0
Director for the Economy	2	1	0
Housing	3	2	0
Major Projects & Investment	1	0	0
Parks & Foreshore	1	0	0
Place & Economy	0	1	0
Planning & Development	3	0	0
Revenues & Benefits	2	3	1
Waste Cleans Ops	4	0	1
Wellbeing	3	4	0
Total	23	14	4

Stage 2 complaints are either upheld or partially upheld in 18 out of 41 cases (43.9%). Revenues and Benefits have the highest percentage of Stage 2 complaints either partially upheld or upheld at this stage.(66.7% - 4 out of 6 stage 2 complaints)

## **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
Customer & Digital Services	4	2
Director for Communities	0	2
Director for the Economy	1	2
Housing	2	3
Major Projects and Developments	0	1
Parks & Foreshore	1	0
Place & Economy	1	0
Planning & Development	1	2
Revenues & Benefits	3	3
Waste Cleans Ops	1	4
Wellbeing	7	0
Total	21	20

The aim is to answer stage 2 complaints within 15 working days. Of the 41 cases logged as responded to on the system 51.2% are answered within this time. Wellbeing, Parks and Foreshore and Place and Economy all answered 100% of their stage 2 complaints within 15 working days whilst waste and cleansing ops only managed this 20% of the time.

## **Appendix 9**

### **LGO Cases partially upheld/upheld**

Case 1 - Mr X complained that the Council failed to prevent deductions the DWP made from his Universal Credit. Mr X also says the Council has not refunded all the money it owes. Mr X says that as a result of the Council's actions, he suffered financial hardship. The LGO found

fault in the Council's actions to prevent and refund deductions taken from Mr X's Universal Credit. This fault has caused Mr X an injustice.

**Remedy** - Financial redress of £300 and an apology to Mr X.

Case 2 - Ms Y was not happy with the way that her PCN dispute has been handled by the Parking team. The Council did not properly take account of her vulnerability when enforcing an unpaid penalty charge notice. Ms Y says she suffered a harmful impact on her mental health and spent unnecessary time and trouble in trying to resolve the matter. The LGO found fault by the Council but did not consider it caused Ms Y an injustice requiring a remedy in addition to the action the Council has already taken.

**Remedy** - The Council had already provided Ms Y with a detailed response and removed the compliance fee and set up a payment plan to allow extra time to make the payment due. No further remedy was needed

Case 3 - Mrs Z's son was unhappy that the Council instructed bailiffs who wrote to Mrs Z after the son had already informed the Council that his mother had moved into a care home.

**Remedy** - The Council had already removed the arrears and cancelled all costs before the ombudsman investigated this case. In recognition of the distress and upset caused by being contacted by bailiffs the ombudsman suggested that the Council pay a financial remedy of £150 which the Council agreed to do. The ombudsman decided in the light of this not to start an investigation.

## **Appendix 10**

### **Cases used to determine the percentage of maladministration**

Letter from the Housing Ombudsman

Case 1 (this case was counted as completed in 2021-22 by the HO but on the MATs system this was completed 24-6-22 so is also showing in Appendix 11) - Ms A was unhappy with the Council's response to her reports of damp and mould at her address and the handling of her complaint. The HO found fault with the Council in its handling of the reported complaint about condensation and mould at the property. £100 compensation was awarded for this and a further £75 for the handling of the complaint. The Council was also ordered to, if not done already, the rendering and plastering needed to make good around the windows that was identified as required; to install a humidistat fan in the bathroom and to inspect the guttering and downpipe during rainfall.

**Remedy** - Apology, financial redress of £175 for the service failures identified and works to be completed

Case 2 - Ms C was unhappy with the Councils handling of her reports concerning anti-social behaviour, the installation of soundproofing and the handling of the complaint.

**Remedy** - The council is to pay Ms C £50 for the delay in progressing the complaint and the failure to keep her reasonable updated with regards to its progress

## **Appendix 11**

### **HO Cases partially upheld/upheld**

Case 1 - Ms A was unhappy with the Councils response to her reports of damp and mould at her address and the handling of her complaint. The HO found fault with the Councils in its handling of the reported complaint about condensation and mould at the property. £100 compensation was awarded for this and a further £75 for the handling of the complaint. The Council was also ordered to, if not done already, the rendering and plastering needed to make good around the windows that was identified as required; to install a humidistat fan in the bathroom and to inspect the guttering and downpipe during rainfall.

**Remedy** - Apology, financial redress of £175 for the service failures identified and works to be completed

Case 2/3 - Mr B was unhappy about neighbours cluttering the communal stairwell and cat fouling in the communal stairwell. Mr B also reported anti-social behaviour by a neighbour's grandson and was unhappy at the way that this had been handled. He was also unhappy with the way that the complaint had been handled. Mr B raised an initial complaint regarding the stairwell the 20-05-21 and a second complaint was raised regarding the handling of anti-social behaviour complaint and how the complaint had been handled. The HO looked at both complaints together. The Ombudsman found maladministration in respect of the Councils handling of Mr B's reports of cat fouling and rubbish left in the communal hallway of the property and the Councils response to Mr B's complaint.

**Remedy** - Apology, financial redress of £450 (£300 for lack of meaningful response to the cat fouling and rubbish in the communal stairwell and £150 for failures in complaints handling). To undertake a case review at senior level with a written report sent to Mr B and the HO