



City of Westminster

Annual Complaints Review 2016/17

July 2017

For further information contact: Sue Howell,
Customer and Complaints Manager
Telephone: ext. 8013
Email: showell@westminster.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents complaints performance and trends for 2016/17. It also includes a performance review of Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) first time enquiries, and a limited review of Leader and Cabinet Member correspondence.

2. Background

- 2.1. The council's two stage complaints procedure is as follows:
- **Stage 1** - Complaints are addressed by the local service delivery manager (10 working day turnaround).
 - **Stage 2** - A Chief Executive's review undertaken (10 working day turnaround)
 - **LGO** - If the complainant still remains dissatisfied he/she can take the concern to the LGO
- 2.2. The procedure covers most council services although Adults and Children's Social Care Services each have their own statutory complaints procedure. In view of this separate reports are produced for Member and Officer oversight, therefore information about these services has not been included in this report.
- 2.3. CityWest Homes (CWH) has been operating its own complaints procedure since 1 April 2012, and therefore their complaints data has not been assessed in this report. CWH produces its own annual complaint report which had not been completed at the time of drafting this report.
- 2.4. Previously Stage 1 complaints data was captured on a number of different systems. However, a new corporate complaints database went live in April 2016 although usage was phased in, and the system was connected to the complaints web page form in September 2016. Parking Services complaint data was not recorded in the new system for 2016/17 as they had other technical issues which were not resolved until March 2017. In view of this Parking Services data is shown separately and is not included in the majority of the charts, tables and graphs for stage 1 complaint data.
- 2.5. As some services have a small amount of data on other system this report will focus on the majority of the complaints data which was recorded in the new system and therefore the information in this report will be representative of each services performance.
- 2.6. This report will include information on all stage 2 complaints and all Local Government Ombudsman complaints received in 2016/17 as they were all entered into the new system when it went live.

3. The management of complaints

- 3.1. The following are being or have been developed to address and improve the management of complaints:

- The Council's Complaints Team have been overseeing the use of the new complaints system throughout the year and this has included training of staff across the Council on how to use the system, resolving teething problems and developing the reporting and analytical components. The Council now has, for the first time, a complete corporate overview of all complaints.
- There continues to be some localised training issues in the way data is being entered and the Corporate Complaints team is cleaning up data entered incorrectly and working with the various teams who still have problems in entering data so that the system can produce the reports required to manage performance. The complaints Team is reviewing data on a monthly basis until such time as the organisation has truly embedded this system into its operation.
- The new system is also being used by the Cabinet and Ward member support team but owing to some technical issues there has not been a full take up of the system by all team members. This is now being phased in.

4. **Headline findings**

Complaint Numbers

- 4.1. There has been an overall decrease in the total number of complaints across all stages of the complaints procedure (down 211 which equates to 25%) when compared to the previous year. It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions as there may have been some under reporting following the introduction of the new complaints system, and there has been a reduction of Housing Benefit complaints received when compared with 2015/16.

Stage 1

- 4.2. **Complaint Volumes** - 3 Directorates deal with complaints in significant volume (City Treasurers 62%, Growth Planning and Housing 23% and City Management and Communities 15%)
- 4.3. Of the 62% (388) complaints from City Treasurers 51% are about Housing Benefit, 44% are Council Tax and 5% from Business Rates
- 4.4. **Response Times** – 84% of stage 1 complaints were responded to within target response time (10 working days). 86% met the target response time in 2015/16 so there has been a slight decrease in performance
- 4.5. Waste and Parks and Highways Infrastructure and Public Realm have the most difficulty in meeting the target response time. Highways Infrastructure and Public Realm have already put measures in place to improve their performance
- 4.6. **Complaint Outcomes** – 24% of stage 1 were Upheld against 28% in 2015/16
- 4.7. **Most common causes of complaints** – The most common causes are failures to do something and delays in doing something.
- 4.8. 35-40% of complaints about delays were upheld and a similar amount with respect to service quality
- 4.9. There were 8 complaints with allegations of incorrect charges and all 8 were upheld

Stage 2

- 4.10. **Complaint Volume/Escalation** - Stage 146 complaints escalated from stage 1 to stage 2 against 163 complaints in 2015/16 (down 10%)
- 4.11. 64% of all stage 2 complaint are from City Treasurers of these 34% relate to HB, 24% to CT and 3% to business rates
- 4.12. **Response Times** – 66% of stage 2 complaints were responded to in target response time
- 4.13. **Complaint Outcomes** - 3% of all stage 2 complaints were Upheld against 4% in 2015/16 and most stage 2 complaints were not upheld
- 4.14. **Reasons to Escalate** - Of all stage 2 complaints 46% had no specific reason for the escalation. This is due to a system issue as reason for escalation are only captured in the system if the stage 1 complaint was started in icasework and many stage 1 complaints especially from the first two quarters of the financial year were recorded on other systems.

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

- 4.15. **Volume** - There was a slight increase in LGO first time enquiries 34 received in 2016/17 against 28 in 2015/16.
- 4.16. **Response Times** - 53% of first time enquires were completed in target response time
- 4.17. **Complaint Outcomes** - Of the 34 first time enquiries received 28 decisions have been made. Of these 12 cases were Upheld with Maladministration and Injustice, and No formal maladministration with injustice report which require publication and reporting to the Leader of the Council, the relevant Cabinet Member, the Chief Executive have been issued in 2016/17
- 4.18. **LGO Annual letter** - At the time of drafting this report the LGO Annual letter had not been issued/received
- 4.19. **Compensation** - Was offered in 7 cases in 2016/17 and a total amount of £6,070 was paid, against 10 cases in 2015/16 and £4,350 having been paid.
- 4.20. There was one Housing Options complaint where the LGO awarded one payment of £4,700 as their finding was that there were a series of various delays in dealing with different aspects and the complainant and her family had to live in unsuitable conditions for 14 months so their award was on the higher end of their scale.

Leader and Cabinet Member Correspondence

- 4.21. The data provided indicates that there has been a slight decrease (down 29) in the volume of correspondence received

5. Complaint Volumes- Across all Stages and Directorates

Table 1: Comparison of total numbers of complaints for 2015/16 and 2016/17

	2015/16	2016/17	Variance	% change
Stage 1	885	691	-194	-28%
Stage 2	163	146	-17	-12%
Total	1048	837	-211	-25%

- 5.1. As indicated in **Table 1** there has been an overall decrease in the total number of complaints across all stages of the complaints procedure when compared to the previous year. It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions as there may have been some under reporting following the introduction of the new complaints system, and there has been a reduction of Housing Benefit complaints received when compared with 2015/16.
- 5.2. In view of this complaint volumes will be closely monitored in the current financial year to see if the decrease is a continuing trend.

