



ADJUDICATION AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

7 March 2019

Subject Heading:	Update on Corporate Complaints and Statutory Complaints for Quarter 3
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Policy context:	Corporate Complaint Policy and Procedure 1st April 2015
Financial summary:	There are no financial implications to this report.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Havering will be clean and its environment will be cared for	[]
People will be safe, in their homes and in the community	[]
Residents will be proud to live in Havering	[X]

SUMMARY

This report updates Members of Adjudication and Review on complaint handling performance, across all Council services.

The Corporate Complaint Policy and Procedure was introduced on 1st April 2015. Some changes to the Corporate timescales were made, effective 1st October 2018. Turnaround was set to 10 working days for Stage 1 complaints and 25 working days for Stage 2 complaints. Services should aim to respond to 95% of cases within time.

This report also includes quarterly statistics for Statutory complaints; information follows.

Statistics are reported to Committee on a quarterly basis.

This report attaches written information for Members to consider on complaint statistics for Quarter 3, indicating numbers received and performance on timeliness and quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee consider and discuss any further action required on the following:

1. The Corporate Complaints Performance Statistics for Quarter 3 (October – December 2018).
2. The Statutory Complaints Performance Statistics for Quarter 3 (October – December 2018).
3. Decisions made by both the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO) throughout the quarter.

REPORT DETAIL

The Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure has been in place since 1st April 2015. This report summarises the performance under the Council's complaints handling process, and identifies Services response turnaround times, together with those areas in need of additional attention.

Statutory complaints, those related to the care of children and adults, are subject to a separate Statutory Complaint Policy with different timescales.

Corporate Complaints Performance Statistics

The 3rd quarter performance statistics for all complaints under the procedure is attached as **Appendix 1**.

In short, the council received 411 Stage 1 complaints during the period October to December 2018. 77% of them (315) were responded to within 10 days, which is the revised timescale, effective October 2018.

The council received 69 requests for escalation to Stage 2 of the process, 88% (61) of them dealt with within 25 days, in line with the revised timescale, effective October 2018.

This equates to an escalation request rate of 17% however, this is reduced to 9% when considering the number of cases that were not escalated to Stage 2. When compared to the previous quarter, the request for escalation rate is lower than the previous 20%. However, the number of cases actually taken through the Stage 2 process is higher than the previous 4%.

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The following table provides an easy view of the percentage of complaints completed at Stages 1 and 2.

	October	November	December
Stage 1 percentage to time	73%	80%	76%
Stage 2 percentage to time	85%	92%	89%
Cumulative percentage Stages 1 & 2	75%	82%	78%

Results for Quarter 3 are disappointing. However, bearing in mind the timescale for Stage 1 complaints changed from 15 days to 10 days with effect from 1st October 2018, a dip in performance was to be expected whilst Services re-aligned themselves to the amended process.

While performance for Stage 2 complaints has improved since Quarter 2, it still does not meet the prescribed target of 95% in time, and this is of concern to the team. It is recognised that the nature of Stage 2 complaints has changed, with several contributory factors indicating the team are under-resourced; a backlog has occurred for the first time since the introduction of the Stage 2 team in April 2015. A recruitment campaign will be undertaken post 1 April 2019 and whilst results may not be seen immediately, it is anticipated performance will improve following a period of training.

Statutory Complaints Performance Statistics

Quarters 1 and 2 statutory complaints statistics for Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care are shown at Appendix 2.

There has been a slight increase in Children's statutory complaints in Q3 (21) compared to the same period in 2017-18 (22). Adult statutory complaints has seen a slight decrease in 2018-19 for Q3 (22) compared to 2017-18 (27) in the same period.

Performance on response times for statutory complaints still require improvement with Adults having 64% (14 of 22) responded to within timescale and Children's having 34% (6 of 21) in Q3. There were two escalations to Stage 2 in Q3 for Children's Services within the statutory process.

Ombudsmen Decisions

During Quarter 3 there were 11 decisions by Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, as follows:

- 4 x Closed after initial enquiries: No further action
(Environment (1); Housing (3))
- 2 x Closed after initial enquiries: Out of jurisdiction
(Housing (2))
- 3 x Closed: Premature
(Children's Services (2); Housing (1))
- 1 x Not Upheld: No maladministration

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(Housing)

1 x Upheld: Maladministration, injustice with penalty
(Planning & Building Control) S

There were no Housing Ombudsman decisions during the period.

See table below for comparison of significant (**S**) decisions made for Quarter 3 in 2017 and 2018:

Significant decisions (where maladministration and injustice found)				
	Quarter 3 2017		Quarter 3 2018	
Maladministration, injustice with penalty	1	Housing	1	Planning & Building Control
Maladministration, injustice, no penalty	2 1	Housing Traffic & Parking Control	0	

Quarter 3 Ombudsman decisions are shown in more detail on attached Appendix 3.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no financial, legal, human resource or equality implications or risks from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure is published on the internet and as it has been mentioned previously, may provide background to the information in this report.

Attached are two appendices:

Appendix 1 – Quarter 3 Corporate Complaints statistics

Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 Statutory Complaints statistics

Appendix 3 – Ombudsman Activity Report for Quarter 3