



City of Westminster

Annual Complaints Review 2021/22

September 2022

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1. Introduction

This report presents complaints performance trends for 2021/22, and a comparison of performance between 2020/21 and 2021/22, where applicable across stage 1 and stage 2 of the corporate complaints procedure, with limited information on Children's and Adults Services statutory complaints. It also includes a performance review of Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) first time enquiries.

Data used in this report has been taken from iCasework, which is the Council's complaints database.

2. Background

The Council's two stage complaints procedure is as follows:

Stage 1 - Complaints are addressed by the local service delivery manager (10 working day target turnaround).

Stage 2 - A review by a senior officer delegated by the Chief Executive can be requested (20 working day target turnaround).

LGSCO - If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the stage 2 reply they can take their concerns to the LGSCO.

The Council's corporate complaints procedure covers most Council services although Adults and Children's Social Care Services must adhere to separate statutory complaints procedures for some complaints as defined under the relevant legislation. There is limited information about statutory complaints within this report as separate reports are produced for Member and Officer oversight. Data about Children's Services complaints which can be addressed within the corporate complaints procedure is included in this report.

3. The Management of Complaints

A change was made to the Council's complaints policy and on 16 June 2021 the target response time for completing a stage 2 complaint increased from 10 working days to 20 working days. The Council recognised that meeting the 10-working day target for stage 2 responses had been a challenge for a number of reasons and as a consequence very few stage 2 complaint responses were meeting this target. The target was also not consistent with other Local Authorities.

The Housing Management service continue to investigate and respond to their own stage 2 complaints. All other stage 2 complaints are handled by the Corporate Complaints team.

4. Headline findings

Stage 1 Summary

Complaint Volume - 2198 stage 1 complaints were received which was a 43% increase on the previous year. This was mainly attributable to an increase in complaints about the housing management service, in particular the repairs service.

Response times –The 10-working day response target has been met in 62% of stage 1 complaints which is a 7% reduction on the previous year.

Complaint Learning – Item 5 provides examples of how complaint data has been used for complaint learning.

Stage 2 Summary

Complaint Volume – 422 stage 2 complaints were received which represents a 74% increase on the previous year. The increase is generally due to a significant increase in Housing Management Services complaints; however, most services saw an increase.

Response Times – 55% of stage 2 complaints were responded to within the target response time, against 17% in the preceding year.

Complaint Escalation Rate – Across all services the escalation rate from stage 1 to stage 2 is 19%.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

The Council received 17 first time enquiries in 2021/22 against 23 enquiries in the previous year.

Compensation – In 2021/22 a total of £6,350 was offered which was a significant decrease from 2020/21 when a total of £15,200 was offered.

No formal reports were published against the Council in 2021/22.

LGSCO Annual letter 2021/22

Complaint Outcomes – the LGSCO received 108 complaints in 2021/22. 81 of those were either referred back to the Council's complaints procedure or the Ombudsman closed the case after initial enquiries were made. The remaining 27 were formally investigated and of those 23 were upheld and 4 were not upheld.

Complaint Volumes across all Stages and Directorates

As indicated in **Table 1** 2198 stage 1 complaints and 422 stage 2 complaints have been recorded (withdrawn complaints not included). When all the statutory complaints are included, the totals are 2311 for all stage 1 complaints, 425 for all stage 2 complaints and 2 Children's stage 3 complaints.

The statutory complaints procedure for Adults Services is a one stage process after which the complainant can escalate to the LGSCO. The statutory complaints procedure for Children's services has three stages.

Table 1 – Complaints (both corporate and statutory) across Stage 1 and Stage 2 for 2021/22

Directorate/ Division	Stage 1 Total for 2021/22	Stage 2 totals for 2021/22	Children's Statutory Stage 3	% escalated to Stage 2
Finance and Resources	180	22	N/A	12%
<i>Housing Benefit</i>	67	4	N/A	6%
<i>Council Tax</i>	41	4	N/A	10%
<i>Business Rates</i>	65	12	N/A	18%
<i>Corporate Property</i>	1	2	N/A	200%
<i>Electoral Services</i>	5	0	N/A	0%
<i>Coroner Services</i>	1	0	N/A	0%
ECM	331	37	N/A	11%
<i>Waste and Parks</i>	162	3	N/A	2%
<i>Public Protection and Licensing</i>	91	15	N/A	16%
<i>Parking Services</i>	46	12	N/A	26%
<i>Highways and Public Realm</i>	12	2	N/A	17%
<i>Community Services (Sports & Leisure)</i>	20	5	N/A	25%
Growth, Planning and Housing	1589	355	N/A	22%
<i>Development Planning</i>	55	6	N/A	11%
<i>Housing Solution Services</i>	228	50	N/A	22%
<i>Housing Mgt</i>	1306	299	N/A	23%
Innovation and Change	8	0	N/A	N/A
<i>City Promotions</i>	4	0	N/A	0%
<i>Campaigns</i>	4	0	N/A	0%
WAES	1	0	N/A	0%
Children's Services	89	8	N/A	9%
Adults Services	0	0	N/A	N/A
Sub Total for all Corporate Complaints	2198	422		19%
Children's Statutory Complaints	10	3	2	
Adults Statutory Complaints	103	N/A	N/A	N/A