6. Stage 1

- 6.1. Stage 1 Date - Period Captured – complaints recorded between 1st April 2016 and 31st March 2017 except for complaints from Parking Services as they did not use the new system in 2016/17 so their stage 1 data has been shown separately. For this reason Parking Services does not feature in the charts, graphs and tables generated by the system.
- 6.2. Number of Stage 1 Complaints in the Period – **626** (*does not include volume from Parking Services*)
- 6.3. In the preceding year (2015/16), 885 stage 1 complaints this represents a 28% increase when compared with 2016/17. However, as stated in item 5.1 there may have been some under reporting when services switched from the old system of collecting complaint data to using the new system, and there has been a reduction in the number of HB complaints on the preceding year.
- 6.4. **Number of Complaints by Directorate**
- Contains - All complaints received in 2016/17 and recorded in icasework. Parking Services is shown separately as their data did not go into the new complaints system in 2016/17

Table 2 - All complaints made by Directorate

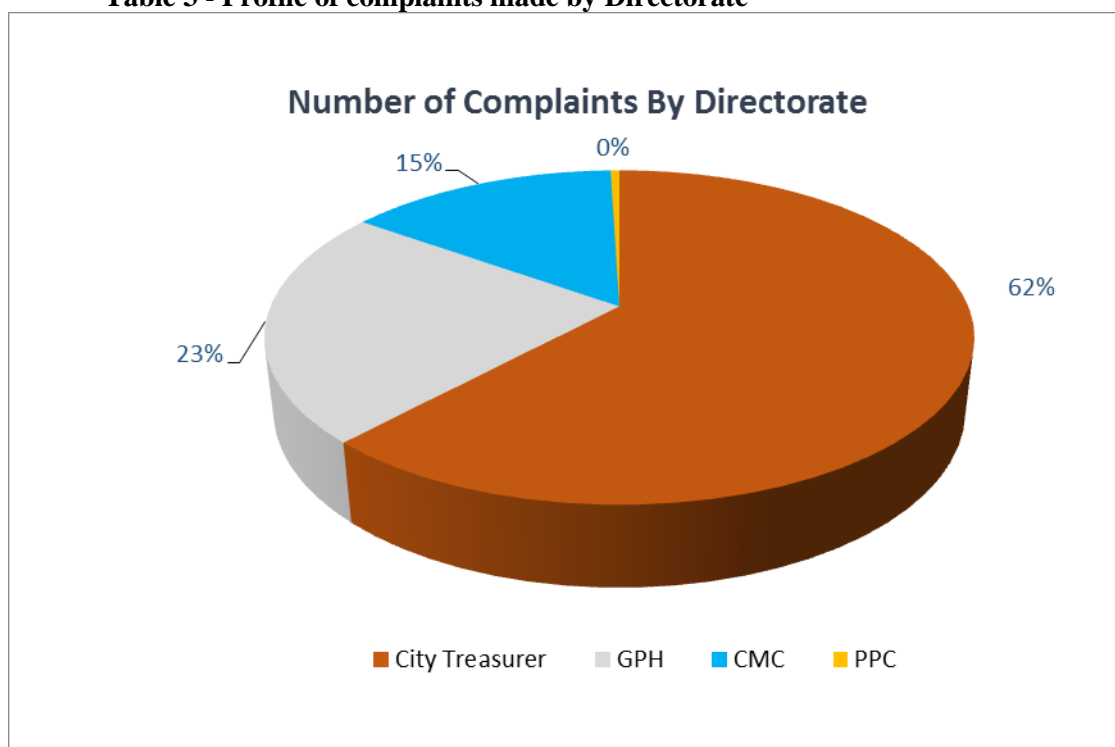
Directorate	Number of Complaints	% of all Complaints
City Treasurer	388	62%
Growth, Planning and Housing	143	23%
City Management and Communities	92	15%
Policy, Performance and Communications	3	0%
Total	626	100%

Parking Services Data

Parking Services Volume & Outcome			
Total	Upheld	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld
61	22	26	9

Parking Services Response Times			
Total	0-10 days	11-20 days	20+ days
61	47	10	4

Table 3 - Profile of complaints made by Directorate



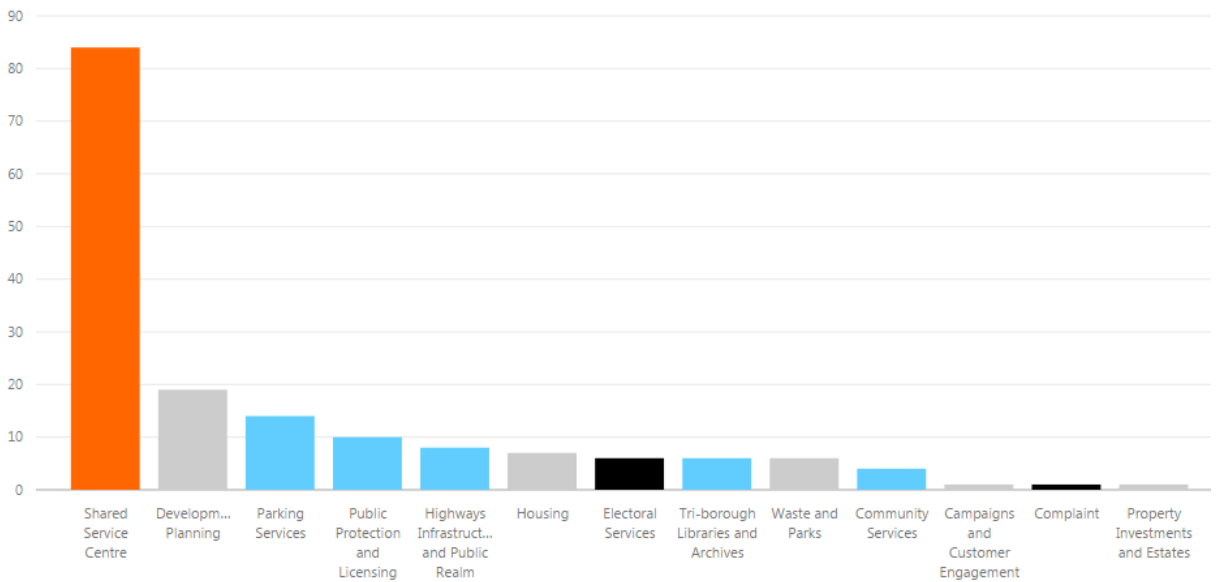
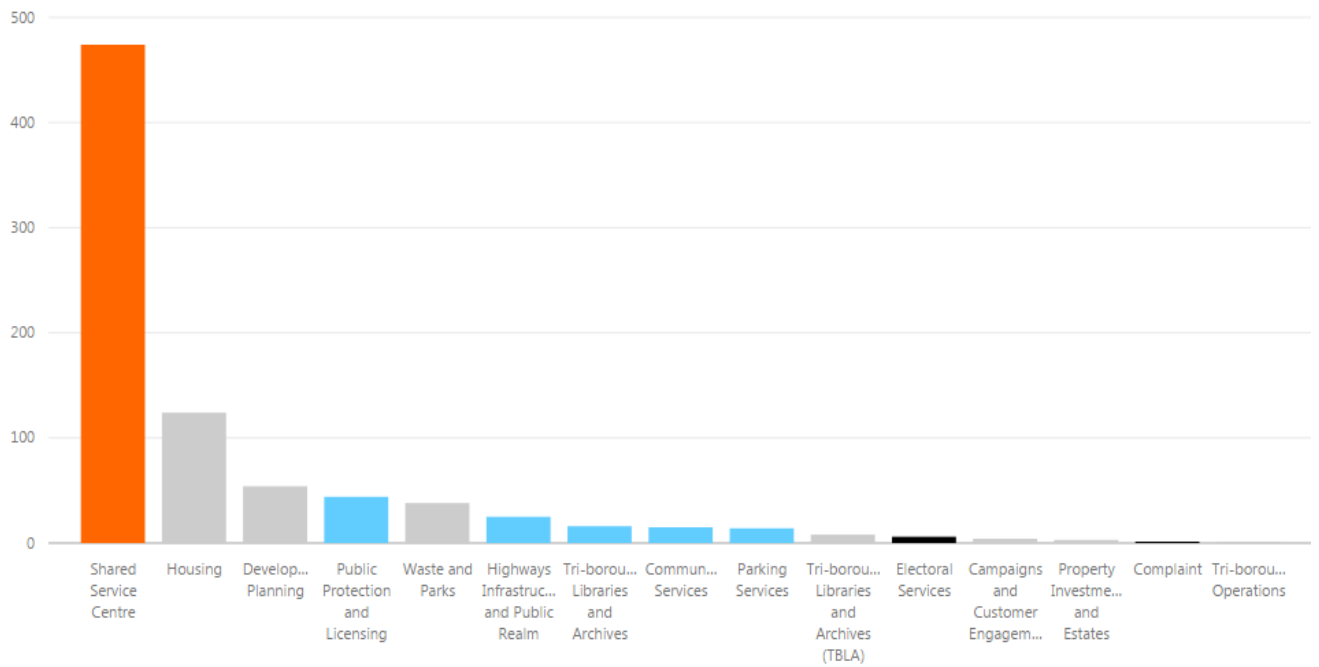
6.5. Three Directorates deal with complaints in significant volumes as recorded in icasework.

