

**ITEM No ...5.....**

**REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 11 DECEMBER 2019**

**REPORT ON: BI-ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLAINTS**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT NO: 368-2019**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report on complaints statistics for the first half of 2019/20, with comparisons to previous periods, and to report on the action which continues to be taken to ensure that complaints are handled well and that the Council learns from complaints.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Committee notes:

- (a) the key performance indicators on complaints closed between 1 April 2019 and 30 September 2019, with trends from previous periods.
- (b) the latest update from the Complaints Review Group which meets quarterly to check the quality of complaints handling and to promote learning and process improvement from complaints.
- (c) the results of the satisfaction surveys sent to everyone who made a complaint closed during the first half of 2019/20, with trends from previous surveys.
- (d) examples of complaints received about Council services.
- (e) a summary of the annual letter from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman on complaints received about the Council during 2018'19, which highlights that only one complaint reached the Ombudsman's investigation stage and was upheld.
- (f) that a programme of training for employees on dealing with complaints is continuing, and is reinforcing the importance of dealing promptly with complaints, keeping complainants informed and giving clear explanations of decisions.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**4. COMPLAINTS STATISTICS: 1 APRIL 2019 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**4.1 In the first half of 2019/20:-**

- 295 complaints were closed (compared to 340 in the first half of 2018/19, 293 in the first half of 2017/18 and 234 in the first half of 2016/17, although the 2016/17 figures did not include Social Work as their complaints were not at that time covered by the model complaints handling procedure)
- 65.3% of complaints at the frontline stage were closed within the target of 5 working days and a further 8.9% within an extended target time.
- the aim of the model Complaints Handling Procedure is for as many complaints as possible to be resolved at the frontline stage (stage 1) with as few as possible going for further investigation (stage 2). During the first half of 2019/20, our ratio of

complaints closed at stage 1 compared to stage 2 was 80% to 20% - the Ombudsman's office regards over 80% closed at stage 1 as good performance.

- 62.7% of complaints at the investigation stage were closed within the target of 20 working days and a further 27.1% within an extended target time.
- the average number of working days taken to close complaints was 5.2 at the frontline stage and 22.4 at the investigation stage (combining 'opened at' and 'escalated to' figures). The targets are 5 and 20 days, although the Ombudsman has emphasised that the 5 and 20 day targets are designed to drive improvement rather than absolute standards which must be complied with. It is acknowledged that some complaints take longer to resolve and that missing the targets is not regarded as a 'fail'. In particular, complaints relating to schools tend to take longer to resolve as they often involve arranging meetings with parents or investigations according to agreed procedures for teachers. Nevertheless, we continue to reinforce to services the importance of responding quickly to complaints.
- at the frontline stage, 19.5 of complaints were upheld and a further 13.6% were partially upheld.
- at the investigation stage, 5.1% were upheld and 18.6% were partially upheld.
- the percentage of complaints recorded in each category is shown below (with the figures for the first half of 2018/19 in brackets):
 

- delay in responding to enquiries and requests	-	18.8%	(13.5%)
- failure to meet our service standards	-	18.5%	(19.1%)
- treatment by, or attitude of, a member of staff	-	24.9%	(25.4%)
- failure to provide a service	-	24.6%	(22.4%)
- dissatisfaction with our policy	-	9.8%	(13.3%)
- failure to follow the proper administrative process	-	2.5%	(5.5%)
- refusal to give advice or answer questions	-	0.9%	(0.8%)

Complaints categorised as relating to treatment by or attitude of staff continue to be the highest group although the % has fallen compared to the equivalent period last year.

- 25 people made more than one complaint during the first half of 2019/20, 20 making two complaints, 3 making three complaints, 1 making four complaints and 1 making five complaints.
- by service, the number of complaints recorded were:
 

- Corporate Services	-	35
- Children & Families		
- Education	-	46
- Children's Services	-	22
- Criminal Justice	-	5
- Neighbourhood Services		
- Housing and Communities	-	78
- Environment	-	58
- Community Safety		7
- City Development	-	19
- Chief Executive's	-	2
- Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership: Social Work	-	23

A breakdown of each service's figures is given in Appendix One.

4.2 To put the number of complaints received into context, the Council manages a huge volume of transactions with customers. For example, in a typical year we:

- manage around 12,500 Council houses and relet around 1,200 of these.
- carry out around 55,000 repairs and deal with over 1,500 reports of anti-social behaviour.
- put out over 210,000 Council Tax bills and reminders - adding benefit notifications and other letters takes the total of revenue transactions to over 350,000.
- educate over 18,000 pupils (over 3.2 million 'pupil days') and process around 1,700 placing requests.
- process around 2,500 applications for various education benefits.
- carry out almost 800 food inspection visits and re-visits, 250 occupational health and safety visits and 4,000 pest control visits.
- complete around 6 million collections from waste and recycling containers city-wide.
- provide home care to over 1,800 people and residential care to 1,200 service users.
- receive almost 1,600 requests under Freedom of Information Legislation and Environmental Information Regulations.
- register around 4,000 births and deaths and conduct around 600 weddings.
- receive over 120,000 service requests on our website (job applications, requests for wheelie bins, book renewals etc).
- process over 200,000 online payments through our website valued at around £150 million.
- process over 1,100 Building Warrant applications and around 1,000 planning applications, and investigate around 130 planning enforcement complaints.
- maintain over 500 Km of roads and approximately 1,100 Km of footpaths, and travel about 30,000 Km treating priority roads in the winter.
- complete around 10,000 road repairs.
- provide free school transport to over 1,000 pupils, making 400,000 trips per school year.
- process over 12,000 recruitment applications via the Talentlink portal.
- deliver 3,700 adult learning opportunities and deliver a youth work programme to almost 3,500 young people.
- have over 29,000 attendances at community centre activities by children aged 5-10.
- have 8,000 attendances at community events.

- 4.3 Key quarterly trends from the analysis of performance indicators are shown in the charts in Appendix Two. Note that the figures for each quarter will not necessarily add up to the bi-annual or annual totals reported - complaints are only counted once although their status may change during the year. For example, a complaint may be counted as a stage 1 in one quarter but be counted as a stage 2 in a subsequent quarter and in the bi-annual and annual statistics if it has been escalated because the complainant was dissatisfied with the first response.

## 5. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 A Complaints Review Group, made up of complaints administrators from a number of services and officers with a remit for performance and improvement from the Chief Executive's service, meets every quarter to review a sample of complaints and check if these were well recorded, investigated and responded to. The group also looks at all 'open' complaints which are beyond the target date for response, and at the planned service improvements identified by officers when they close complaints as upheld or partially upheld. A key aim is to identify any lessons learned from complaints which can be used as intelligence, translating the insight gained from complaints into practical action which can help to prevent the same issues recurring.
- 5.2 The group continues to find evidence that complaints are generally being recorded, investigated and responded to well, along with evidence that complainants are being contacted to keep them informed of progress if complaints are taking longer than the target number of days to investigate. The group does still see some cases where targets have been missed, complainants have not been advised about escalating complaints if still dissatisfied and clearer explanations and apologies could have been given where complaints were upheld. These are discussed with complaints administrators and they have been asked to reinforce the importance of good practice in complaint handling. The importance of dealing with complaints quickly, keeping complainants informed and advising complainants what to do if still dissatisfied continues to be emphasised to staff through guidance on the intranet, reminder messages on the complaints system, emails and presentations. A new programme of training on complaints is underway.
- 5.3 The Complaints Review Group has also assessed the effectiveness of the Council's complaints handling arrangements using a Performance Assessment Tool developed by the Complaints Standards Authority within the Ombudsman's service. This tool allows organisations to assess their performance in relation to six themes of good practice and to identify any areas requiring improvement action. As a result of the initial assessment, the following priorities were identified:
- repeat the training programme implemented when the model Complaints Handling Procedure was introduced, and ensure that training continues to be refreshed on a 3-year cycle - this is now underway.
  - ensure that dealing with complaints is among the competencies considered in Employee Performance and Development Reviews for relevant staff.
  - make further efforts to establish the 'root cause' of complaints and ensure that any improvements made in response to individual complaints are communicated across the service and the Council. In particular, the Performance Assessment Tool highlights the importance of identifying key themes from complaints and being able to demonstrate improvement actions as a result - this is a key focus of the work of the Complaints Review Group.
  - make sure that independent advice agencies are aware of the Council's procedures so can advise and assist complainants where required.
  - ensure that reports such as this are cascaded to staff involved in dealing with complaints.

