

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Audit Committee – 1 December 2016
Subject: Corporate Complaints Process and Reporting
Report of: City Treasurer

Summary

This report presents the complaints and enquiries dashboard, which sets out the Council's annual performance for 2015/16, as well as the first two quarters of 2016/17 in the management of corporate and social care complaints, Councillor and MP enquiries. It also covers information on how the Council has used this information to influence service improvements. This was referenced at the Audit Committee on 9 June, where it was requested that this information be presented to Members annually, for scrutiny. Also included is a brief summary of the complaints process and the role of the Corporate Complaints Team (CCT). This is an updated version of complaints data from that presented to Committee on 6 October (which was deferred to this meeting).

Recommendations

Audit Committee Members are asked to note the report and approve the distribution of an annual report to this Committee which summarises the performance of the Council in the management of complaints.

Wards Affected: All

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1.0 Introduction

The Corporate Complaints Team

- 1.1 Whilst all managers are responsible for responding to complaints, the Council's process is overseen and coordinated by the Corporate Complaints Team (CCT), based within the Performance, Research and Intelligence (PRI) service of the Corporate Core. This team came together in PRI in 2011 and provides a centralised support function to all directorates, including leading on the management of social care complaints under statutory social care procedures for Children's and Adults. The rationale for aligning complaints to PRI was to ensure complaints were seen as an important insight that would support performance improvement in a corporate and transparent way.
- 1.2 This team is responsible for working with service managers to:
- quality assure responses
 - monitor and influence response timescales
 - ensure engagement with the complaints learning process
 - provide general advice and guidance on complaints policy and procedure and ensure compliance with it.
 - Prepare performance management information to ensure scrutiny and challenge in meeting complaints and enquiry performance indicators.
- 1.3 The team also manages the complaint responses at the final stage of the complaints process, and offers a review of the service's actions in the corporate complaints process on behalf of the Chief Executive. The Team manage the relationship with, and responses to, the Local Government Ombudsman as well as MP enquiries made directly to the Chief Executive.

The Current Complaints Process

- 1.4 During the period of complaints management covered in this report, the Council operated its complaints process in three stages¹, with each stage offering an escalated review of the complaint and decisions made. Responses must be made to corporate complaints within ten working days.
- 1.5 Issues raised by MPs and Councillors are handled under a similar framework, but these are recorded as "*enquiries*" rather than complaints; the response target is also ten working days. If the issue raised relates to a specific service user who remains dissatisfied with the Council's response, then the service user may be encouraged to enter into the complaints process via the MP, in order to secure an independent review of the issue by the Corporate Complaints Team, and if they then deem appropriate, the Local Government Ombudsman.

¹ This has now been reviewed, and from January 2017, the complaints process will be reduced to only two stages. See section 4 for more details.

- 1.6 Social Care complaints are handled separately to the corporate process, as they are covered by statutory legislation. Complaints which relate to statutory social care services for Adults are covered by *The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009* and those relating to Children's Services statutory procedures are set out under the *Children's Act 1989: Representations Procedure (England) regulations 2006*. For Adults social care, there is a one staged complaints process, after which the complaint is referred to the Ombudsman. Children's Services social care complaints follow three stages, with defined procedures for independent people to be appointed to manage the investigation at the second stage; the third stage stipulates the appointment of an independent panel to review the outcome before referral to the Ombudsman.
- 1.7 Although legislation sets timescales for Children's Social care complaints (Stage one, maximum of 20 working days, Stage two, maximum of 65 working days and Stage three Review Panel, must be organised within 30 working days), Adult social care legislation does not, but states timescales must be negotiated with the customer. That said, the Council aims to complete Adults complaint responses within 20 working days, in line with the process for Children's Services complaints.
- 1.8 Once the Council's corporate or social care complaints process has been exhausted, the complainant has the right to refer their complaint to the independent Local Government Ombudsman, who then makes enquiries of the Council; a response to which must be provided within 28 calendar days. Following their enquiry, the Ombudsman will make a decision and issue recommendations which the Council is required to follow.

2.0 Performance Management of Complaints

- 2.1 As part of the governance arrangements for the complaints process, a performance management framework exists, whereby a complaints and enquiry dashboard is prepared and presented by the Corporate Complaints Team to each Directorate Management Team every quarter. This enables the scrutiny of complaint and enquiry performance in several areas:
- meeting the service standards for responding to corporate complaints within the locally agreed standard of ten working days or responding to social care complaints within the statutory timescale of 20 working days;
 - the percentage of complaints being upheld;
 - response times to, and findings from, the Local Government Ombudsman, and;
 - the key learning outcomes as a result of complaints.