7. Number of Complaints by Divisions within each Directorate

- This table contains all complaints received in 2016/17, by the structural units within each Directorate recorded as “divisions in Icasework. The exception presented here, are teams within Shared services in City Treasurers, which are broken out, as they have high volumes.

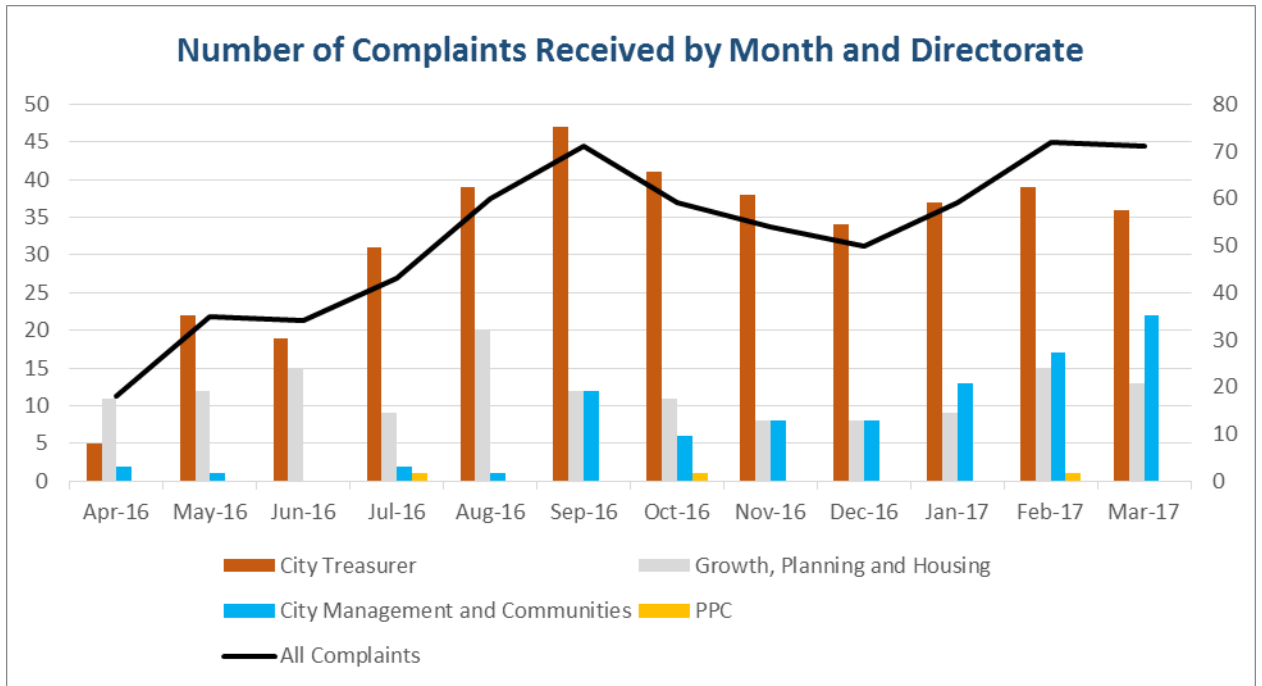
Table 4 - Profile of complaints made by directorate

Directorate/ Division	Number of Complaints	% of all Complaints
City Treasurers	388	62.0%
<i>Housing Benefit</i>	197	31.5%
<i>Council Tax</i>	172	27.5%
<i>Business Rates</i>	18	2.9%
<i>Other</i>	1	0.2%
City Management and Communities	92	14.7%
<i>Public Protection and Licensing</i>	29	4.6%
<i>Waste and Parks</i>	22	3.5%
<i>Libraries and Archives</i>	15	2.4%
<i>Highways and Public Realm</i>	14	2.2%
<i>Community Services</i>	11	1.8%
<i>Other</i>	1	0.2%
Growth, Planning and Housing	143	22.8%
<i>Housing</i>	106	16.9%
<i>Development Planning</i>	35	5.6%
<i>Corporate Property</i>	2	0.3%
Policy, Performance and Communications	3	0.5%
<i>Campaigns / Engagement</i>	3	0.5%
Total	626	100%



8. Trends in volumes of complaints received

- 8.1. This data is included to give insight into changing trends with complaints numbers. For all Directorates the shifting onto the Icasework platform will impact as well as changes in complaint volumes.



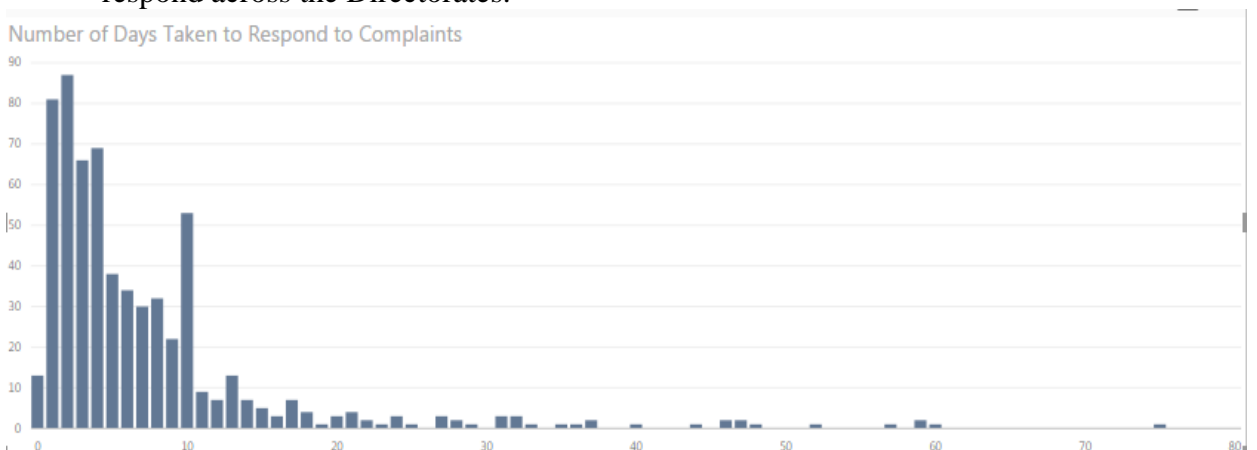
8.2. City Treasurers, who deal with most complaints had a spike in September 2016, but no trends in terms of on-going growth or reduction in numbers.