- 5.4 Most of the 'planned service improvements' identified as a result of complaints during the first half of 2019/20 involved speaking to individuals about errors or arranging training for teams to remind them of procedures and customer care standards. However, over this period there were also a number of service improvements identified, for example:

A customer complained that .....	We listened, we acted .....
They had set up a Direct Debit for Council Tax but still received an arrears notice for a previous year	Direct Debit procedures to be reviewed and staff awareness sessions carried out
They were unable to move into a house following a mutual exchange due to the number of repairs required	Inspection processes for mutual exchanges to be reviewed
A fault with District Heating meant that heating and hot water were not working and fault has not been resolved despite a number of attempts	Procedures to be identified for repairs to District Heating Units, including with contractors and manufacturers if required
Child fell in playground and parents were not notified of injury	Uneven surface in playground rectified and staff reminded of procedures

- 5.5 The electronic complaints recording system also has a feature which sends an automatic 'follow-up' email to those who record planned service improvements when closing complaints. The aim is to ensure that these improvements are implemented. Officers are prompted to give further updates a month after the complaint was closed, and these are also reviewed by the Complaints Review Group.
- 5.6 Analysis of complaints will be used to inform decisions on topics for service redesign reviews, empowering our people to use the most appropriate methodology based on the principles of lean service and customer insight, and it is felt that this approach lends itself well to learning from complaints and improving processes to prevent recurrence.
- 5.7 We also learn from complaints about other authorities. Each month the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman issues a newsletter highlighting complaints and, where these concern local government, we draw these reports to the attention of relevant services to ensure they are aware of any criticisms of other Councils or examples of good practice.

## 6. SATISFACTION WITH THE COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

- 6.1 The model Complaints Handling Procedure requires that the Council reports on a measure of customer satisfaction with its complaints process. To achieve this, we issue surveys to people who have made a complaint in the previous three months.
- 6.2 Trends in satisfaction are highlighted in the charts in Appendix Three. Since the survey sample always consists entirely of people who have made complaints about the Council, the majority of which are not upheld, it is not surprising that satisfaction levels are not always high. Samples each quarter are also small, so caution needs to be exercised in drawing conclusions from one period's results.
- 6.3 Points to note from the survey trends include the need to continue to reinforce the importance of:

- responding quickly to complaints, and keeping complainants informed when that is not possible.
- giving complainants information and explanations that are clear and easy to understand.

- 6.4 It is recognised to be very difficult to get complainants to comment objectively on the complaints process, as distinct from the outcome, where their complaint was not upheld or did not result in the action they wanted. Nevertheless, our aim is to increase the % of complainants who acknowledge that the process of dealing with their complaint was satisfactory, even if they did not get the outcome they desired.
- 6.5 Performance will continue to be monitored and messages about good complaints handling will continue to be reinforced. Overall trends since the Council adopted the model Complaints Handling Procedure are positive, but those responding to the survey still indicate high levels of dissatisfaction with certain aspects of how we have dealt with their complaints so efforts to improve will continue. It should be noted, however, that overall levels of customer satisfaction with contact with the Council remain high, as evidenced by the results of the annual citizen survey. In particular, the survey continues to show high satisfaction with the friendliness, courtesy and helpfulness of employees.
- 6.6 A programme of training for employees on dealing with complaints is underway, and this will reinforce the importance of dealing promptly with complaints, keeping complainants informed and giving clear explanations of decisions.

## 7. COMPLIMENTS

- 7.1 During discussion on previous reports, members have suggested it would be useful to include information on compliments received, and this was done in the last annual report.
- 7.2 Below are some examples of the compliments which have been submitted in the period covered by this report on the 'Tell Us About Good Service' form on the Council's website:
- Huge thanks to x the plumber who sorted the leak from upstairs neighbour - he was more than helpful. Even when he was in the neighbour's house sorting leak, he visited my address to let me know what was happening every step of the way.
  - I would like to compliment the design team for the outstanding climbing frames at Menzieshill Playpark.
  - Thank you for helping me with my garden as I'm disabled and can't do it myself. They've been really nice.
  - Amazing service from x at the Rent/Debt Recovery Team. She was extremely patient with me and explained everything fully. She really helped me and made me feel really comfortable. Not once did she judge me for being an unemployed young person with poor mental health. She was very calm and put me at ease.
  - I received fantastic service from x when I was due a boiler safety check. She was very helpful, friendly and sorted out an issue I had with an engineer missing an appointment very promptly.
  - What a great website your team have put together. We publish directories we send out free of charge to all UK local authorities. The way your website is structured made it a lot easier for me to fit staff into their correct departments and sections and then speak to the relevant teams. I look at every council website in the UK and Dundee's website has been the best so far! Please pass my compliments to your web team.

- As a resident of the local area around Baxter Park, I am extremely pleased with the resurfacing work and other modifications being made to the park.
- Lovely workman turned up and quickly fixed leaky bathroom tap, fantastic work, I'm extremely happy at the amazing quickness of this request. I know I said I would be available anytime which probably helped but still a fab service.
- I had a new boiler fitted last month and was so impressed with the workmen. I stayed at home that day and would hardly know they were there. The service was second to none and am so pleased with the work carried out.
- Always forget to compliment the council on the flowers displays across the city. Loved the wildflowers that cover areas around Olympia etc and the flowering garden on Dudhope roundabout is a delight to see when driving past. Makes the city look so good. Many thanks to the garden teams. Your work is appreciated.
- I just wanted to offer a massive compliment to x in the Council Tax & Revenues Department who has just dealt with my enquiry on the phone. We are moving house soon so I wanted to let you know and x said that I could do this online or on the phone with her. I chose the latter and she went through the form, completing it whilst I was on the phone and even checked to see how I could be refunded if a repayment was due. She was so helpful and even wished us luck with our move! With so many things to think about when you are moving it was good to sort out our council tax with a person and know that it was done properly - thank you!

7.3 As well as the compliments submitted online, a number of services have received 'thank you' letters, cards and emails. Here are a sample of the compliments received through those methods:

- The truth is: if it weren't for the Social Work intervention, I'd probably be dead or worse. You do what could be considered a thankless job. I want you to know how much of a positive effect you have had on me.
- I have a looked after child in my care... I am writing to congratulate the staff and give my heartfelt thanks. The social worker and his senior have encouraged, supported, believed in and NEVER given up hope on this young man. My heart is bursting with pride to inform you that he has just accepted a conditional place at college which is beyond our wildest dreams. None of this would have been possible without the support of the staff involved. They are a true credit to your team.
- Staff at Community Living are positive and upbeat ... I can safely say that my daughter could not get any better care anywhere. The team are marvellous and passionate about putting a positive input into her life - so understanding, very supportive, working together and training for her care package and building on her life. Staff go above and beyond and problem solve, listen and communicate well" ... "We cannot thank staff enough for all the support and care that they have shown my brother. My mum and brother are continually singing staff praises. I am so grateful. It really puts my mind at ease, knowing my brother is so well cared for.
- Thank you for making Mum and Dad's Diamond Wedding at Craigie House so special. The buffet and the dining room were laid out so well and we appreciated so much the effort everyone made.
- (About Janet Brougham House) Thank you all for the loving care, kindness and attention that you gave x in her time at Janet Brougham House. We would also like to give thanks to the kitchen staff for their superhuman efforts to ensure she got something to eat ... The care given to my father was so special, especially towards the end. He always enjoyed his chats with the staff and most of the time coming away with his corny jokes, he also enjoyed sitting in his lovely room watching his movies, it was such a nice cheery room with plenty of laughter ... I would like to thank you and your

team along with your residents for looking after my Grandad. I was told of a great reputation of the Janet Brougham House from my family and upon visiting for myself, I found it a relaxed, calm, friendly atmosphere. A place you enjoyed coming to. A place Grandad loved. It goes without saying a place I would recommend in a heartbeat. A special place, lovely people, please continue your excellent work of looking after your lovely residents ...You really know how to make this amazing place so warm, welcoming and delightful. I loved every minute of my volunteering time. You and your professional team made me feel just like family. You went above and beyond and I am touched and grateful. I was very happy for being in the middle of the elderly people who need special attention and care. Their individuality, independence, choice and personal dignity are respected at all time. Supportive and homely atmosphere is your main principle that is too vital for their wellbeing ...Thank all staff for the care, affection and attention delivered to Dad. With particular gratitude and appreciation during his palliative stage in life.

- (About Oaklands Day Centre). You are a wonderful team. In Mum's time with you she really enjoyed her days ... A huge thank you for providing my Gran with the opportunity to do what she loved most - socialise - when she began to find it too tricky to do it herself. In recent years where she struggled to be as independent as she had been, we know that Oakland's was a place where she was able to enjoy some of the things she loved. This is down to all of the amazing staff being so caring and compassionate in all that they do ...Deepest thanks for the care and support that you offered my Mum over the last 12 months. The kindness displayed by all at Oakland's, helping her to maintain social contact, made a huge difference to her quality of life ... We appreciated the time taken to write up Mum's diary - it gave us a real insight into how she spent her days with you. She particularly liked the concerts and blethering with the friends she made.
- (About Menzeshill House). I am indebted to you all forever for the love, kindness and wonderful care you gave (my mum). Everyone, care staff, kitchen staff, cleaners, laundry, maintenance, entertainment, hairdresser and I apologise if I've missed anyone, thank you from the bottom of my heart. The care you gave my Mum was exceptional. I could ask no more ... "Thank you for making mum part of the Menzieshill House family, and treating her with special care and dignity in her final years. We will always be grateful" ... "Thank you very much for helping to make x's 100th birthday party such a success. I know without the care she receives at Menzieshill House she would not have reached the 100 years".
- (About the Community Health Team / Health Inequalities Service) "Thank you for all the help you gave me. I feel a million times better now than I did from the first time I met you. You're very good at your job" ... "I enjoyed our time together and found your advice most helpful. It's so easy to let yourself go when caring for someone, and you gave me a little nudge to look after myself" ... "Thanks so much - if I hadn't met you I wouldn't be doing any of these things – they have changed my life" ... "I am feeling so much better. I have made so many new friends and am so much more confident I can honestly say for the first time in years I am truly happy.....I am so grateful to you for all your help as if it wasn't for yourself and art angel I wouldn't be in a good place" ... "A wonderful service that helps people at their most vulnerable times with strong support at times when one feels there is nothing left to live for, a life-saving service" ... "I'm staying sober and getting the right professional help thanks to you. You've given me a chance / lease of life. It's not just your job, you adapted and talked to me the way I respect. I'm shocked and glad you got through to me. Very professional my friend."
- A distraught would-be bride who had forgotten to contact the Registrars in enough time before the wedding ceremony said the member of staff she dealt with "was so nice, just like a brother" (and the City Registrar got her a dispensation so the marriage could go ahead!)



- I was in your office to register my Dad's death. X was very kind, courteous and considerate in carrying out her role and is a credit to your office. I'd like to pass on my gratitude for being so caring at what is a difficult time for us.
- I write to inform you of the outstanding reception I received from three members of your staff and an employee of Tayside Contracts... While locking my car, I accidentally dropped my car key which I believed fell into the drain. I quickly phoned Dundee City Council and a very calm lady quickly re-assured me she would be able to help. I was transferred to a very helpful gentleman in roads who arranged for a colleague to call me to say he had organised for a representative from Tayside Contracts to come to my aid. A very kind and helpful gentleman arrived within 20 minutes and was most courteous. He proceeded to bring out the contents of the drain and meticulously searched through the gunge. On failing to find the key, we again looked under the car and the one in front (and found it under the rear wheel of the car in front). He congratulated us and not once did he, or the people on the phone, suggest I had been stupid. I am humbled by these responses and could these people be congratulated. All are a credit to Dundee.

## **8. ANNUAL LETTER FROM THE SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICE OMBUDSMAN**

- 8.1 The annual letter from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, providing statistics on complaints to the SPSO about the Council during 2018/19, was received in October 2018.
- 8.2 40 complaints were received about Dundee City Council in 2018/19, 17 about Housing, 4 about Social Work, 3 each about Planning, Roads and Transportation and Legal and Admin, 2 about Economic Development and 1 each about Environmental Health and Cleansing and Finance. 6 were categorised as 'subject unknown'.
- 8.3 36 complaints were determined by the Ombudsman in 2018/19, compared to 25 in 2017/18. The number of complaints about the Council represents 2.8% of those received by the Ombudsman about local authorities in the year, compared to last year's figure of 1.6%.
- 8.4 Of the 36 complaints determined during the year:-
- 12 were recorded as not duly made or withdrawn.
  - 12 were listed as premature
  - 1 were out of jurisdiction
  - 1 was 'outcome not achievable'
  - 8 were 'proportionality'
  - only two complaints reached the 'investigation' stage, compared to one in 2017/18 and two in 2016/17. One of these was not upheld and the other was partially upheld. The partially upheld complaint concerned the absence of a Biodiversity Duty document relating to a planning issue and how a complaint about this was handled. The recommendations to apologise to the complainant and remind officers of the procedure to be followed have been implemented.

## **9. BENCHMARKING**

- 9.1 The Council takes part in the Scottish Local Authorities Complaint Handlers Network which shares good practice and also carries out an annual benchmarking exercise. This allows Councils to compare their complaints statistics with all other Councils in Scotland and, in particular, with Councils in their 'family group' of similar authorities.
- 9.2 For the majority of indicators, the Council's performance is broadly in line with national and family group figures and with expectations of good practice.
- 9.3 The benchmarking exercise does highlight that:

- Dundee records a relatively low number of complaints per 1,000 population (4.6 in 2018/19) compared to both the national (10.36) and family group (14.9) averages. This is partly explained by a small number of Councils who record an exceptionally high number of complaints which skews both of these averages. For example, a very small number of Councils record the first report of a 'missed bin' as a complaint, but these numbers are so large that they affect the overall averages significantly. Dundee's figures are in line with around half of Councils which are likely to take a similar approach to defining complaints. We encourage services to ensure that complaints are recorded on the electronic system to ensure that performance can be managed and reported.
- Possibly linked to the above, we also uphold a smaller % of complaints at stage 1 (24.9% in 2018/19) than the national (49.7%) and family group (52.6%) averages. If some Councils are recording significantly more complaints than us, it seems likely that a high proportion of these are very straightforward cases of fixing a problem without the need for much in the way of investigation/explanation (eg the 'missed bin') and therefore are more likely to be upheld. As with the figures above, a group of around half of Councils have broadly similar figures for the percentage of complaints upheld/not upheld. We will continue to monitor this as the benchmarking process continues.
- The average number of days to close complaints at stage 1 was 5.2 days in Dundee in 2018/19 compared to a national average of 7.1 and a family group average of 9.3 days.