It also covers the performance of MP and Councillor enquiries.

- 2.2 This process is then replicated at the Strategic Management Team meetings, where a combined Directorate dashboard is presented for Strategic Directors to peer assess and scrutinise performance; enabling them to take action to address issues.

2.3 Attached to this report is the complaints dashboard which covers data for the financial year 2015/16, and first two quarters of this financial year, along with a summary of key performance highlights and areas of concern. Performance in responding to complaints is published regularly on the Council's website. However, it is acknowledged that introducing annual reporting to Audit Committee will strengthen transparency in this area and ensure members have oversight of how the Council is responding to the complaints and concerns of the public. Strategic Directors are also encouraged to share their Directorate complaints reports with their associated Executive Members on a quarterly basis. Performance information and general complaints information on processes, and support for the public can be viewed online at: http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200025/complaints_comments_and_questions/4218/complaints_performance

2.4 Whilst the accompanying complaints dashboard highlights performance for each measurable indicator in more detail, in summary, the table below shows the annual performance for 2015/16, when compared with the previous year:

Period	Stage 1 and 2 complaints	Performance target 96% within 10 working days	Social Care	Performance target 96% within 20 working days	MP Enquiries	Performance target 96% within 10 working days	Ombudsman Enquiries	Performance target average response within 28 calendar days)
2014/15	1864	89%	314	55%	1321	82%	39	28 (26% upheld)
2015/16	1841	85%	220	70%	1331	80%	27	28 (44% upheld)

- Performance in responding to Corporate Complaints within target has declined, but only slightly, when compared with the previous year. Numbers dealt with have been largely consistent (1,841 in 2015/16 compared with 1,864 in 2014/15), with 85% handled within the ten day target compared with 89% in 2014/15. The percentage of complaints escalating through the stages of the process is only just above the annual 10% target at 12%, which is encouraging as it shows the majority of cases are being handled to the complainant's satisfaction early on.
- The percentage of Social Care complaints responded to within target has increased quarter on quarter in 2015/16. Outturn for 2014/15 was 55%, up to 70% at the end of 2015/16, showing a significant improvement, although numbers received have also significantly reduced (down from 314 to 220 in 2015/16). A new process has now been implemented which provides social care managers with only ten working days to respond to these complaints, and requires them to seek an extension from a senior manager to extend this to the 20 working days set out in legislation. This has been successful in improving performance in this area, as managers are now focussing on cases much earlier on, assessing the complexity, which focuses them on seeking an extension only where this is needed. This, in turn, means that more cases are

being resolved within ten working days.

- The number of MP enquiries handled by the Council stands at 1,331 for 2015/16, a slight increase on the number handled in the previous year (1321). The annual performance for those responded to within ten working days is 80%, a slight decrease on the previous year where performance stood at 82%.
- Performance for responding to the Ombudsman is on target at an average of 28 calendar days. The volume received has reduced from 39 to 27. The percentage of upheld complaints from the Ombudsman in 2015/16 is a concern, as this has increased from 26% in 2014/15 to 44% in 2015/16. It should be noted that the Ombudsman still records a complaint as upheld even where the Council has already acknowledged the fault and upheld it through our own procedures. In response to this, a new policy has been developed to deal with remedying complaints, which provides guidance on appropriate redress and resolution of cases with the aim of reducing Ombudsman involvement. Whilst the Council must accept that complaints may still be pursued with the Ombudsman, it is anticipated that this new policy will assist in reducing the number of cases where the Ombudsman remains dissatisfied with the remedy the Council has already proposed where fault has been found. In addition, a briefing session is being delivered for staff which will cover the key messages around this priority and the need to focus on reducing the number of cases the Ombudsman upholds. These are being delivered throughout October, November and December 2016.
- In addition, the first two quarters of 2016/17 are showing that:
 - Performance for responding to the Ombudsman continues to meet the 28 calendar day target
 - The percentage of Ombudsman complaints being upheld so far is showing an encouraging decrease. At the end of quarter 2 this was down to 11% (last year's outturn was 44%).
 - Responding to social care complaints on time continues to improve – at the end of quarter 2 this stands at 83% (70% at the end of 2015/16). Social care complaints upheld is also showing a decrease – standing at 37% at the end of quarter 2, compared with 49% at the end 2015/16.
 - Volume has increased for the number of corporate complaints responded to – when comparing the volume of the first two quarters of the year with the same period last year, we can note a 34% increase.