8.3. City Management have seen a growth in complaints believed largely due to the adoption of icasework by different services

8.4. Growth Planning and Housing complaints peaked in the summer of 2016 (August), but there is no indication of a growth or reduction in complaints long term.

9. Response Times for all

9.1. The data in the chart below shows the profile of the number of days taken to respond across the Directorates.



9.2. What this chart shows is that the modal number of days (most common) to respond to complaints is actually only 2, and that the vast majority of complaints dealt within 10 days are actually dealt with, within 5.

Response Time by Directorate

9.3. Data in the table below contains complaints which are made within the year.
13 cases are unresolved

Directorate	0-10 days	11- 20 days	20+ days	0-10 days	11- 20 days	20+ days	Median Number of Days to Respond
City Treasurer	366	13	6	95%	3%	2%	3
City Management	37	20	29	43%	23%	34%	12
Growth, Planning and Housing	106	26	7	76%	19%	5%	10
Policy, Performance and Comms.	3	0	0	100%	0%	0%	2
Total	512	59	42	84%	10%	7%	4

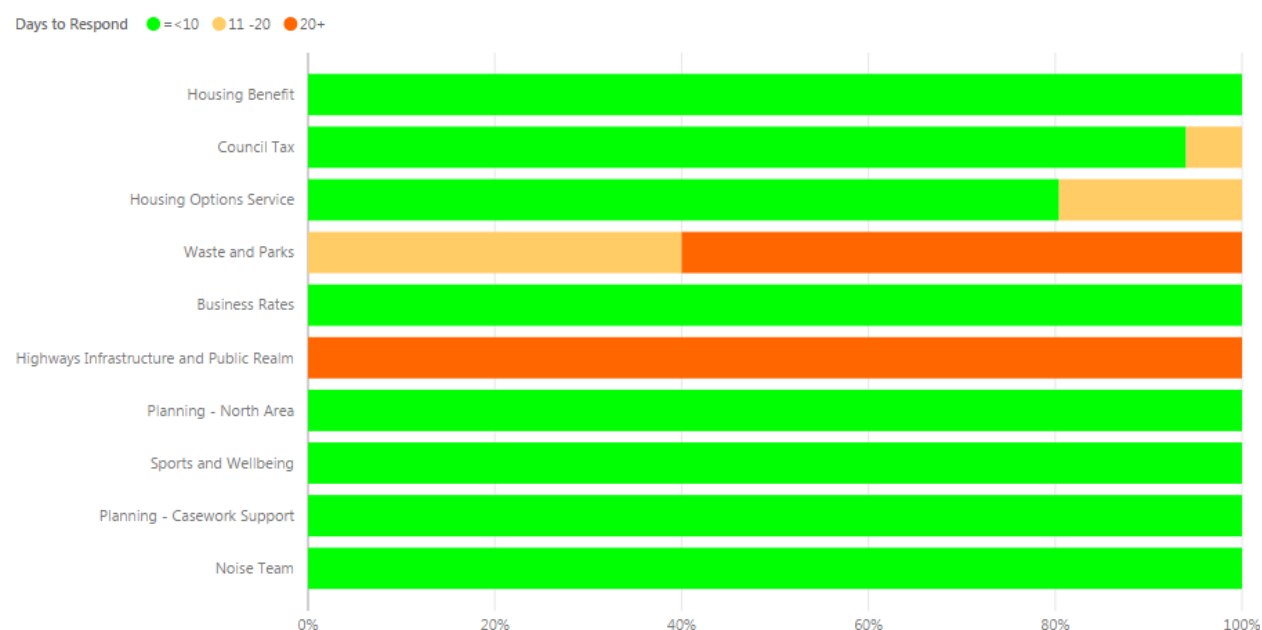
9.4. Overall 84% of complaints were responded to within target 10 days and 94% within 20 days. In 2015/16 86% of stage 1 complaints met the target response time so there has been a slight decrease in meeting to target response of 10 working days.

9.5. City Management, who receive 15% of all complaints were responsible for almost 70% of all the complaints that ran over 20 days.

9.6. City Treasurers who have the highest volumes of complaints were generally very quick in response time with around 5% missing the 10 day target.

Response Time by Teams

9.7. The chart below contains the same data as 5, but broken down into teams – only teams with only 5 or more complaints are shown in a category are shown. It is ordered (top to bottom) in the order of the total number of complaints.



9.8. The chart below indicates that difficulty in meeting the 10 day target are mainly limited to a few service areas – Waste and Parks, and Highways, Infrastructure and Realm.

9.9. With regard to the difficulty in meeting the target response time Highways Infrastructure and Public Realm, has advised that following a service review and change in structure at the end of 2016, the coordination of the correspondence for the Highways and Road Management Services was consolidated into a single point of contact and a backlog was inherited during this change. There have been some teething and performance issues which are being addressed and measures have been put in place to close down all open enquiries (in and out of time) by the 14th June. With new processes, support and additional resources in place they hope to see an improvement that would take performance to at least 95% responses in time. The performance will be monitored by the service.

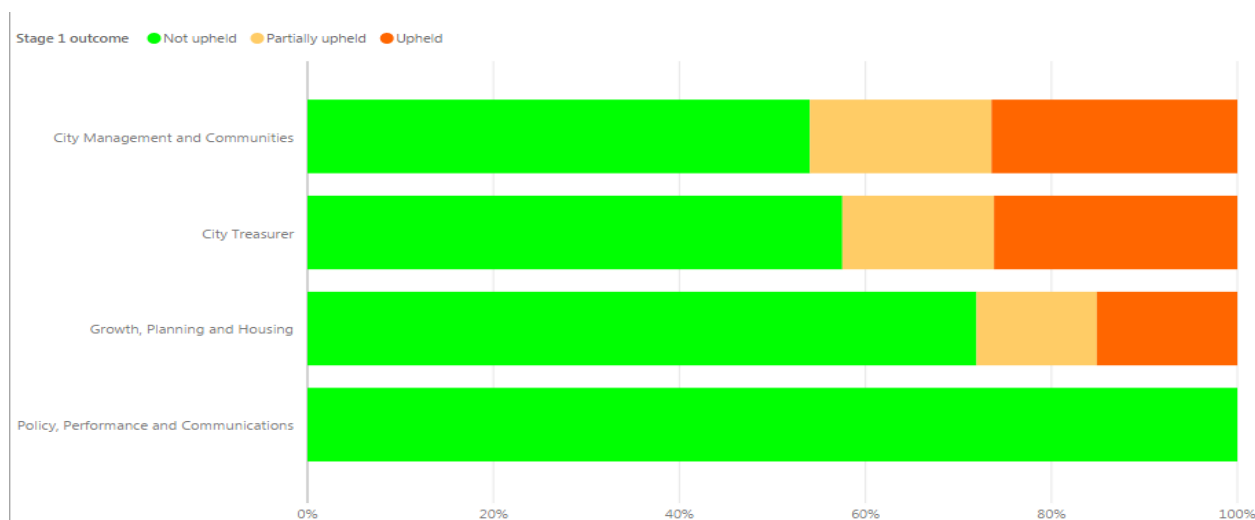
10. Complaint Outcomes

10.1. % Figures here are for those complaints where an outcome is known

Table 5 - Westminster Overall Complaint Outcomes

Outcome	Number	%
Not Upheld	372	60%
Partially Updated	101	16%
Upheld	145	24%
Total	167	100%
<i>Incomplete/ withdrawn</i>	<i>8</i>	

Figure 1 - Complaint Outcome by Directorate



10.2. The upheld complaints are of most interest as these are cases where things have gone wrong. 28% of stage 1 complaints were upheld in 2015/16 against 24% in 2016/17 so there has been a decrease on the preceding year.