## **10. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality and Risk Management. There are no major issues.
- 10.2 The complaints recording system includes a feature that asks complaint handlers to highlight any complaint relating to an equalities issue - age, disability, gender, LGBT, race or religion. In the first half of 2019/20, no such complaints were recorded. Numbers of complaints relating to equalities issues are never high, but complaints administrators from each service are being reminded that this should be recorded where relevant.

## **11. CONSULTATIONS**

The Council Management Team has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

DAVID R MARTIN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

26 November 2019



<b>Children and Families - Children's Services</b>													
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Within Target</b>		<b>With Extension</b>		<b>Upheld</b>		<b>Not upheld</b>		<b>Partially upheld</b>		<b>Average days to resolve</b>
	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	
Frontline	8	36.4	2	25.0	1	12.5	1	12.5	6	75.0	1	12.5	11.4
Opened at Investigation	11	50.0	6	54.5	4	36.4			11	100.0			23.3
Escalated to Investigation	3	13.6	2	66.7	1	33.3			1	33.3	2	66.7	21.1

<b>Children and Families - Criminal Justice</b>													
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Within Target</b>		<b>With Extension</b>		<b>Upheld</b>		<b>Not upheld</b>		<b>Partially upheld</b>		<b>Average days to resolve</b>
	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	
Frontline	4	80.0	1	25.0					4	100.0			11.3
Opened at Investigation													
Escalated to Investigation	1	20.0			1	100.0			1	100.0			41.1

<b>City Development</b>													
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Within Target</b>		<b>With Extension</b>		<b>Upheld</b>		<b>Not upheld</b>		<b>Partially upheld</b>		<b>Average days to resolve</b>
	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	
Frontline	18	94.7	14	77.8	2	11.1	5	27.8	12	66.7	1	5.6	3.2
Opened at Investigation	1	5.3	1	100.0					1	100.0			1.0
Escalated to Investigation													

<b>Corporate Services</b>													
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Within Target</b>		<b>With Extension</b>		<b>Upheld</b>		<b>Not upheld</b>		<b>Partially upheld</b>		<b>Average days to resolve</b>
	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	
Frontline	30	85.7	24	80.0	2	6.7	9	30.0	14	46.7	7	23.3	3.3
Opened at Investigation													
Escalated to Investigation	5	14.3	4	80.0					4	80.0	1	20.0	8.4



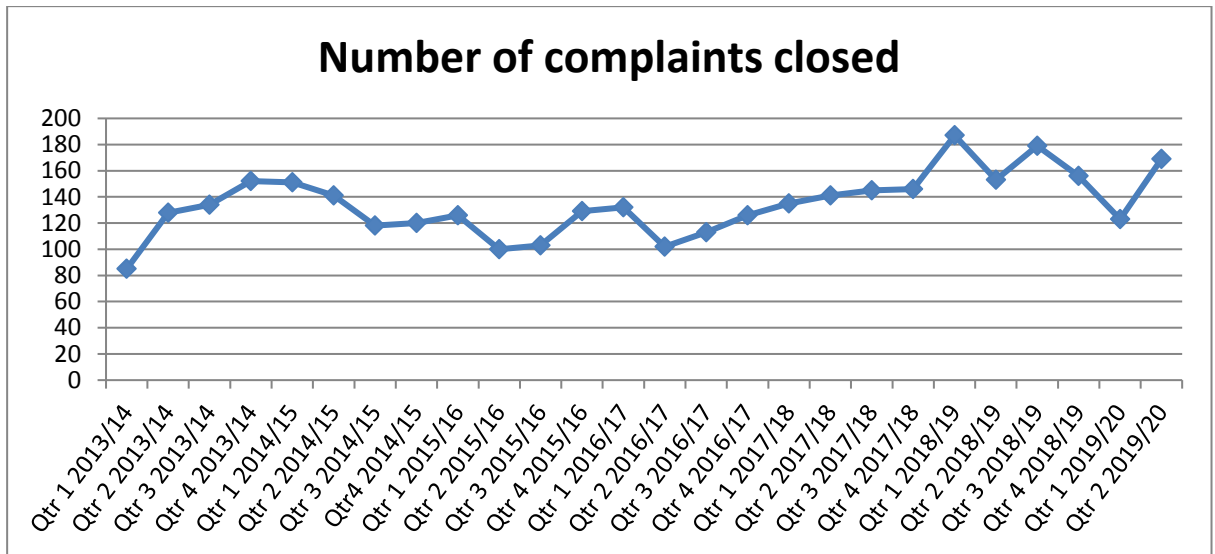


<b>Neighbourhood Services - Environment</b>													
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Within Target</b>		<b>With Extension</b>		<b>Upheld</b>		<b>Not upheld</b>		<b>Partially upheld</b>		<b>Average days to resolve</b>
	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	
Frontline	58	100.0	44	75.9	4	6.9	12	20.7	42	72.4	4	6.9	3.3
Opened at Investigation													
Escalated to Investigation													

<b>Grand Totals</b>													
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Within Target</b>		<b>With Extension</b>		<b>Upheld</b>		<b>Not upheld</b>		<b>Partially upheld</b>		<b>Average days to resolve</b>
	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% age</b>	
Frontline	236	80.0	154	65.3	21	8.9	46	19.5	158	66.9	32	13.6	5.2
Opened at Investigation	36	12.2	21	58.3	12	33.3	1	2.8	28	77.8	7	19.4	26.3
Escalated to Investigation	23	7.8	16	69.6	4	17.4	2	8.7	17	73.9	4	17.4	16.3