3.0 Learning from Complaints and Service Improvements

- 3.1 A learning process currently exists to ensure that when something goes wrong in service delivery, and a complaint is made, the Council can use this intelligence to feed back into its service planning and share with officers where they need to improve practice and performance.
- 3.2 There are examples of where the learning process has resulted in changes to services, for instance, the Travel to School policy, whereby as a result of a number of complaints, the procedure for assessing applications was changed and the appeals process was reviewed and strengthened. Another example

from a Planning enforcement complaint exposed that proposed planning conditions attached to an approval were unenforceable; a new process was therefore established to ensure all conditions proposed are assessed and verified by the Enforcement Section to ensure that they do not limit enforcement action in future. In social care, a review of the Family and Friend's Carer Policy and Guidance was initiated, following a number of complaints about lack of clarity and entitlements for carers in this position. This led to a clearer and more robust policy that provided template correspondence letters and information to carers to inform them of their rights at the point of agreeing to provide care.

3.3 A further selection of these examples are highlighted on the Council's website at:
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200025/complaints_comments_and_questions/67/complaints_comments_and_questions/5

3.4 Whilst there are a number of examples to show that complaints are making a difference, the learning process is being strengthened so that those complaints that are a concern in terms of risk and impact on the complainant will now have a *Learning Action Plan*, which will be developed and monitored by the Corporate Complaints Team, working with the service manager, to secure ownership and commitment to the actions and timescales. In addition, once the plan is signed off as completed, the key actions and learning outcomes will be shared in a communication bulletin across the service, and beyond if necessary, to ensure that the impact of the learning improves practice and performance in the future.

4.0 Changes to the Complaints Process from 1 January 2017

From 1 January 2017, all corporate complaints will be handled through a two stage process, with the Corporate Complaints Team responsible for reviewing the case at stage two, with the third stage removed from the procedure. This will bring the following key benefits:

- Reduce bureaucracy and time spent on navigating the complaints process will be reduced for both officers and complainants.
- Reduce the number of officers the complainant needs to deal with, and make it easier for them to express their views, without having to repeat their dissatisfaction up to three times before the process concludes.
- Provide more opportunity for the complainant to get involved in how their complaint might be resolved at the second stage, with greater consideration built in for meeting their desired outcomes, as the Corporate Complaints Team will now make contact with them to discuss their complaint at the second stage.
- Opportunity for independent review earlier – often complainants express dissatisfaction that the current procedure permits services to investigate their own complaints. With this revision, the Corporate

Complaints Team will be involved sooner, and be able to provide their independent view of the issues, and influence the remedy and resolution earlier on.

- Speed up their access to the Local Government Ombudsman by making referrals earlier.
- The process will be more closely aligned to good practice advice from the Local Government Ombudsman, who recommends only two stages.

The process revision will also build in:

- The option to extend the timescale to 15 working days in the most complex of cases at stage two, providing this has been negotiated with the complainant. This will mean that quality of responses in complex investigations is not compromised.
- A discretionary element on whether or not to pursue further investigation at stage two. In some cases there may be nothing further to be achieved from further investigation, for example where the desired outcomes are unachievable, there is clearly no fault because the decision is in line with policy, or the case has been well handled, and fault acknowledged and suitable remedy offered at the first stage. In these cases, the complainant will be notified of the decision not to investigate further. This will reduce the duplication within the current process, whereby the complaint response is effectively repeated throughout the stages, and will expedite access to the Ombudsman for an independent review, to the complainant's overall advantage.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Members are asked to note the Council's performance in managing complaints and enquiries in 2015/16, and the first two quarters of this year, along with the positive contribution that complaints information is making to service improvement and the actions to improve this further.

5.2 Strategic Directors are to take responsibility for sharing their own performance dashboards with their associated Executive Member on a quarterly basis.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 The recommendations appear at the front of this report.



Manchester City Council-Audit Committee Complaints and Enquiries Dashboard Annual year 2015/16 and Q1 and 2, 2016/17

Produced by Corporate Complaints, Performance and Intelligence

Performance Management Framework

Audit Committee

Complaints & Information Request Report

2015/16 and Quarters 1 and 2, 2016/17

Exception Report

Areas of strength:

Performance for responding to the Ombudsman was on target at 28 calendar days in 2015/16, and continues to be so at the end of quarter 2 of 2016/17.