NB: The reason that the escalation rate for Corporate Property is 200% is because the complaints that escalated to stage 2 were received in the preceding year.

NB: In 2020/21 the Libraries service came under ECM but in 2021/22 had moved over to the Children's directorate.

Table 2 indicates that this represents an overall increase in complaint volumes.

Table 2 – A comparison of corporate complaint volumes 2020-21 and 2021/22 across all services

	2020/21	2021/22	Variance
Stage 1	1541	2198	657
Stage 2	243	422	179

5. Stage 1 complaints

Total number of Stage 1 Complaints received by directorate (withdrawn complaints not included) – 2198

Table 3 – Comparison of Stage 1 totals by Divisions within Directorates for 2020/21 and 2021/22. Adults and Children’s statutory complaints data is not included.

Directorate/ Division	Total for 2020/21	Total for 2021/22	Variance
Finance & Resources	194	180	-14
<i>Housing Benefit</i>	53	67	14
<i>Council Tax</i>	78	41	-37
<i>Business Rates</i>	63	65	2
<i>Corporate Property</i>	0	1	1
<i>Coroner Services</i>	0	1	1
<i>Electoral Services</i>	0	5	5
ECM	265	331	66
<i>Waste and Parks</i>	107	162	55
<i>Public Protection and Licensing</i>	62	91	29
<i>Parking Services</i>	62	46	-16
<i>Highways and Public Realm</i>	16	12	-4
<i>Community Services (Sports)</i>	18	20	2
Growth, Planning and Housing	1016	1589	573
<i>Development Planning</i>	43	55	12
<i>Housing Solution Services</i>	242	228	-14
<i>Housing Mgt</i>	731	1306	575
Policy, Performance and Communications	0	8	8
<i>Campaigns / Engagement</i>	0	4	4
<i>City Promotions, Events and Filming</i>	0	4	4
Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES)	3	1	-2
Children's services (inc. Libraries)	63	89	26
Total	1541	2198	657

Table 3 (above) indicates that overall, there has been a significant increase in the number of stage 1 complaints (43%), however this can be mainly attributed to the increase in complaints for the housing management service. The main driver for housing complaints in Westminster continues to be repairs. With over 90,000 repairs raised in the financial year 2021/22 this is by far the biggest service provided by the housing team and the number of repairs complaints received represents a small proportion of the jobs completed.

During 2020/21 the repairs service was impacted by Covid restrictions with all non-urgent repairs put on hold. This created a backlog of repairs which the team cleared over the end of 2020/21 and into 2021/22. Many of the repairs complaints received in 2021/22 were regarding delays in completing work and the impact that outstanding repairs had on families.