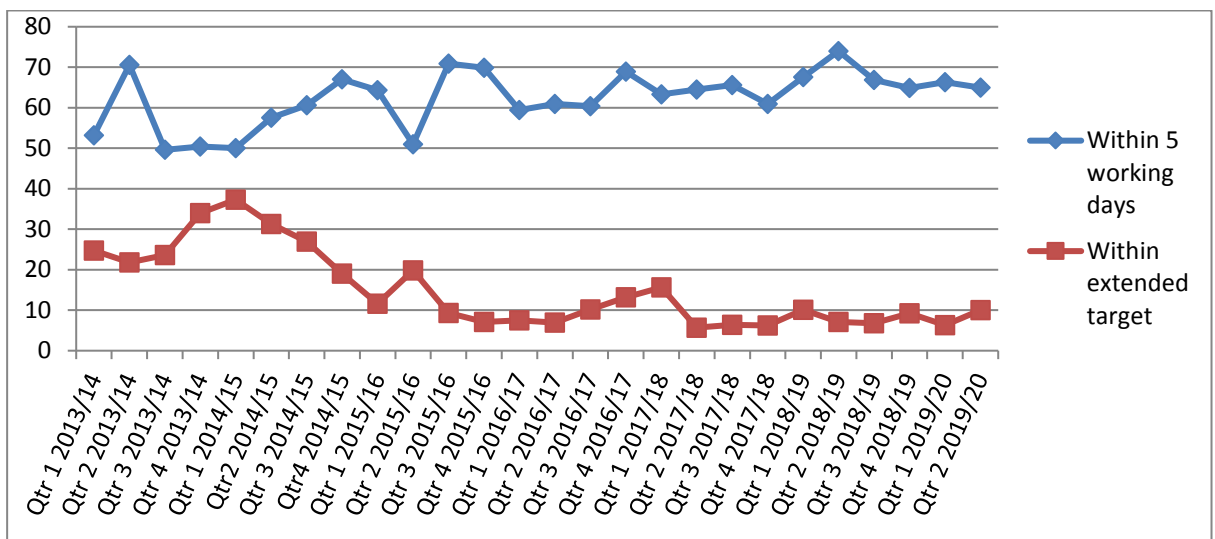


COMPLAINTS STATISTICS



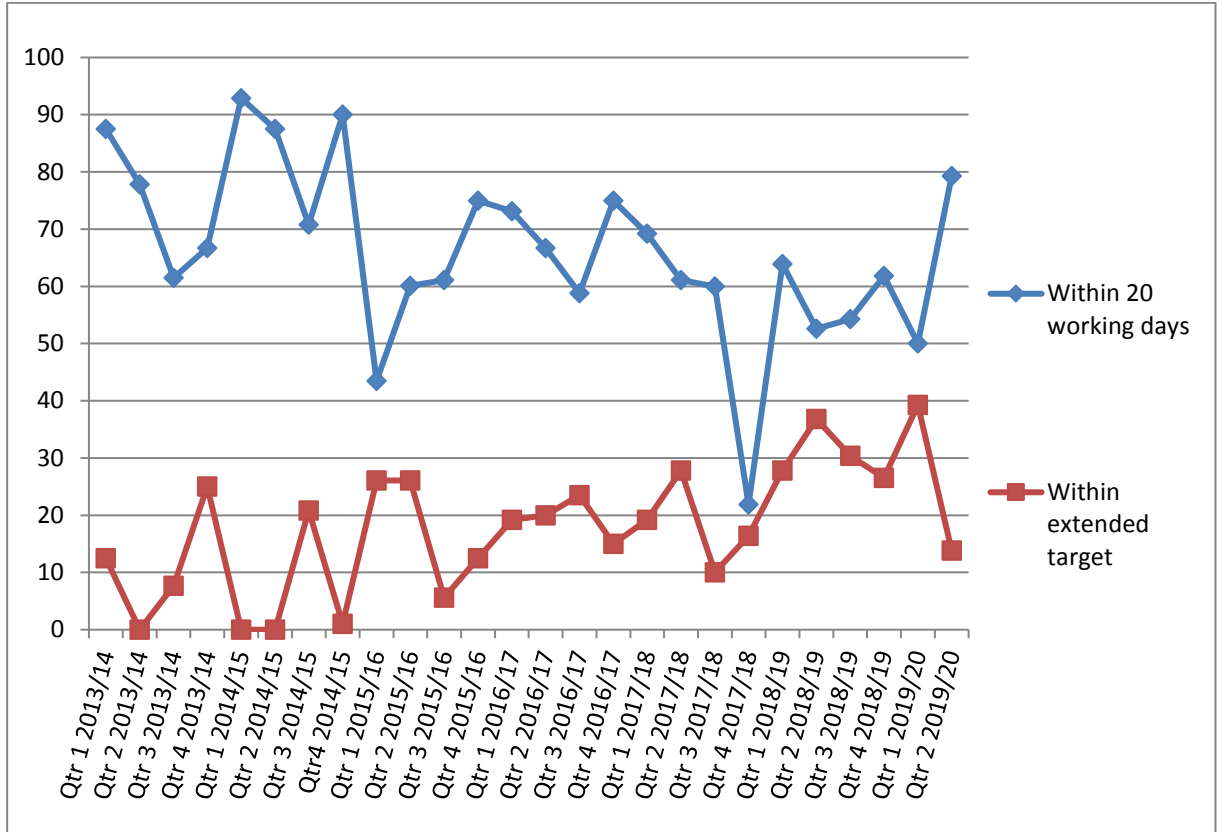
While the overall trend has tended to rise, we believe this reflects greater use of the electronic complaints recording system rather than any increase in actual dissatisfaction. The Council should continue to emphasise that it welcomes complaints as a valuable source of customer feedback and an opportunity to identify improvements, rather than something negative.

### % of stage 1 complaints closed within target



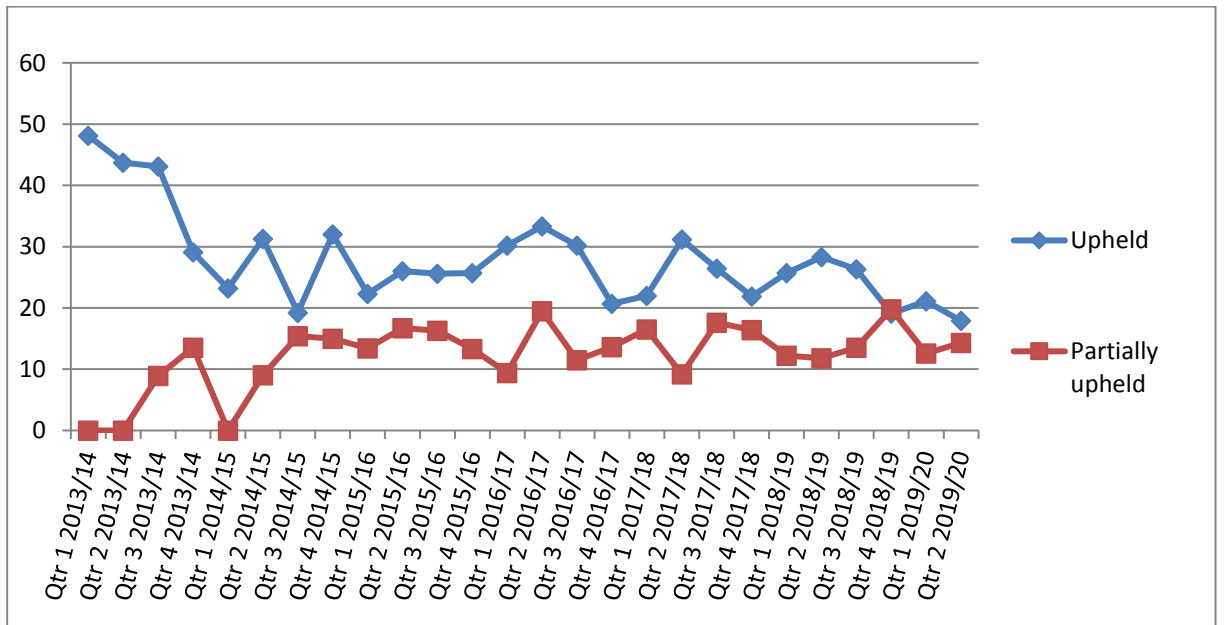
We continue to emphasise to staff the importance of responding to complaints within target (or contacting customers to agree extended targets if a quick response is not possible).