The % of complaints escalating through the stages was only just above the annual 10% target at the end of 2015/16 at 12%, which is encouraging as it shows the majority of cases are being handled to the complainant's satisfaction early on. The year to date performance at the end of Q2 2016/17 shows no movement, with the outturn remaining at 12%.

The % of Social Care complaints responded to within target increased quarter on quarter in 2015/16. The outturn the previous year (2014/15) was 55%, up to 70% at the end of 2015/16, so this is a significant improvement. New management structures and new processes around managing deadlines in Social Care, supported by senior management, will assist with this further over the next financial year. At the end of the first two quarters of this year, performance stands at 83%.

Engagement with the complaints learning process has been strengthened, with much more information available to us about how complaints have impacted on the service. However, there is room for further engagement in this process, to make it even more robust and this will be a key priority for the Council during the next financial year.

Areas of concern:

The percentage of upheld complaints from the Ombudsman in 2015/16 is a concern, as this has increased from 26% in 2014/15 to 44% in 2015/16. However, for the first two quarters of 2016/17, there is a continued improvement and the performance stood at 11% (only slightly above the 10% target). The Council need to continue to work on this priority over this coming financial year.

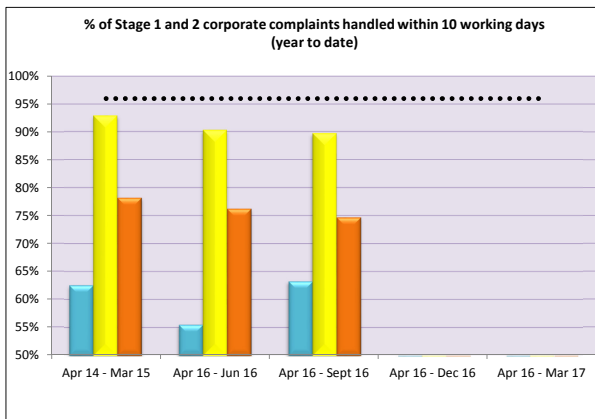
Performance in responding to corporate complaints for 2015/16 has declined, but only slightly, when compared with 2014/15 (down from 89% to 85%). Numbers dealt with over these two years was largely consistent (1841 in 2015/16 compared with 1864 in 2014/15). However, for the first two quarters of 2016/17, volume has increased, with Stage 1 and 2 cases showing a 34% increase when compared to the same first two quarter's of last year (up from 885 for Q1 and 2 last year to 1186 for the first two quarters of this).

Performance in responding to Stage 3 complaints on time has also slipped, with the average for the 2015/16 at 73%, compared with 83% in 2014/15. Performance is back up to 80% for the first two quarters of the current 2016/17 financial year, although this is still significantly below the 96% target.

The number of MP enquiries handled stands at 1,331 for 2015/16, a slight increase on the number handled in the previous financial year, 2014/15 (1,321). The annual performance for those responded to within 10 working days was 80% in 2015/16, a slight decrease on 2014/15 where performance stood at 82% against a target of 96%. For the first two quarters of the 2016/17 financial year, this stands at 83%.

Audit Committee Complaints and Information Request Dashboard

Number of combined stage 1 and stage 2 corporate complaints and % handled within 10 working days											Year To Date:		
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children and Families	107	63%	96%	27	56%	33	70%	-	-	-	-	60	63%
Corporate Core	950	93%		249	90%	231	89%	-	-	-	-	480	90%
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev	745	78%		346	76%	300	73%	-	-	-	-	646	75%
All Directorates	1,802	85%		622	81%	564	79%	-	-	-	-	1,186	80%

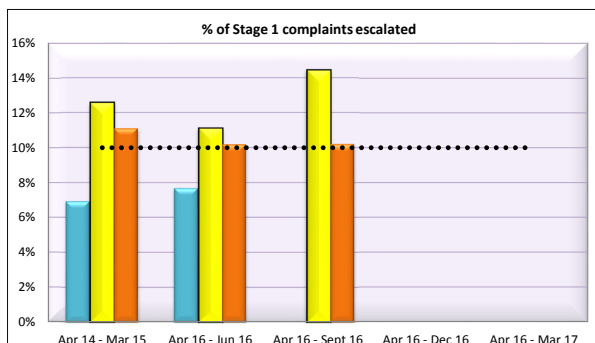


Performance Commentary:

Performance for responding to Stage 1 and 2 complaints for 2015/16 was 85%, this is below the previous year's outturn for 2014/15 at 89%, despite slightly less corporate complaints being responded to (1802 compared with 1864 in 2014/15).