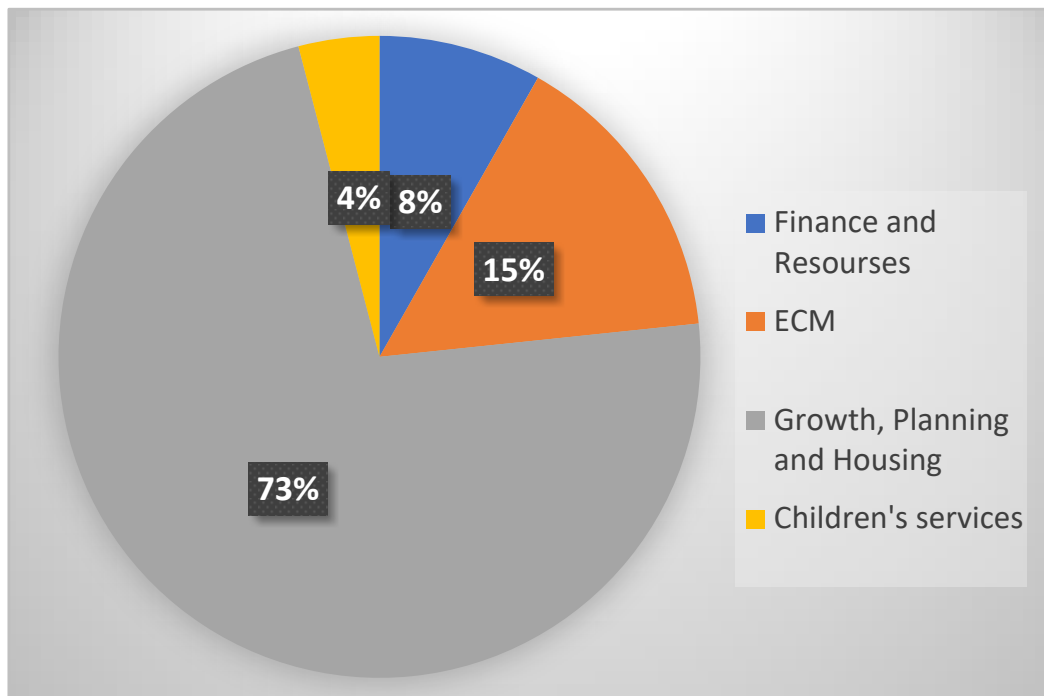
The repairs service was also tested by torrential rain in July 2021, which caused widespread flooding in North Westminster. Many homes were flooded, and tenants were provided with temporary accommodation while homes were dried out and repaired. Again, this was a source of complaints from residents, with many residents seeking compensation for inconvenience and damaged personal possessions.

The housing management service has undergone a restructure which has increased resourcing in the area housing offices, specifically housing officers and surveyors. The number of properties managed by these officers has been cut to allow them to get to know all of our tenants and leaseholders and to be the first point of contact in resolving potential complaints. This should help reduce the volume of formal complaints received as well as improve the response rate to complaints within the formal complaints process.

The service is also introducing customer relationship management software (CRM) for complaints management so that our contact centre can view complaints, to reduce administration and to provide better performance management tools.

The other significant increase was for Waste and Parks. This was partly due to an increase in complaints about public toilets which included the 50p charges, lack of staff, ASB and broken fittings. There was also an increase in complaints about bulky waste collections due to the confusion over the change in policy that accompanied the end of Covid measures.

Chart 1 - Profile of complaints made by directorate with a total of 10 complaints or over in 2021/22



As seen in **Chart 1** complaints from Growth Planning and Housing (GPH) represent 73% of all stage 1 complaints received and the situation was similar in 2020/21 as GPH represented 66% of all stage 1 complaints.

Stage 1 response time by Directorate

The target response time for replying to a stage 1 complaint is 10 working days. Performance is therefore measured by:

- Complaints completed in target response time (0 to 10 days)
- Those completed in 11 to 20 days
- Those complaints that took over 20 days.

As indicated in **Table 4** (below) the average response time for all complaints completed within target response time across all directorates in 2021/22 is 62% against 69% for the preceding year. It is likely that the pandemic continued to slow down response times in 2021/22 however it is disappointing that the performance was down on the previous year.

Steps need to be taken during 2022/23 to improve the performance and specific service areas will be targeted and asked to put an action plan in place.

Table 4 - Percentage of Stage 1 complaints completed in target response time for 2021/22 and 2020/21

Percentage Total for 2021/22	62%
Percentage Total for 2020/21	69%

Table 5 - A breakdown of stage 1 response times for all directorates 2021/22

Directorate/ Division	% in target time
Finance and Resources	78%
<i>Housing Benefit</i>	97%
<i>Council Tax</i>	83%
<i>Business Rates</i>	56%
<i>Corporate Property (1 complaint)</i>	0%
<i>Electoral Services</i>	80%
ECM	66%
<i>Waste and Parks</i>	72%
<i>Public Protection and Licensing</i>	54%
<i>Parking Services</i>	67%
<i>Highways and Public Realm</i>	40%
<i>Community Services (Sports & Leisure)</i>	90%
Growth, Planning and Housing	59%
<i>Development Planning</i>	50%
<i>Housing Solutions Service</i>	87%
<i>Housing Mgt</i>	54%
Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES)	100%
Children's services	56%
Total	62%

NB: The reason that performance was low for Business Rates complaints was because staff were undertaking additional duties managing the business support grants.