**% of stage 2 complaints closed within target**



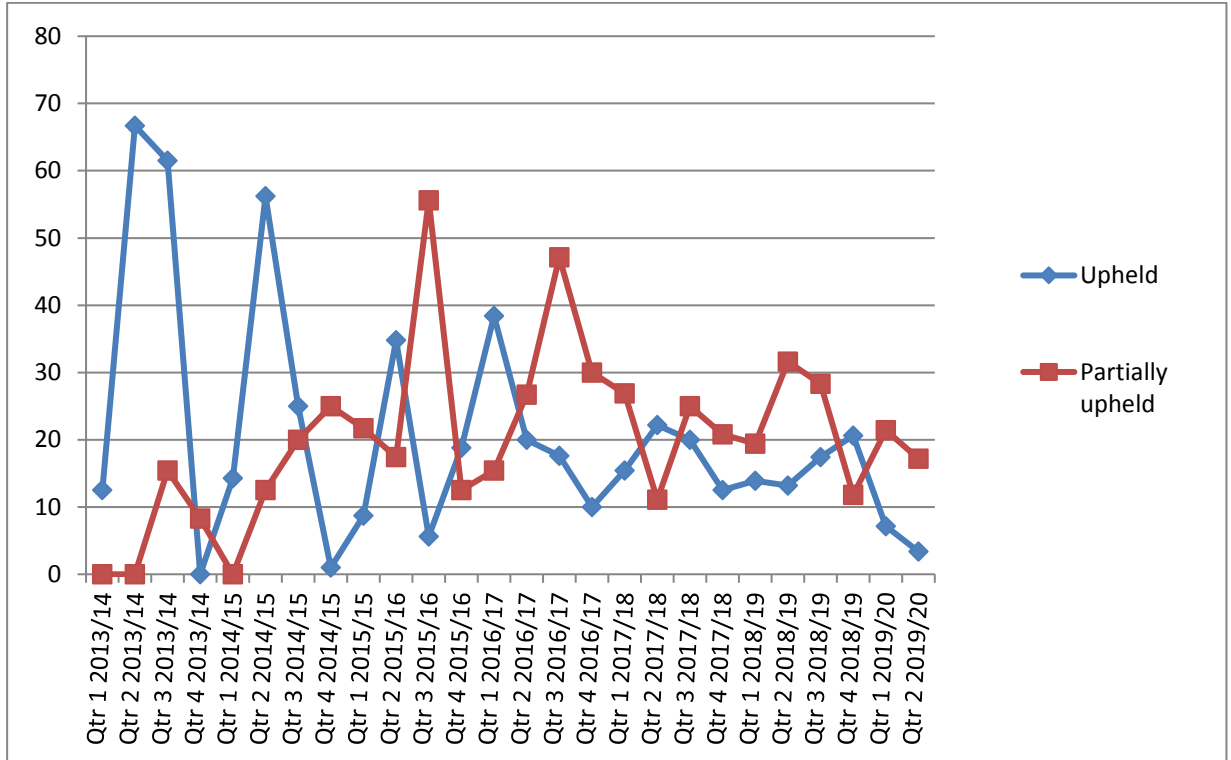
A very small number of complaints go to stage 2, so % figures will fluctuate considerably from one quarter to the next due to individual cases. Officers who deal with stage 2 complaints have been reminded that these should be acknowledged within 3 days as well as responded to within 20 days or an agreed extended target timescale.

**% of stage 1 complaints upheld and partially upheld**



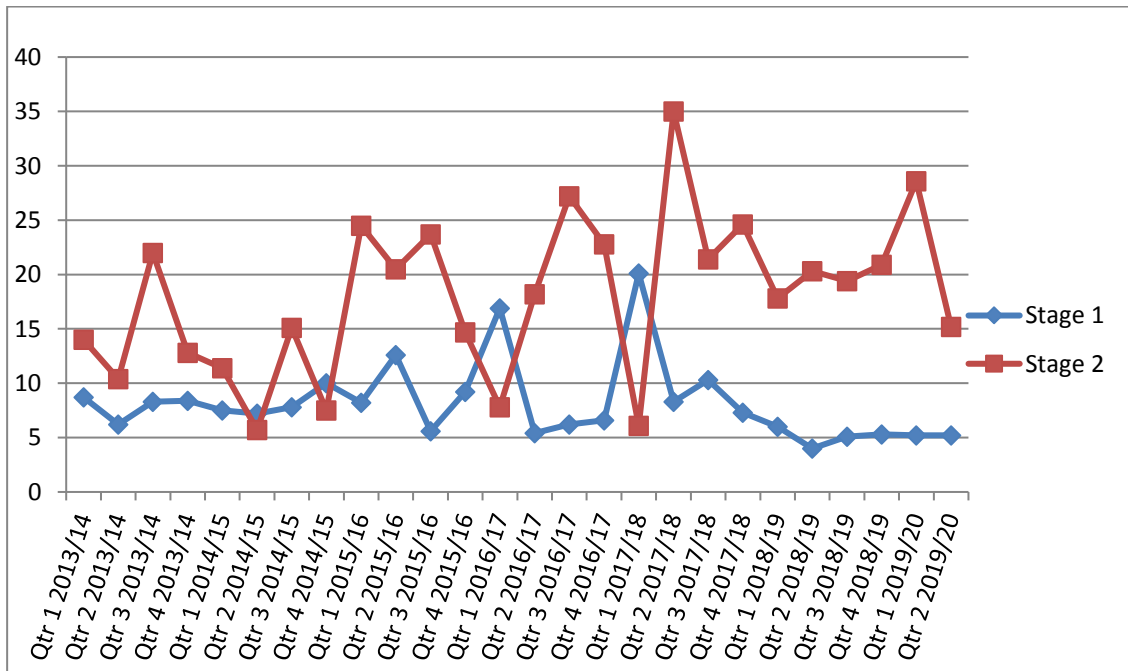
'Partially' upheld was not originally included as an option in the indicators specified by the SPSO, so these figures are only available from quarter 3 in 2013/14. The % of complaints being upheld or partially upheld appears reasonable.

**% of stage 2 complaints upheld and partially upheld**



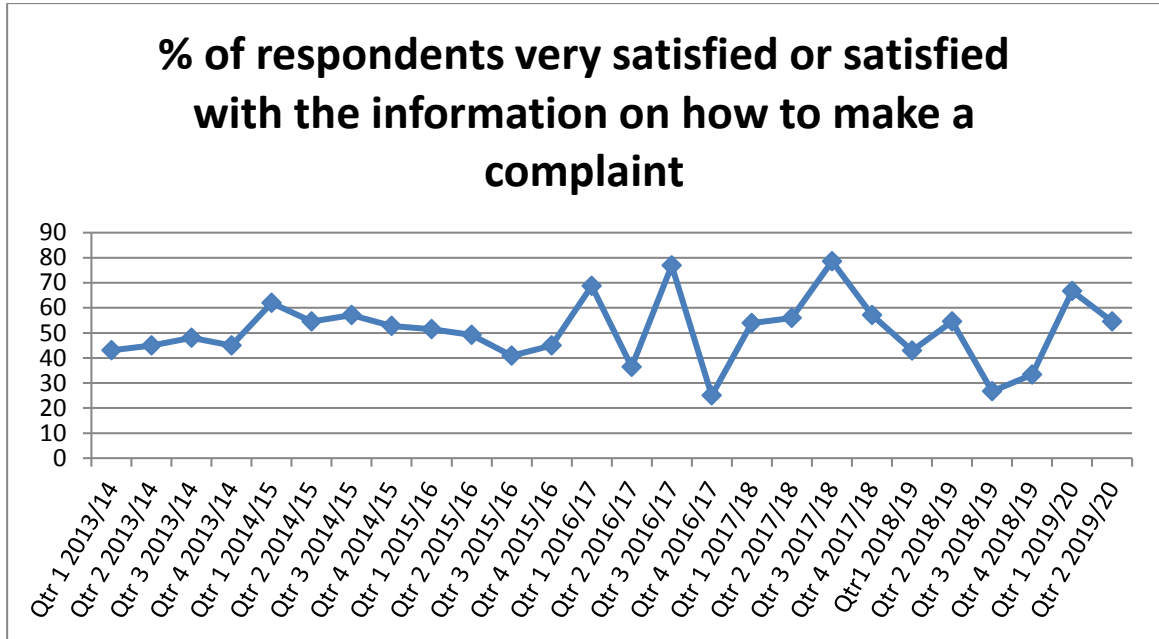
A very small number of complaints go to stage 2, so % figures will fluctuate considerably from one quarter to the next due to individual cases.