In the first two Qtrs. for 2015/16 we had responded to 885 complaints; by contrast we have responded to 1186 complaints for the same period this year, which is a 34% increase.

Number of Corporate Stage 1 complaints % escalated											Year To Date:		
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children and Families	101	7%	10%	26	8%	33	0%	-	-	-	-	59	3%
Corporate Core	843	13%		234	11%	216	18%	-	-	-	-	450	14%
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev	702	11%		314	10%	274	10%	-	-	-	-	588	10%
All Directorates	1,646	12%		574	10%	523	13%	-	-	-	-	1,097	12%

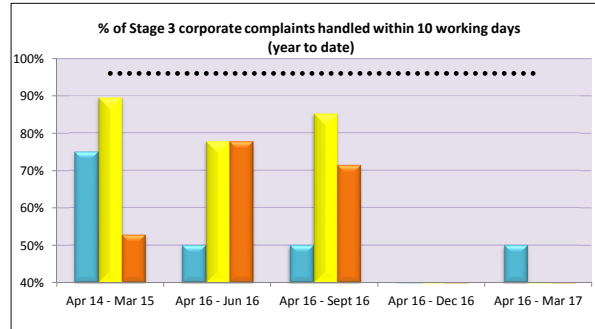


Performance Commentary:

The % escalated through the complaints stages for 2015/16 was slightly above target at 12%.

The year to date performance for 2016/17 remains at 12%, only just exceeding the 10% target, and shows that the majority of complaints are being handled to the complainant's satisfaction early on.

Number of stage 3 corporate complaint responses and % handled within 10 working days											Year To Date:		
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children and Families	4	75%	96%	2	50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50%
Corporate Core	47	89%		18	78%	29	90%	-	-	-	-	47	85%
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev	36	53%		9	78%	12	67%	-	-	-	-	21	71%
All Directorates	87	74%		29	76%	41	83%	-	-	-	-	70	80%



Performance Commentary:

The 2015/16 annual performance for Stage 3 complaints handled on time was below the 96% target at 74%. The most dramatic decline in performance has been with Growth & Neighbourhoods who have gone from 74% (2014/15) to 45% (2015/16), although there have been a number of complex Stage 3 complaints managed in this financial year.

For 2016/17, the year to date response rate is already showing an improvement at 80%, although still below the 96% target.

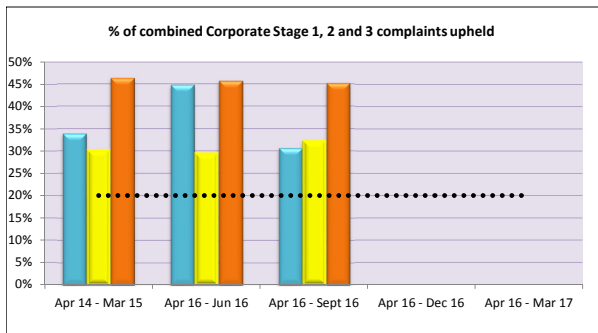
The Corporate Complaints Team will ensure that they are proactive in reducing these timescales over the next year.

Legend:

- Target (Dotted line)
- Core (Yellow bar)
- Growth & N'hoods (Orange bar)
- All Directorates (Blue bar)
- Children (Green bar)
- Adults (Red bar)
- Children & Families (Light Blue bar)
- All Directorates Trendline (Dashed line)
- Failed Target by > 10% (Red X)
- Failed Target by < 10% (Yellow X)
- Achieved Target (Green Checkmark)

Audit Committee Complaints and Information Request Dashboard

Number of Corporate Stage 1, 2 and 3 decisions and % upheld										Year To Date:			
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children and Families	109	34%	20%	29	45%	33	18%	-	-	-	-	62	31%
Corporate Core	971	30%		269	30%	248	35%	-	-	-	-	517	32%
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev.	742	46%		350	46%	289	45%	-	-	-	-	639	45%
All Directorates	1822	37%		648	39%	570	39%	-	-	-	-	1218	39%