Adults and Children’s Services statutory complaint response times

Statutory Complaints	Stage 1 totals	% in target response time	Stage 2 totals	% in target response time	Stage 3 totals
Children's Statutory Complaints	10	60%	3	100%	2
Adults Services Statutory Complaints	103	67%	N/A	N/A	N/A

NB: Children’s Statutory complaint procedure has three stages and the Adults complaints procedure has one stage. Stage 3 of the Children’s statutory complaints procedure has various timescales relating to Stage 3 complaints which include:

- Organising the Panel within 30 working days of the complainant’s request
- The Chair should produce the panel’s report within 5 working days of the Review Panel
- Sending the Local Authority’s response to the complainant within 15 working days of the Panel’s report

Complaint Outcomes

Each complaint response should indicate what is the complaint outcome (finding), explain if the Council considers that anything went wrong and if it did what has/will be done to put it right. Complaint outcomes are usually expressed as Upheld, Not Upheld or Partially Upheld.

An Upheld decision indicates that we accept that there was fault. A Partially Upheld complaint decision is reached if 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. A Not Upheld complaint indicates that there has been no fault.

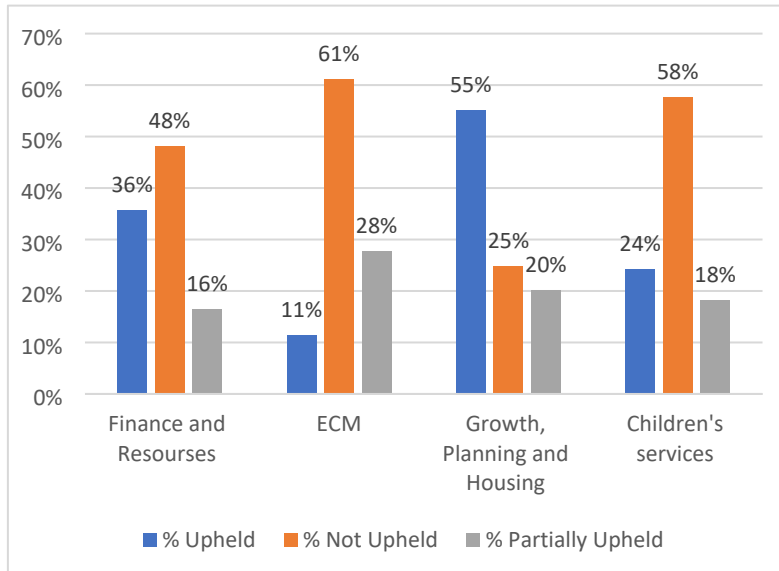
It is generally accepted that at stage 1 there will be a higher percentage of complaints that are upheld or partially upheld as the main purpose in investigating a complaint is to try and find any mistakes and put right any wrongs. This should then prevent the need for the complainant to escalate to the final stage of the complaint procedure.

As seen in Table 6 below across all directorates the percentage of Partially Upheld remains similar to the previous year but there are more upheld decisions. This is mainly due to the high number of Upheld complaints (55%) in the Housing Management service (see figure 2). Decisions on their own say little about the quality of the complaint response and should be viewed with the escalation rate from stage 1 to stage 2, as we expect small volumes escalating to the next stage of the complaints procedure if service faults found have been rectified at stage1. This issue is addressed under Item 7.

Table 6 – A comparison of stage 1 outcomes for 2020/21 and 2021/22 across all Directorates

