



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## ADJUDICATION AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Subject Heading:**

Quarter 1 2021/22  
Update on Corporate Complaints

**SLT Lead:**

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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

Communities making Havering	[X]
Places making Havering	[X]
Opportunities making Havering	[X]
Connections making 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. Some changes to the Corporate timescales were made, effective 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018. Turnaround was set to 1 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.

Statistics are reported to Committee on a quarterly basis.

## Adjudication and Review Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

This report attaches written information for Members to consider on complaint statistics for Quarter 1, 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 1 (April – June 2021).
2. Decisions made by both the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and 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.

#### **Corporate Complaints Performance Statistics**

The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter performance statistics for all complaints under the procedure is attached as **Appendix 1**.

In short, the council received 660 Stage 1 complaints during the period April to June 2021. 67% of them (474) were responded to within the required timescale of ten working days.

The council received 131 requests for escalation to Stage 2 of the process, 76% (91) of them dealt with within 25 days, in line with current timescales.

This equates to an escalation request rate of 20% however, this is reduced to 6% when considering the number of cases that were not escalated to Stage 2.

This report would usually compare the current Quarter performance with the same period last year. However, this has not been possible as the Council's Corporate Complaint process was suspended during Quarter 1 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, there is no data available for comparison purposes. However, a quick look at the same period for 2019/20 shows significant increases in complaint volumes in the last two years.

In April to June 2019, the Council received 490 Stage 1 complaints, an increase of almost 35%.

## Adjudication and Review Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

In addition, there were 84 requests for Stage 2 escalations, an increase of 56%

Complaint handling resumed during June 2020

The following table provides an easy view of complaints completed at Stages 1 and 2 for this Quarter

	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
Stage 1 percentage to time	76%	73%	67%
Stage 2 percentage to time	54%	80%	76%
Cumulative percentage Stages 1 & 2	72%	75%	68%

Services are struggling with complaint volumes which continue to increase. Wherever possible, teams are implementing plans to tackle backlogs, using Apprentice and Secondment roles to provide additional support.

### **Ombudsmen Decisions**

During Quarter 1 there were 14 decisions by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, as follows:

- 4 x Closed after initial enquiries: No further action  
(*Environment (3); Council Tax & Benefits*)
- 1 x Closed after initial enquiries: Out of jurisdiction  
(*Environment*)
- 3 x Closed: Premature  
(*Housing (2); Council Tax and Benefits*)
- 3 x Upheld: Maladministration, injustice with penalty **S**  
(*Adults; Public Protection; Housing*)
- 1 x Upheld: Maladministration, injustice, no penalty **S**  
(*Housing*)
- 2 x Upheld: Maladministration, no injustice **S**  
(*Housing; Environment*)

There were no Housing Ombudsman decisions during the period.

Quarter 1 Ombudsman decisions are shown in more detail on attached Appendix 2.

### **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 1 Complaints statistics

Appendix 2 – Ombudsman Activity Report for Quarter 1