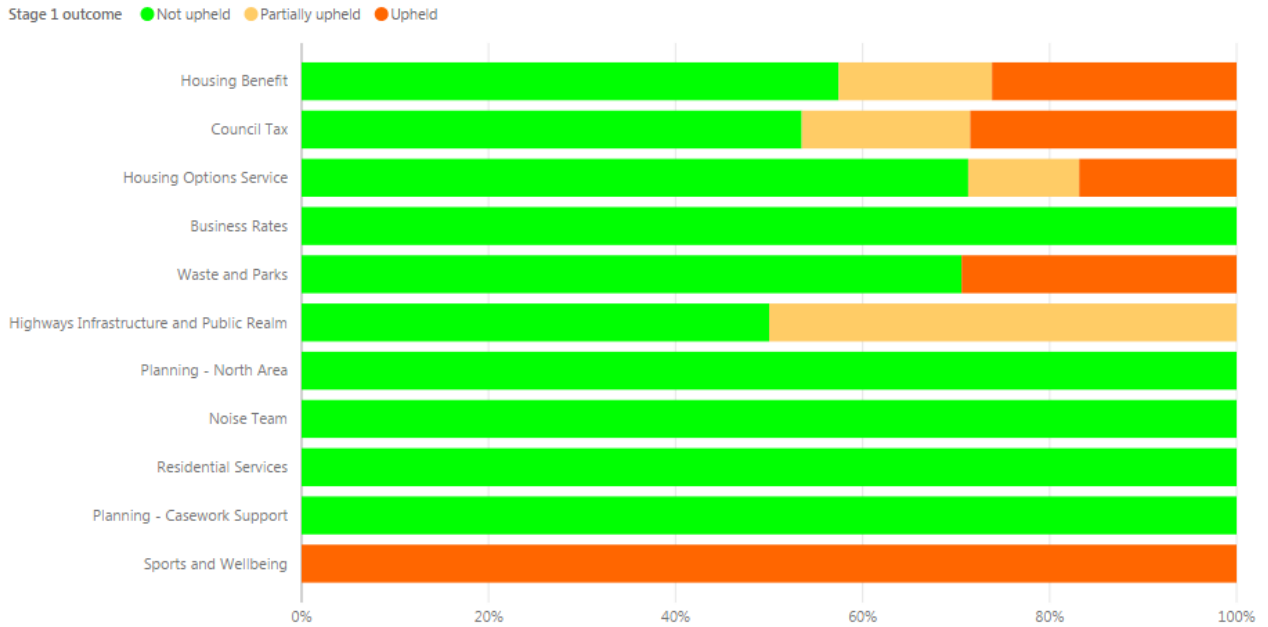
10.3. Growth Planning and Housing, by some margin had the fewest number of complaint upheld or partially upheld.

10.4. A **Partially Upheld** complaint decision is reached when the majority of the complaint concerns are Not Upheld, but there are some minor lapses in service delivery which did not have a significant impact in reaching the complaint decision. For example, a service area concludes that a repair was carried out in accordance with policy and procedure but the service area accepts that it could have been more pro-active in letting the resident know what was happening.

10.5. City Treasurers and City Management both have around 54-57% of complaints not upheld

Figure 2 – Complaints Outcomes by Teams

10.6. Teams are shown in order (top to bottom) of number of complaints received (5 minimum).



10.7. At the team level there are a number of teams where no complaints were upheld, which may in itself be some reason for further questioning. However, if policy and procedure is adhered to a finding of not Upheld is an appropriate finding, this is more so if the reason for the complaint is the complainant simply not liking a legitimate decision taken by the service.

11. Most Common Causes of Complaints

11.1. The most common causes of all complaints made in the year.

Complaint Cause	Number of Complaints	% of all categorised complaints in WCC
Failure to do something	107	17%
Delay in doing something	95	15%
Disagree with charge received	89	14%
Not to the quality or standard expected	62	10%
Other service quality cause	40	6%
Total in top 5	393	63%

11.2. The most common causes for complaint are failures and delays in doing something, followed by quality issues.

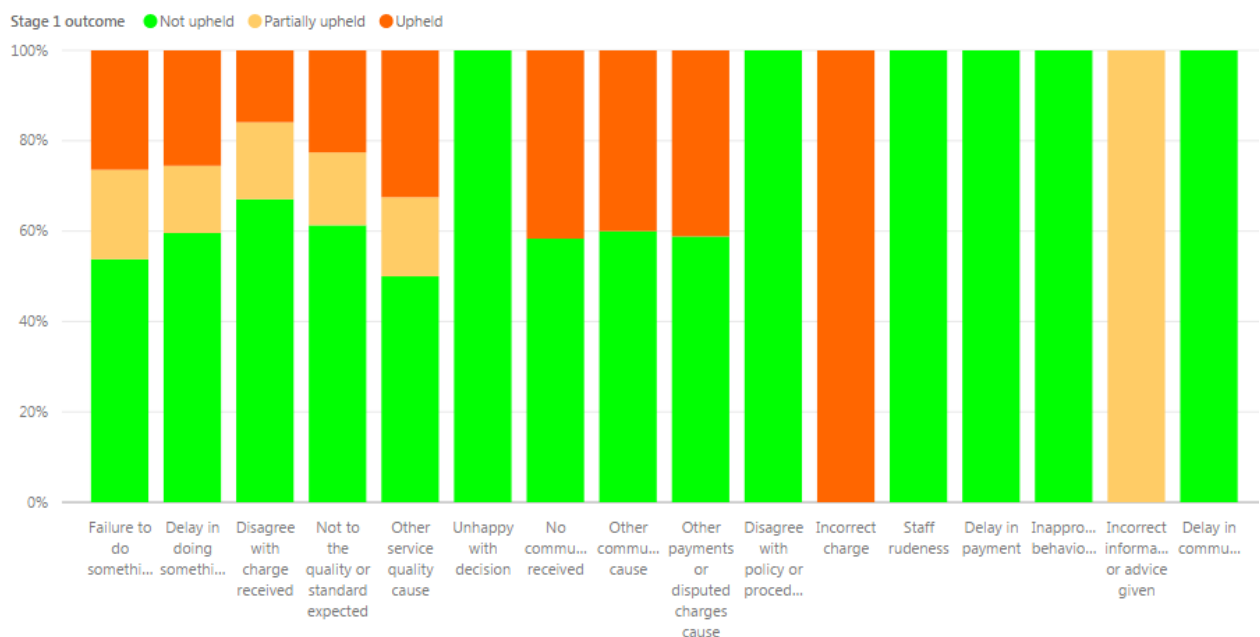
11.3. Only 13 complaints in total, mostly in GPH related to “disagreement with policy or procedure”.