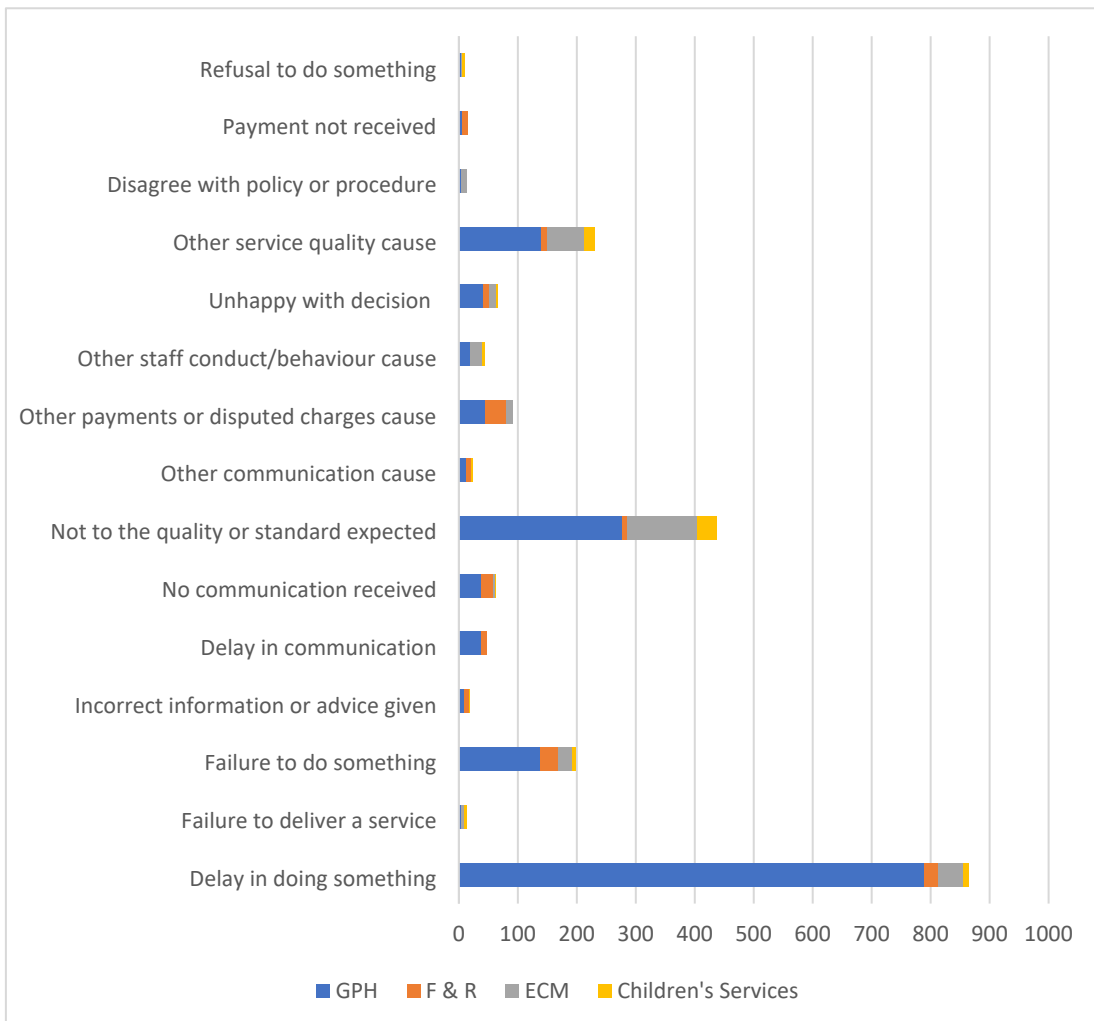
	2020/21		2021/22
Not Upheld	40%		33%
Partially Upheld	22%		21%
Upheld	37%		46%

Figure 2 – Outcome by Directorate



Reasons for Complaining

Figure 3 - Cause of complaint by Directorate where there were more than 10 complaints per cause



In view of the complexity of all the different services offered by each directorate, generic causes are used so we can track at a corporate level the overarching cause of complaint. As seen in Figure 3 service quality, delay in doing something, and not done to the quality or service standard expected are the most common cause of complaint.

Complaints Learning

The following Council-wide learning was identified:

- All services must use the standard complaints templates including the correct escalation text.
- Recommendations and agreed actions need to be tracked to ensure that we keep our promises to customers.
- The importance of communication and keeping customers updated, returning calls as promised and responding to correspondence and complaints in accordance with our SLAs.
- Ensuring that Council policy and procedures are followed.
- Ensuring that appropriate levels of compensation are awarded in line with the Ombudsman guidelines and payment is made in a timely fashion.

The below provides some service-specific examples of complaint learning.

Housing Management Service - the tenant's handbook was reviewed to ensure the wording around repair timescales was clearer. The advice in the Knowledgebase (which is used by the contact centre advisors) was reviewed. Following an Ombudsman complaint changes were made to the ASB procedures and policies, notably around signposting customers to the community trigger process.

Housing Solutions Service –the Admin hub now proactively chase all requests for medical information and going forward this year, the whole medical assessment process will be streamlined. Regarding complaints about homeless applications, additional resource was agreed which will allow the team to better manage demand. The team were provided with additional training and new reports were developed to improve the management and oversight of cases.

Parking Service – learning focused on individual feedback, with case studies created in some instances and team discussions and communications being conducted to prevent similar errors. Additional permit training has been provided to the telephony and Reps teams, along with case studies, workshops, and team communications.

Council Tax – the service continues to review upheld complaints in detail to ensure we efficiently address any necessary changes in procedures/processes. During this period there were no trends identified and this will continue to be monitored closely in the new financial year.

Business Rates - the majority of the complaints received still relate to the Covid Business Support Grants or Expanded Retail Relief entitlement. The service is aiming to review complaint responses in depth over the next couple of months and will be checking that all the individual points raised are responded to.