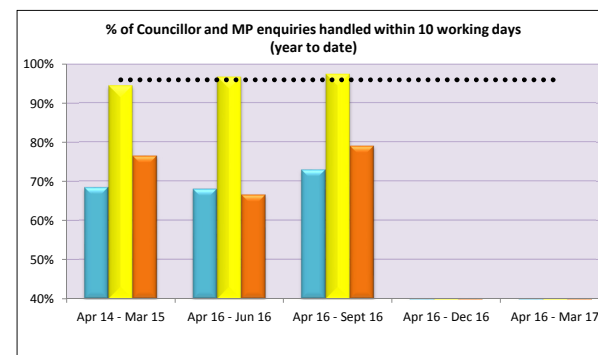


Performance Commentary:

The % of complaints that were upheld increased throughout 2015/16, with a full year outturn of 37%. However of the 204 upheld decisions, 83 of them were only partially upheld. This means there may have been only a very small proportion of the complaint where fault was found, but due to the way the Council records outcomes, these are still classed as upheld.

The year to date performance at the end of Quarter 2 2016/17, although above target, is similar to last year's outturn at 39%.

Number of Councillor and MP enquiries and % handled within 10 working days										Year To Date:			
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children and Families	606	68%	96%	160	68%	222	77%	-	-	-	-	382	73%
Corporate Core	546	95%		150	97%	157	98%	-	-	-	-	307	97%
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev.	179	77%		33	67%	34	91%	-	-	-	-	67	79%
All Directorates	1,331	80%		343	80%	413	86%	-	-	-	-	756	83%

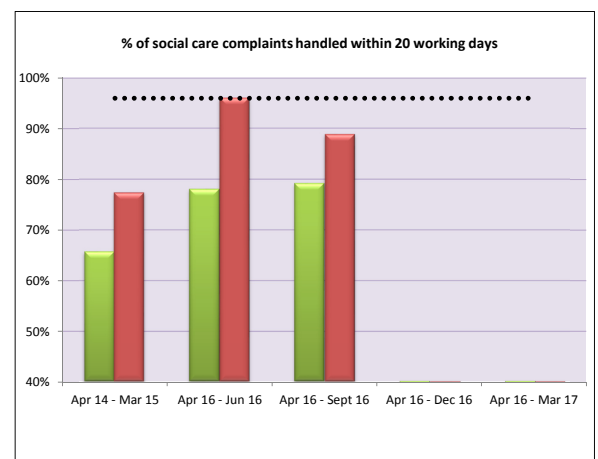


Performance Commentary:

The number of MP enquiries handled in 2015/16 stands at 1,331 for the financial year, a slight increase on the number handled in 2014/15 (1321). The annual performance for those responded to within 10 working days was 80%, again a slight decrease on the previous year (82%). In addition the Corporate Complaints Team managed 77 MP enquiries on behalf of the Chief Executive across all directorates (23 Children's and Families, 10 Core and 44 Growth and Neighbourhoods) 75% of these were handled within 10 working days.

The year to date performance for 2016/17 at the end of quarter 2, stands at 83% of enquiries handled on time against the target of 96%.

Number of Social Care Complaints and % handled within target										Year To Date:			
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children	149	66%	96%	41	78%	36	81%	-	-	-	-	77	79%
Adults	71	77%		25	96%	29	83%	-	-	-	-	54	89%
Total Social Care	220	70%		66	85%	65	82%	-	-	-	-	131	83%



Performance Commentary:

Children's - Annual Performance for 2015/16 was well below target, at 66% on time, it has improved by 14% from 2014/15 performance, (where it was 52%). Additionally the number of cases has declined from 194 to 149. Performance in this area remains a concern, although new management structures are contributing to improvements and this should be realised more fully over this financial year. The statutory process for managing children's social care complaints stipulates complaints should be responded to within a maximum of 20 working days. From April 2016 there is a new process in place whereby Managers are required to aim for a response within 10 working days, and any need for an extension to 20 needs to be authorised by the Deputy Director of Children's Services.

The year to date performance at the end of Q2 for social care in Children's services in 2016/17 is 79% which shows a continued increase in meeting timescales.

Adults - The annual performance for 2015/16 has increased from 60% in 2014/15 to 77%. In addition there has been a significant decrease in the number of complaints responded to in the social care process (2014/15 - 120, 2015/16 - 69).