Within Directorates with most complaints

Most Common Complaint Causes by Directorate	City Management and Communities	City Treasurer	Growth, Planning and Housing	CMC, GPH and City Treasurer Totals
First	Other service quality cause	Failure to do something	Not to the quality or standard expected	Failure to do something
Second	Not to the quality or standard expected	Disagree with charge received	Unhappy with Decision	Delay in doing something
Third	Failure to do something	Delay in doing something	Failure to do something	Disagree with charge received
Fourth	Delay in doing something	No Communication Received	Delay in doing something	Not to the quality or standard expected
Fifth	Inappropriate Behaviour	Not to the quality or standard expected	Disagree with Policy or Procedure	Other service quality cause
Sixth	Disagree with Charge Received	Other Payments or Disputed Charges	Other service quality cause	Unhappy with Decision

Cause of Complaint by Outcome by Team

11.4. The most common causes (minimum 5 complaints), by the outcome are shown.



- 11.5. 35-40% of complaints about delays were upheld and a similar amount with respect to service quality.
- 11.6. Complaints against incorrect charges, (there were only 8) were all upheld.
- 11.7. No complaints about the policy or the implementation of the policy to come to a decision were upheld.
- 11.8. Not a single complaint about staff rudeness or inappropriate behaviour was upheld.

Reason for Complaint vs. Outcome

11.9. The table below shows for the 10 most common complaint causes

Top 10 Complaint Causes	Not upheld	Partially upheld	Upheld	Upheld or Partially Upheld	All Complaints	% of all complaints	Upheld or partially upheld as a % of all complaints upheld or partially upheld	Upheld or partially upheld as a % of type of complaint made
Failure to do something	57	21	28	49	106	20%	25%	46%
Delay in doing something	56	14	24	38	94	18%	19%	40%
Disagree with charge received	59	15	14	29	88	17%	15%	33%
Not to the quality or standard expected	38	10	14	24	62	12%	12%	39%
Other service quality cause	20	7	13	20	40	8%	10%	50%
Unhappy with decision	28			0	28	5%	0%	0%
No communication received	14		10	10	24	5%	5%	42%
Other communication cause	12		8	8	20	4%	4%	40%
Other payments or disputed charges cause	10		7	7	17	3%	4%	41%
Disagree with policy or procedure	12			0	12	2%	0%	0%

11.10. The most common reason for a complaint that most commonly led to a partially upheld or upheld conclusion was “other service quality issue” followed by “failure to do something”.

12. Stage 2

12.1. Period Captured – complaints recorded between 1st April 2016 and 31st March 2017.

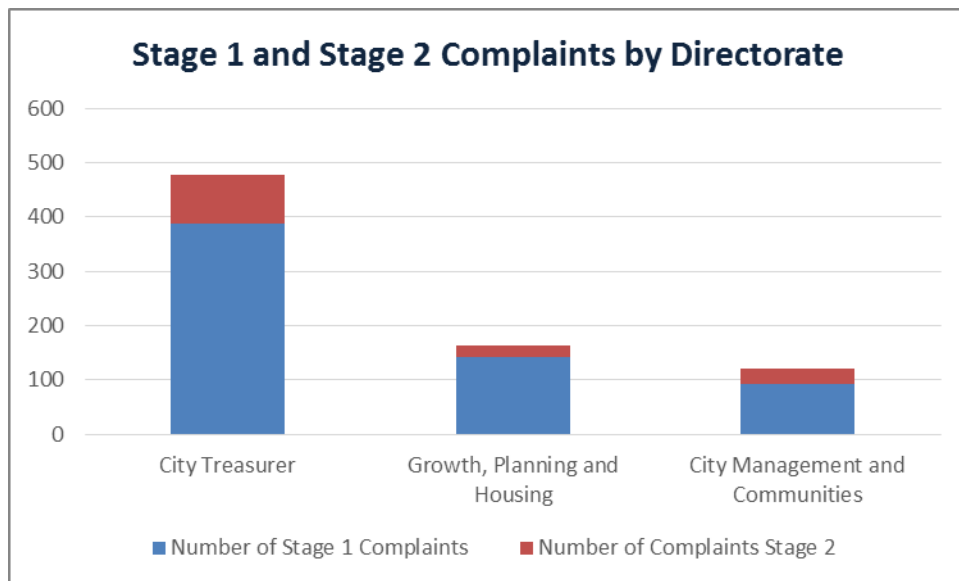
12.2. Number of Stage 2 Complaints in the Period – **146**. In 2015/16 there were **163** complaints received so complaint volume has decreased, down 17 (10%) on 2015/16.

Number of Complaints by Directorate

12.3. Contains - All complaints received in 2016/17

Table 6 - All complaints made by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Stage 1 Complaints	% of all Stage 1 Complaints	Number of Complaints Stage 2	% of all Stage 2 Complaints	Stage 2 complaints as a % of Stage 1 complaints
City Treasurer	388	62%	90	64%	23%
Growth, Planning and Housing	143	23%	21	15%	15%
City Management and Communities	92	15%	30	21%	33%
Policy, Performance and Communications	3	0%	0	0%	0%
Total	626	100%	141		
<i>Chief Execs</i>			3		
<i>Children's</i>			1		
<i>Unallocated</i>			1		
Total	626	100%	146		



Number of Complaints by Divisions within each Directorate

Directorate and Division	Directorate and Division	Stage 2 complaints as a % of all complaints received in the period
City Treasurer	90	63%
Housing Benefit	49	34%
Council Tax	34	24%
Business Rates	4	3%
Other	3	2%
City Management and Communities	30	21%
Parking Services	12	8%
Public Protection and Licensing	10	7%
Tri-borough Libraries and Archives	5	3%
Waste and Parks	3	2%
Growth, Planning and Housing	21	15%
Housing	14	10%
Development Planning	7	5%
Total	143	100%

Number of Complaints by Divisions within each Directorate for 2016/17 and 2015/16

Directorate and Division	2016/17 Directorate and Division	2016/17 - Stage 2 complaints as a % of all complaints received in the period	2015/16 Directorate and Division	2015/16 - Stage 2 complaints as a % of all complaints received in the period
City Treasurer	90	63%	104	65%
Housing Benefit	49	34%	65	41%
Council Tax	34	24%	33	21%
Business Rates	4	3%	4	3%
Other	3	2%	1	1%
City Management and Communities	30	21%	32	20%
Parking Services	12	8%	16	10%
Public Protection and Licensing	10	7%	9	7%
Tri-borough Libraries and Archives	5	3%	4	3%
Waste and Parks	3	2%	3	2%
Growth, Planning and Housing	21	15%	23	14%
Housing	14	10%	17	11%
Development Planning	7	5%	6	4%
Total	143		159	

13. Response Time to Complaints by Directorate

- 13.1. Table 7 contains all stage 2 complaints made in the year, with the exception of 1 complaint that was withdrawn and 1 unresolved. Table 8 indicates a comparison of 2016/17 and 2015/16 overall response times.
- 13.2. Response times have slowed when compared with 2015/16. Generally this was due to a number of

complex cases or where multiple sets of questions had to be asked.