Housing Benefit - continued emphasis was placed upon maintaining good lines of communication with customers so that enquiries were dealt with in as timely a manner as possible. The "Trust and Protect" DWP initiative ended on 1 April 2022, and standard levels of evidence are once again required to support any new applications or changes of circumstance. The Council has continued to proactively contact vulnerable customers on the phone/email to request further information where needed to speed up this process.

Sports & Leisure – improvements were made around the handling of complaints to contractors and third parties and how that aligns with the Council's Complaints procedure.

Adults Services – given the increase in complaints in the homecare service provision the team are focusing on this with partner agencies and commissioning colleagues to support the care providers in delivering good quality care in the home.

6. Stage 2 complaints

Volume of Complaints by Directorate

Total number of Stage 2 Complaints in 2021/22 – **422** (withdrawn and statutory cases not included). There were 243 stage 2 complaints received in the preceding year and this represents a percentage increase of **74%**.

The increase in stage 2 volumes is generally due to the significant increase in Housing Management Services complaints at stage 1 which has then had a knock-on effect on the volume of stage 2 complaints (see item 6).

Table 8 - A comparison of stage 2 volumes by Divisions within each directorate for 2020/21 & 2021/22

Directorate/ Division - Stage 2	Total for 2020/21	Total for 2021/22	Variance
Finance & Resources	10	22	12
<i>Housing Benefit</i>	2	4	2
<i>Council Tax</i>	1	4	3
<i>Business Rates</i>	7	12	5
<i>Corporate Property</i>	0	2	2
City Management and Communities	23	37	15
<i>Waste and Parks</i>	1	3	2
<i>Public Protection and Licensing</i>	7	15	8
<i>Parking Services</i>	12	12	0
<i>Highways and Public Realm</i>	3	2	-1
<i>Libraries and Archives</i>	0	0	0
<i>Community Services (Sports)</i>	0	5	5
Growth, Planning and Housing	205	355	150
<i>Development Planning</i>	4	6	2
<i>Housing Solution Services</i>	48	50	2
<i>Housing Mgt</i>	153	299	146
Children's Services	5	8	3
Total	243	422	179

Stage 2 – Responses times

As indicated in **Table 9** below response times have significantly improved on the previous year. This has been due in part to the change in the target response time to 20 working days which was effective from July 2021 but also a quicker Director sign off process.

Table 9 - Response Time (target of 20 working days from July 2021, previously 10 working days)

Stage 2 - within target response times	2020/21	2021/22
	17%	55%

Stage 2 Outcomes

As with stage 1 each stage 2 complaint response should indicate what the complaint outcome is.

Table 10 below, indicates that that the percentage of Partially Upheld decisions for 2021/22 has decreased when compared with 2020/21, but there has been an increase in the overall percentage of complaints that have been Upheld. This appears to be attributable to an increase in upheld complaints for the Housing Management service.

There is a discrepancy in the number of stage 2 complaints received (422) and the number of stage 2 outcomes (401) due to the fact that Housing Management had 21 stage 2 complaints that were still outstanding and had not been responded to at the time of writing.

Table 10 - A comparison of % Complaint decision by Directorate and overall % totals for 2020/21 and 2021/22

	2020/21 Upheld decision	2020/21 Not Upheld decision	2020/21 Partially Upheld decision		2021/22 Upheld decision	2021/22 Not Upheld decision	2021/22 Partially Upheld decision
F&R	10% (1/10)	50% (5/10)	40% (4/10)		9% (2/22)	64% (14/22)	27% (6/22)
ECM	4% (1/23)	74% (17/23)	22% (5/23)		3% (1/37)	67% (25/37)	30% (11/37)
GPH	27% (56/205)	28% (58/205)	44% (91/205)		41% (137/334)	26% (87/334)	33% (110/334)
Children's	20% (1/5)	0% (0/0)	80% (4/5)		25% (2/8)	25% (2/8)	50% (4/8)
Totals	24% (59/243)	33% (80/243)	43% (104/243)		35% (142/401)	32% (128/401)	33% (131/401)

Reasons for complaint escalation

The Council has an open complaints procedure and welcomes complaints even if the complainant does not fully explain their dissatisfaction with the stage 1 response. **Figure 4** below indicates that 36% of stage 2 complaints cited no specific reason(s) for escalating their complaint other than to generally disagree with the stage 1 finding. Of those complainants who did cite specific reasons for escalating their complaint 26% said that the stage 1 response failed to address all the issues raised in the complaint.