**Average number of days to close complaints**



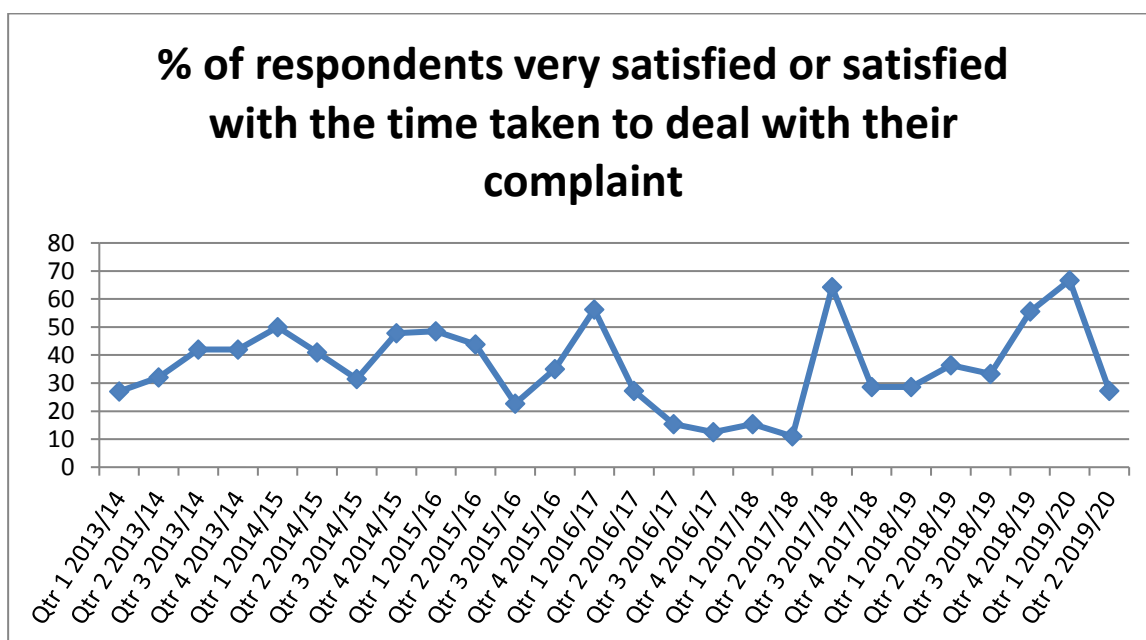
All services should aim to respond quickly to complaints, although it is acknowledged that some are complex and resolving these is likely to drive up the 'average number of days to close' performance.

RESULTS OF SATISFACTION SURVEY OF THOSE WHO MADE COMPLAINTS

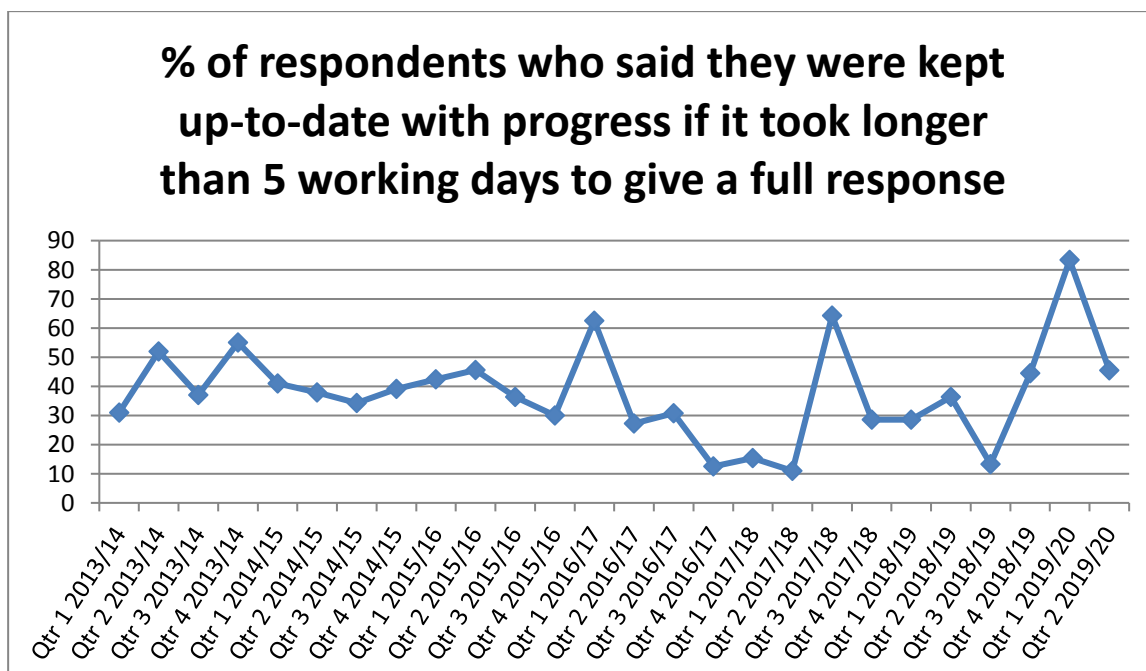


We will review the availability of complaints leaflets in offices and check that the information on the website about making a complaint remains prominent and clear.