Table 7 Response Time to complaints by Directorate

Directorate	Number			%			Median Number of Days Taken
	0-10 days	11-20 days	21+ days	0-10 days	11-20 days	21+ days	
City Treasurer	64	20	5	72%	22%	6%	9
City Management and Communities	19	7	4	63%	23%	13%	9
Growth, Planning and Housing	10	8	3	48%	38%	14%	11
Others	2	2	0	50%	50%	0%	
Total	95	37	12	66%	26%	8%	9

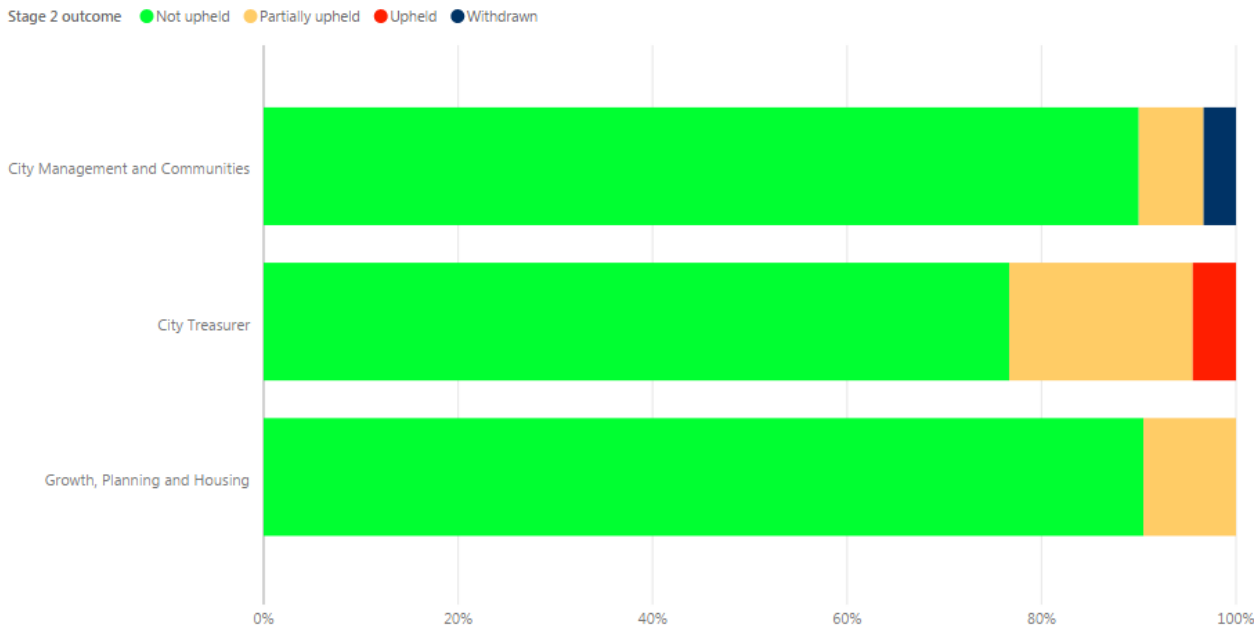
Table 8 Response Times to Complaints by directorate 2016/17 & 2015/16

Directorate	2016/17 0-10 days	%		2015/16 0-10 days	%
City Treasurer	64	72%		77	74%
City Management and Communities	19	63%		27	84%
Growth, Planning and Housing	10	48%		17	74%
Others	2	50%		0	0%
Total	95	66%		121	75%

14. Outcome by Directorate

Directorate	Not upheld	Partially upheld	Upheld	Withdrawn	Grand Total
City Treasurer	69	17	4		90
City Management and Communities	27	2		1	30
Growth, Planning and Housing	19	2			21
Others	5				5
Grand Total	120	21	4	1	146

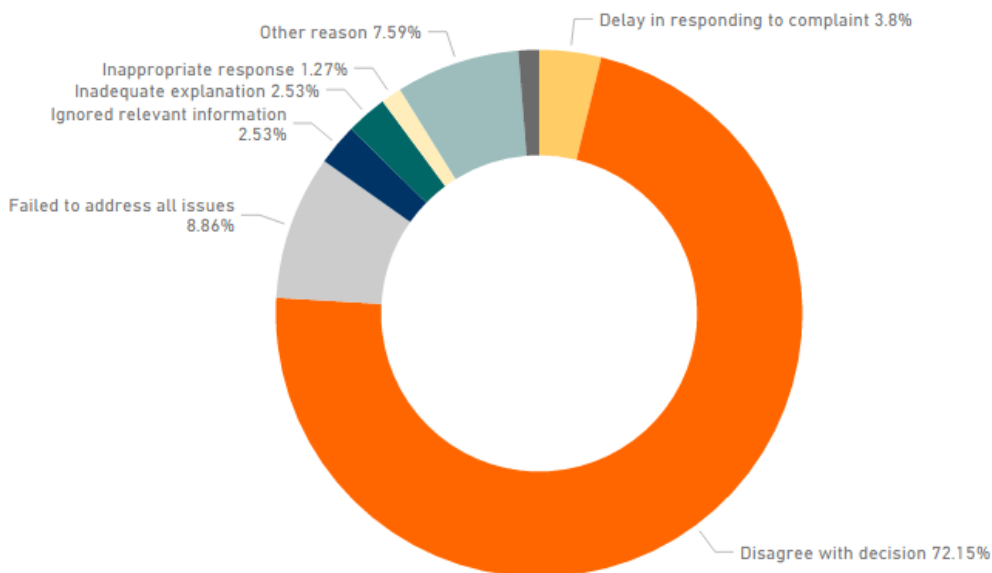
14.1. At stage 2 of the complaints procedure 3% of complaints were upheld against 4% in 2015/16 therefore fewer stage 2 complaints found fault when the complaint escalated from stage 1.



1. Reasons for Complaints – why did complaints get escalated from Stage 1 to 2

- Of all stage 2 complaints, a full 46% had no specific reason cited for the escalation. The graph below includes only those cases with a reason provided. Please note that the new system can only record reasons for escalation from stage 1 to stage 2 if the stage 1 complaint was originally recorded in the new system and a large proportion of stage 2 complaints were recorded on other systems.

< Back to Report | COUNT OF CASE NUMBER BY STAGE 1 ESCALATION REASON



- Almost ¾ of Stage 2 complaints were as a result of complainants not agreeing with the Stage 1 decision.
- None of the other reasons have high numbers, and because of the lack of full categorisation, it is difficult to make any conclusions. However, the system can only record the reason for escalation if the stage 1 was generated on the system, and in the majority of cases the stage 1 complaint was originally recorded on other systems. This is not the case for the current financial year so it will be possible to draw conclusions in next year’s annual report.

2. Stage 2 Outcome by Stage 1 Reason for Complaining

- Of the 146 Stage 2 complaints recorded in 2016/17, 83 were from cases that were initiated and captured in Icasework in this period. This means that some Stage 2 complaints were left over from Stage 1 complaints initiated in 2015/16.
- The most common causes are shown below

Stage 1 Cause for Complaint	No of stage 1 complaints	No that go to stage 2	% of all stage 1 complaints that have a decision at stage 2	Stage 2 Outcome		
				Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Upheld
Failure to do something	107	17	16%	59%	29%	12%
Delay in doing something	95	13	14%	54%	38%	8%
Disagree with charge received	88	14	16%	93%	7%	0%
Not to standard of quality expected	63	6	10%	83%	17%	0%

15. Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) first time inquiries

- 15.1. When the LGO decide that they wish to investigate a complaint about council services they can do so by simply reviewing the information the complainant has provided and/or use information from various web sites or set out in legislation. If they want to obtain specific information from a local authority, such as asking questions or requesting copies of correspondence to assist in an investigation they will write to the relevant council with their request. This is known as first time inquiries. The average response times of first time inquiries is used as a performance measures by the LGO.
- 15.2. As shown in **Table 7** there was a slight increase in the number in the number of first time enquiries when compared with the preceding year. This report also notes that these first time enquiries include 3 cases from Adults Social Care which were not investigated under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure as they were dealt with under the statutory procedure.