Table 12 indicates that the escalation rate from stage 1 to stage 2 across all directorates, is 19%. This is a good performance given that there are only two stages in the complaints procedure, and the volume of stage 1 complaints. This is therefore a reasonable indicator that stage 1 complaint handling is effective, and faults are being identified and rectified at this stage.

Figure 4 – Reasons for complaint escalation

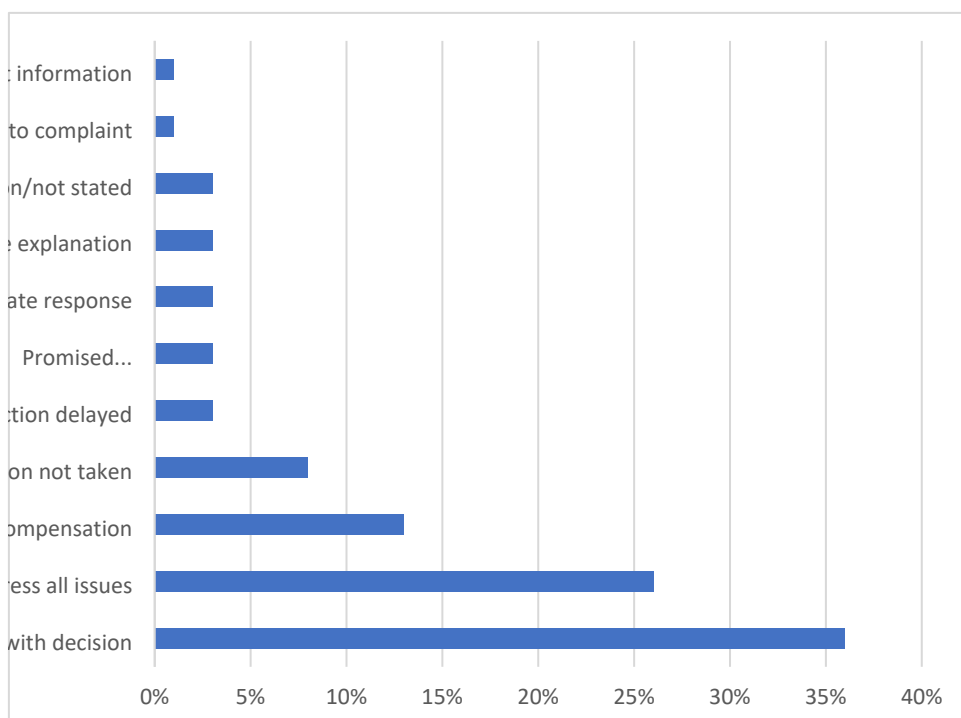


Table 12 – The Escalation rate from stage 1 to stage 2 across all directorates for 2021/22

Directorate/ Division	Stage 1 Total for 2021/22	Stage 2 totals for 2021/22	% escalated to Stage 2
Finance and Resources	180	22	12%
<i>Housing Benefit</i>	67	4	6%
<i>Council Tax</i>	41	4	10%
<i>Business Rates</i>	65	12	18%
<i>Corporate Property</i>	1	2	200%
<i>Electoral Services</i>	5	0	0%
<i>Coroner Services</i>	1	0	0%
ECM	331	37	11%
<i>Waste and Parks</i>	162	3	2%
<i>Public Protection and Licensing</i>	91	15	16%
<i>Parking Services</i>	46	12	26%
<i>Highways and Public Realm</i>	12	2	17%
<i>Community Services (Sports & Leisure)</i>	20	5	25%
Growth, Planning and Housing	1589	355	22%
<i>Development Planning</i>	55	6	11%
<i>Housing Solution Services</i>	228	50	22%
<i>Housing Mgt</i>	1306	299	23%
Innovation and Change	8	0	N/A
<i>City Promotions</i>	4	0	0%
<i>Campaigns</i>	4	0	0%
WAES	1	0	0%

Children's Services	89	8	9%
Total	2198	422	19%

NB: The reason that the escalation rate for Corporate Property is 200% is because the complaints that escalated to stage 2 were received in the preceding year.

7. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

First Time Enquiries

When the LGSCO 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 websites 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 enquiries.

As shown in **Table 13** there has been a decrease (-6) in the number of first-time enquiries when compared with the preceding year.