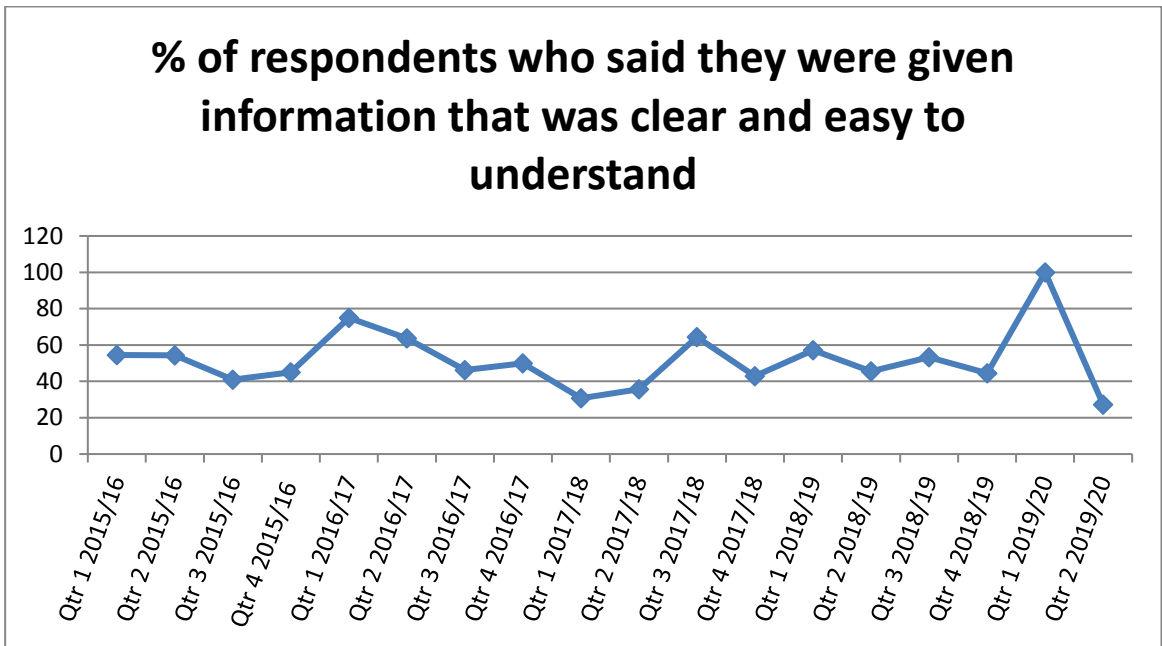




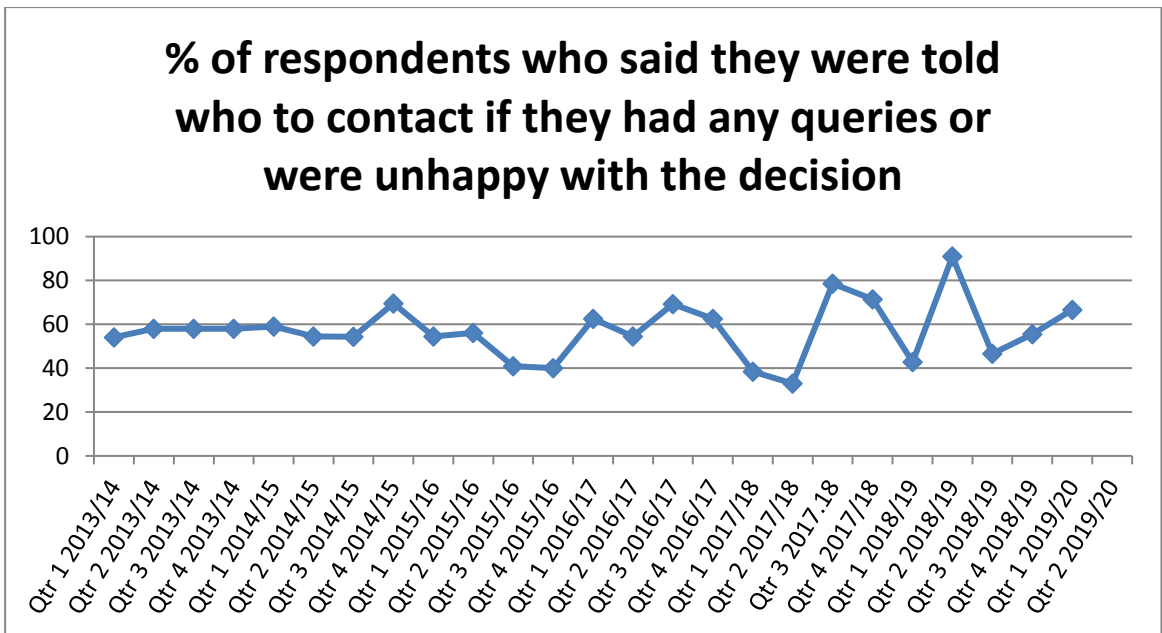
Around 45% of those responding in the latest period said they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the time taken to deal with their complaint. Members of the Council Management Team have been asked to continue to reinforce to officers the importance of dealing with complaints as quickly as possible, and explaining to customers where this is not possible - see next result also.



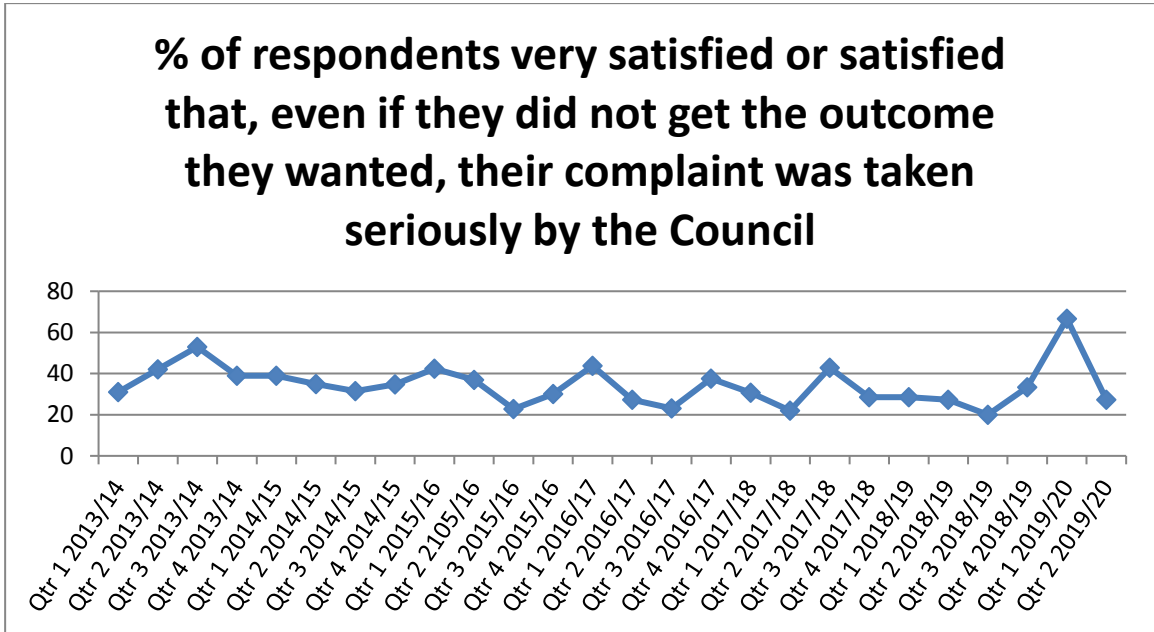
The Management Team has been asked to reinforce to staff the importance of keeping complainants up-to-date with progress on complaints which take longer than the target number of days to resolve and this will be reinforced in training for staff.



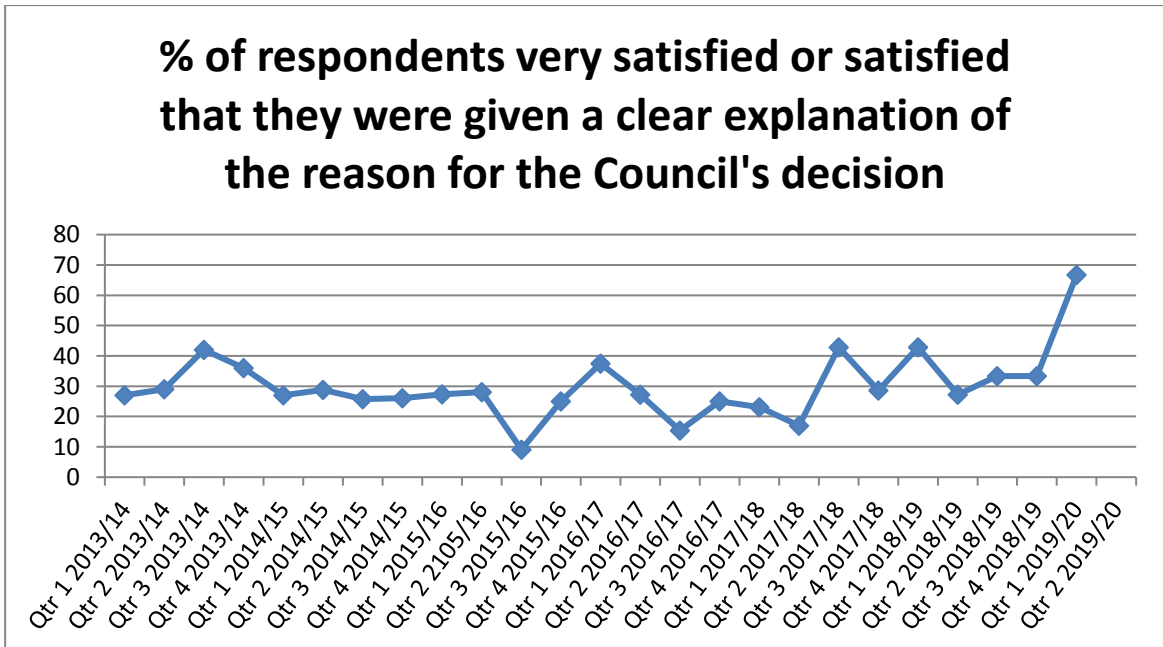
We continually reinforce to staff the importance of using plain English and techniques such as bullet points, headings etc to make complex explanations easier to read and understand.



It should be clear to all complainants who to contact in every case. We continue to reinforce the importance of telling complainants who to contact if dissatisfied with a response, and to monitor a sample of cases to check this is being done.



Around 55% of those responding in the latest period said they were ‘very dissatisfied’ that their complaint had been taken seriously. Although based on a small sample, this suggests that we still need to make more effort to assure complainants that their concerns have been taken seriously even where their complaint is not upheld.



Around 55% of those responding in the latest period were also ‘very dissatisfied’ with this aspect of the process. We will continue to emphasise to staff the importance of clearly explaining decisions on complaints, especially in the training programme which is underway, although it is acknowledged that this result will be affected by people's feelings on the outcome of their complaint.