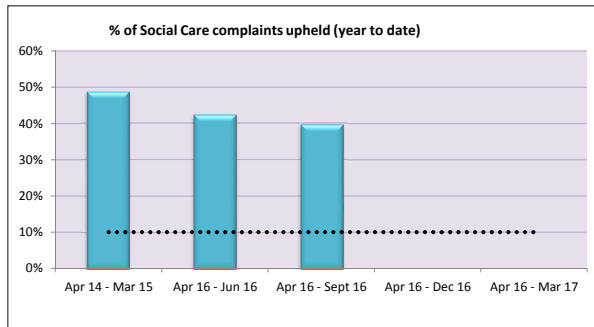
The year to date performance at the end of Q2 for social care in Adults Services in 2016/17 stands at 89%, again a significant increase on the 77% outturn for last year.

Overall social care performance across the two areas of the directorate stands at 83% at the end of quarter 2, an increase on the combined performance of last year which was



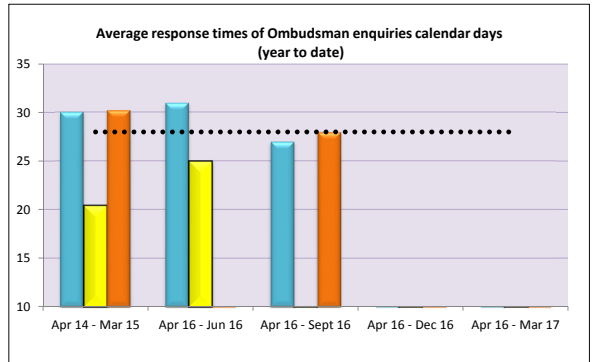
Audit Committee Complaints and Information Request Dashboard

Number of Social Care decisions and % upheld												Year To Date:	
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	220	49%	20%	66	42%	65	37%	-	-	-	-	131	40%



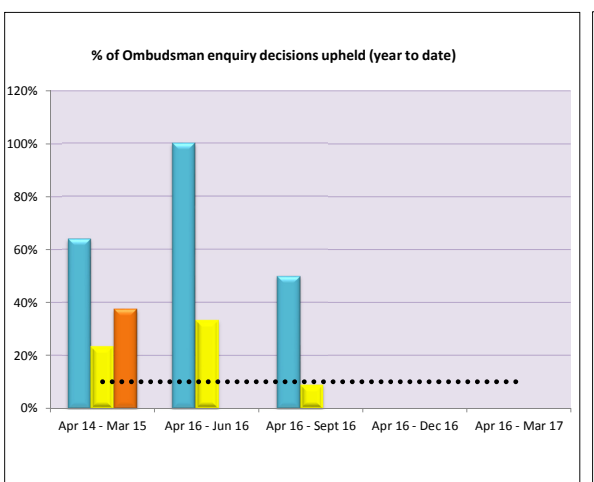
Performance Commentary:
The % of social care decisions upheld for the 2015/16 was above the 20% target at 49%. This identifies a need to focus on service improvement and delivery, and it is anticipated that the Council's learning process will feed into this, with a view to preventing a recurrence of those issues that have caused concern to social care complainants.
The % of social care decisions upheld year to date this financial year stands at 40%, still considerably above the 20% target.

Number and average response times of Ombudsman enquiries (in calendar days)												Year To Date:	
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	Avg Days		No.	Avg Days	No.	Avg Days	No.	Avg Days	No.	Avg Days	No.	%
Children and Families	12	30	28	2	31	1	27	-	-	-	-	3	30
Corporate Core	7	20		2	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	25
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev.	8	30		0	-	2	28	-	-	-	-	2	28
All Directorates	27	28		4	28	3	28	-	-	-	-	7	28



Performance Commentary:
The average response rate to the Ombudsman in 2015/16 was on target at 28 calendar days. It should be noted that it has been excellent performance by services within the Corporate Core that have brought the average response rate within target, as both Children & Families and Growth & Neighbourhoods were outside target at 30 days. There was 30% less formal enquiries from the Ombudsman in 2015/16 when compared to 2014/15. However the Council has also responded to 60 informal enquiries from the Ombudsman, Children and Families - 24, Core - 20 and Growth and Neighbourhoods - 16.
For this current year, 2016/17, with only seven responses, the number of Ombudsman investigations we have received is historically very low, however there were in addition 11 informal enquiries which have required responses.
The year to date response rate for 2016/17 is on target at 28 calendar days.