Table 13 - LGSCO total First Time Enquiries for the years 2020/21 and 2021/22

	First Time enquiries Totals 2020/21	First Time enquiries Totals 2021/22
F&R - HB	2	0
F&R- Council Tax	0	1
F&R- Business Rates	1	0
GPH - Planning	2	1
ECM - Parking	1	2
ECM - Highways & Infrastructure	1	0
ECM - Public Protection & Licensing	4	1
Adult Services	2	3
Housing Solution Services	8	3
Housing Management	0	2
Children's Services	2	4
Totals	23	17

Compensation

The LGSCO 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 LGSCO's satisfaction during the investigation so allowing the complaint to be closed. These remedies can include the payment of financial settlements.

A comparative breakdown of LGSCO financial remedies for 2020/21 and 2021/22 can be found below (**Table 14**).

Table 14 – Comparison of LGSCO compensation settlements

Financial Local Settlements	2020/21	Nos of complaints offering compensation	2021/22	Nos of complaints offering compensation
GPH - HSS	£14,400	5	£4,800	8
GPH - HM	£0	0	£400	2
GPH - Planning	£0	0	£100	1
Adult Services	£250	1	£250	1
Children Services	£150	1	£800	1
ECM - Highways & Infrastructure	£300	1	£0	0
ECM - Parking Services	£100	1	£0	0
Totals	£15,200	9	£6,350	13

When applicable compensation is usually paid by the relevant contractor/provider and not from the Council's purse.

It is difficult to make performance comparisons between financial years as each complaint is dealt with on its merits.

In the majority of cases for 2021/22 each single award is for payments of £500 or less. However, there were three payments over this amount which are detailed as follows:

- HSS - £650 - the complaint related to temporary accommodation which was unsuitable for the complainant's medical needs and also delays in processing her homeless application and medical assessment. The Council agreed to apologise, make a financial payment of £650 and transfer her to a more suitable temporary home while she continued to bid for a property.
- HSS - £1800 – the complaint related to the failure to provide suitable temporary accommodation. The Council agreed to apologise and pay £150 for every month she was in unsuitable accommodation and also £300 for distress and uncertainty. The Council was also ordered to produce an action plan detailing how we will reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation.
- Children's - £800 – the complaint related to the provision of school transport for the complainant's son. The Ombudsman decided, on balance, there was no fault in the Panel's decision-making. However, the Ombudsman found fault in the way the Council considered a subsequent application for assistance with school transport. This caused the complainant uncertainty, and she missed out on having her application fully considered by the Council. The Council agreed to apologise, make a payment of £800 and make several service improvements.

LGSCO – Annual Letter 2020/21

Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Letter for 2021/22.

The Annual letter says very little about performance and refers the reader to the statistical information available via a tool on the LGSCO web site. The LGSCO data will not match the data held by the Council as the LGSCO captures all the contacts, enquiries, and complaints made to them about a local authority and most of these complaints are not formally investigated by the LGSCO. Also, the LGSCO only reports on those cases decided in 2021/22, and some of those complaints were received by the Council in 2020/21. The Council tracks what it has received in a financial year and what is decided in that same year.

Public Report

No public reports were issued against Westminster City Council in 2021/22.

LGSCO data

The LGSCO data records 108 complaints and enquiries against the Council. Of those 75% were either not formally investigated as they were either returned to the authority to answer within our own complaints procedure or were closed after initial enquiries. The remaining 25% were formally investigated and the outcomes are detailed below. It should also be noted that the annual letter is referring to all the decisions made in 2021/22 and some of these complaints were received in the preceding year.

Table 15 – a comparison of all the LGSCO Complaint decisions & Enquiries for 2020/21 and 2021/22

	2020/21	2021/22
Total number of complaints and enquiries decided	79	108
Cases referred back to Council or advice given or cases not completed for valid reasons	38 (48%)	43 (40%)
Cases closed after initial enquiries made	18 (23%)	38 (35%)
Cases Upheld	12 (15%)	23 (21%)
Cases Not Upheld	11 (14%)	4 (4%)

The LGSCO either finds a complaint is Upheld or Not Upheld. When a complaint is Upheld, the Ombudsman will decide if there was injustice, or no injustice caused by the fault(s) they have found. To uphold a complaint some fault must be found, and this means that if a stage 2 complaint has been either upheld or partially upheld then the LGSCO decision will also find the complaint to be upheld.

Compliance

When a case is closed, and a remedy agreed the LGSCO will track whether the local authority completes the remedy, and if this was done in time. The statistics held on the LGSCO system indicates that we have complied with 100% of their recommendations (15 agreed remedies).

8. Financial Implications

None

9. Legal Implications

None

Zoe Evans
Complaints and Customer Manager

**Appendix A: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report
2021/22**