Table 6 LGO total First Time Enquiries for the years 2015/16 & 2016/17

	First Time enquiries Totals 2015/16	First Time enquiries Totals 2016/17	Variance
Finance - HB	7	8	1
Finance - CT/NNDR	3	7	4
Housing Nds	7	8	1
Parking	1	0	-1
Adult's	3	5	2
Children's	1	2	1
Street Mgt	1	1	0
Planning	3	2	-1
Premises Mgt	2	1	-1
Totals	28	34	6

- 15.3. The LGO monitors all local authorities on their response times to first time inquiries. The benchmark was 28 calendar days from the date on the LGO enquiry letter. However, the Ombudsman investigators do now vary the number of days we have to reply. In view of this Table 8 below below measure the first time enquiries which met the investigators target response time.

Table 8 Number of first time Enquiries Completed on time

2016/17	Number of enquiries completed in target response time	Number of first time enquiries	% Completed in time
Premises Mgt	1	1	100%
Street Mgt	1	1	100%
Finance-CT/NNRD	3	6	50%
Finance-HB	5	8	63%
Housing Nds	3	8	38%
Parking	0	0	no cases
Planning	1	2	50%
Children's	0	2	0%
Adults	4	5	80%

- 15.4. Overall 65% of all first time enquiries were responded on time.
- 15.5. Generally all services try and respond to the questions asked as quickly as possible although delays have occurred when the information asked for is complex or lengthy enquiries have been made or where the reply sent back for the Complaints Team to review before sending the reply to the LGO has

resulted to the Team asking the service to look at the questions again and provide a fuller response.

- 15.6. While the Council has received 34 first time enquiries in 2016/17 to date 28 decisions have been made. Of these in 12 (43%) cases a decision of Upheld with Maladministration with injustice was entered, in 13 cases (46%) a decision of Not Upheld with No Maladministration was found and in 3 cases (11%) a decision of Maladministration with No Injustice, meaning that during investigation a fault was minor and did not require a remedy.
- 15.7. Of the 12 decision which found maladministration with injustice 11 cases were dealt with under the council's Corporate complaints procedure and 1 cases was dealt with under the Adults statutory procedure.
- 15.8. Of the 11 addressed under the corporate complaints procedure where a decision of Upheld: maladministration and injustice was found, 2 were Partially Upheld at stage 2 of the complaints procedure therefore as the Council already found some fault, albeit very minor, and therefore the LGO would also issue an Upheld decision. In the remaining 9 cases the complaints were Not Upheld at Stage 2 although the LGO went on to find some fault which was not identified as part of the stage 1 and stage 2 decision or they were not remedied to the LGO's satisfaction.
- 15.9. In many cases this was because the scope of the complaint changed and issues came into play which did not form part of the original complaint. Overall, the LGO is finding Maladministration with injustice through looking at the complaint in the wider context and sometimes with new information provided by the complainant, which was not brought to the Council's attention at stage 1 or stage 2.
- 15.10. There were no formal published reports issued against the Council finding maladministration with injustice for 2016/17.

Compensation

- 15.11. The LGO can award financial payments as part of a remedy for the complaint. The term "injustice remedied" is used to describe decisions where the council remedied or agreed to remedy any injustice to the LGO's satisfaction during the investigation so allowing the complaint to be closed. These remedies can include the payment financial settlements.
- 15.12. A comparative breakdown of LGO financial remedies for the years 2015/16 and 2016/17 can be found below (Table 9).
- 15.13. It is difficult to make performance comparisons between financial years as each complaint is dealt with on its merits. However, **Table 9** indicates there has been a increase in compensation paid and (up £1,720). Although it should be noted that in one Housing Options case the award of compensation was £4,200. The LGO decided that there had been a series of delays in dealing with various aspects of this case and this led to the complainant and her family living in unsuitable conditions for a long period of time. In view of this they set the award at the higher end of the scale.

Table 9: Comparison of Financial Local Settlements 2015/16 & 2016/17

Financial Local settlements	2016/17	nos of cases		2015/16	nos of cases
Housing Nds	£4,700.00	2		£3,200.00	5
Planning	£0.00	0		£250.00	1
Finance (HB/CT/NNRD)	£870.00	3		£700.00	3
Adults	£100.00	1		£200.00	1
Children's	£400	1			0
Totals	£6,070.00	7		£4,350.00	10

15.14. A more detailed look at the LGO performance will be undertaken when the Annual letter is received in late July 2017.

16. Leader and Cabinet Members Correspondence

16.1. Correspondence addressed to the Leader and Cabinet Members, specifically in their capacity as an Executive portfolio-holder rather than as a Ward Councillor, will often take the form of a complaint or issue with a service that is provided by the city council and that falls under their portfolio. It can also constitute wider correspondence received by the Cabinet Member in the course of their portfolio. For the purposes of this report all this correspondence is considered as part of the team and not as part of the complaints figures.

16.2.

16.3. Over the past year the Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services team have found that the individual services have in general provide a prompt service and therefore the team are meeting the ten working day turnaround target for correspondence. Particular praise was given to the Housing Options, Benefits and Parking Services teams for their comprehensive and timely responses.

16.4.

16.5. The quality of the responses is quite high overall and provides enough information to compile a full response to the correspondence. In some cases however the team do have to push for more than one option of moving forward if we feel there could be an alternative. There are also times when some of the information is very technical and it needs to be put into more layman's terms for the resident.

16.6.

16.7. From the backbench Members the main theme of correspondence/enquiries over the last year has been on housing (including high numbers on temporary accommodation and waiting/transfer lists).

16.8.

16.9. The new iCasework case management system has been used fully by the Cabinet Secretariat and Member Services team since 1 September 2016; ensuring that we meet our targets of acknowledging requests within in 24 hours and providing a response in ten working days. The full extent of the benefits of the system will be shown when reporting to this Committee next year, as the data will show a full year of the system being in use.

16.10.

16.11. The data provided in Table 9 indicates that there has been a slight decrease in the volume of correspondence received over the year. However it should be noted that this does not reflect the amount of enquiries the team deal with just the level of correspondence which is responded to and received on a formal basis.

16.12.

Table 9: A breakdown of correspondence totals received by Cabinet Portfolio

Please note that some Cabinet Member portfolios changed in January 2017 and so some correspondence now crosses two portfolios. For the purposes of this report the information has only been included once, in the most relevant portfolio pre-January 2017.

Portfolio	2016/17	2015/16
Adult Services	15	27
Planning	55	58
Housing	167	130
City Management and Transport	44	66
Sustainability	5	21
Business	1	4
Parking	16	58
Children and Young People	30	17
Premises Management	15	21
Finance (inc benefits)	52	32
Public Protection	3	12
Sports, Leisure and Parks	1	8
Libraries, Culture and Registrar Services	21	0
Totals	425	454