Number of Ombudsman enquiry decisions and % upheld												Year To Date:	
Directorates	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16	
	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children and Families	25	64%	10%	1	100%	1	0%	-	-	-	-	2	50%
Corporate Core	17	24%		3	33%	8	0%	-	-	-	-	11	9%
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev.	24	38%		0	-	5	0%	-	-	-	-	5	0%
All Directorates	66	44%		4	50%	14	0%	-	-	-	-	18	11%



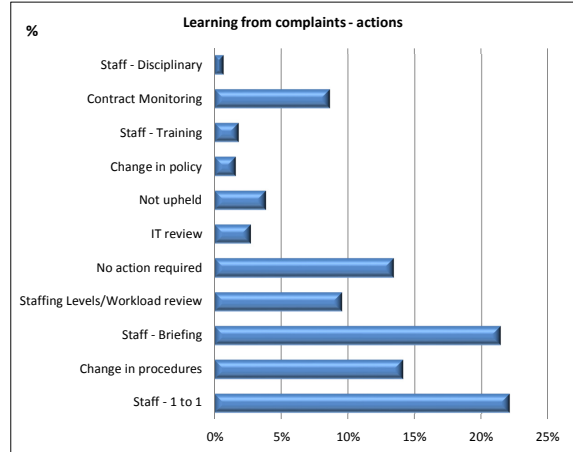
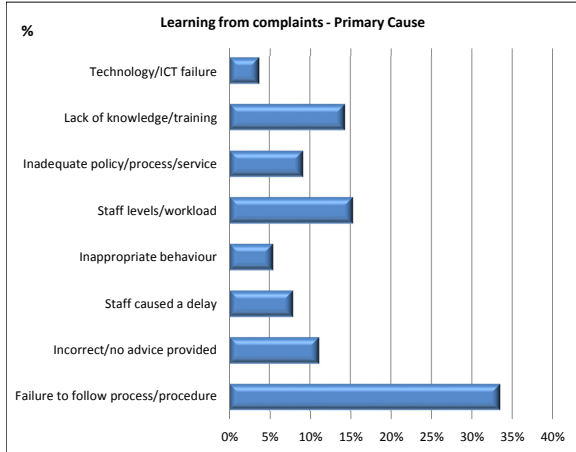
Performance Commentary:
The Ombudsman made 66 formal decisions against the Council in 2015/16; 44% of those have been upheld. This is clearly well above the target of 10% and significantly higher than the outturn for the 2014/15 which stood at 26%.
There is a definite need to work to manage this area of performance; with a greater emphasis on trying to resolve complaints ourselves through our own complaints process, and reducing the number of cases that reach the Ombudsman.
The current year to date performance at the end of quarter 2 for 2016/17 stands at only 11%, so this is an improving picture for this financial year.

Legend:

- Target (Dotted line)
- All Directorates (Blue bar)
- All Directorates Trendline (Blue dashed line)
- Failed Target by > 10% (Red circle with X)
- Core (Yellow bar)
- Children (Green bar)
- Adults (Red bar)
- Failed Target by < 10% (Yellow circle with X)
- Growth & N'hoods (Orange bar)
- Children & Families (Light Blue bar)
- Achieved Target (Green circle)

Audit Committee Complaints and Information Request Dashboard

Directorates	Learning from complaints												Year To Date:	
	1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16		Target 16/17	1 Apr 16 - 30 Jun 16		1 Jul 16 - 30 Sep 16		1 Oct 16 - 31 Dec 16		1 Jan 17 - 31 Mar 17		1 Apr 16 - 30 Sept 16		
	Minor	Critical		Minor	Critical	Minor	Critical	Minor	Critical	Minor	Critical	Minor	Critical	
Children and Families	140	26	n/a	35	1	21	2					56	3	
Corporate Core	215	6		72	1	65						137	1	
Growth & N'bourhoods/Strat.Dev.	233	6		168	0	68	1					236	1	
All Directorates	588	36		275	2	154	3					429	5	



Performance Commentary:

The Council operates a learning process whereby each case is categorised as high or low risk at the point of conclusion and any actions not only to resolve the complaint, but those to learn from are captured on a central database in order to monitor performance in this area. During financial year 2015/16 there have been 36 critical learning actions identified. There have been 5 critical learning actions for this current financial year.

The two graphs above breakdown the learning into what was considered the primary cause for the failure, and what actions were taken to reduce the risk of similar complaints being upheld. The primary cause for the majority of failures were staff failing to follow the correct process/procedures. The majority of learning was dealt with by either a 1to1 with the officer(s) concerned or a staff briefing.

Legend:

●●●●● Target	All Directorates	— All Directorates Trendline	⊗ Failed Target by > 10%
■ Core	■ Children		⊙ Failed Target by < 10%
■ Growth & N'hoods	■ Adults	■ Children & Families	⊙ Achieved Target