



**Doncaster
Council**



Complaints and Compliments Annual Report for 2021/22

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarise complaints and compliment information for 2021/22 for Doncaster Council and partners. This includes the Council, Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST), St Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) and Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust (DCLT).

The aim of complaint procedures is to resolve any dissatisfaction promptly, effectively and transparently and to inform service improvements to prevent service users experiencing the same issues in the future. The Council, DCST, SLHD and DCLT all have complaint policies and procedures. They also have officers who are responsible for ensuring the complaint and compliment processes are followed and are available to support customers and staff to ensure that making a complaint is as easy as possible for all concerned. These officers also ensure we respond to enquiries and investigations from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The Council's definition of a complaint is:

“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action taken by the Council or their staff, which affects a customer or a group of customers”

The aim of the complaint procedure is to resolve any dissatisfaction promptly, effectively and transparently and to assist with service improvements. All Councils have a duty to provide available access to residents to report concerns and must investigate and respond within a reasonable and defined timescale.

2. Complaints Procedure

The following Complaint Procedure relates to all the organisations; however, DCST also have an additional statutory procedure, which is detailed later in this section.

Early Resolution

Complaints that can be fully resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within 3 working days is the Council's preferred method of dealing with complaints. We aim to deal with the majority of complaints by early resolution. However, the Council will need to deal with some complaints through a formal investigation approach due to their complexity.

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

At this stage, a senior officer within the service area will investigate the complaint and send a full response to the complainant within 10 working days. In the event a complaint cannot be responded to in full by this time, the customer must be updated and an extension recorded with a new due date. Any extensions agreed should be shared with the Customer Experience team who will be monitoring the progress of each complaint.

Escalated Complaint Investigation

A complainant can request an escalated complaint investigation if they are unhappy with the outcome of the Stage 1 investigation. The Customer Experience team will liaise with the Head of

Service to discuss whether there has been any additional information provided by the complainant that would require a further review. An independent senior officer would conduct the escalated complaint investigation. Their role is to ensure that a thorough investigation is carried out and a full response provided to the complainant within 20 working days (or a pre agreed timescale) of their latest communication. The escalated investigation is the end of the Council's internal complaints procedure. There is no further right to appeal to the Council following the issue of a Stage 2 response.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

Following a full investigation, a complainant can approach the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). The LGSCO will not usually investigate a complaint unless it has been dealt with through the Council's complaint procedure first and exhausted the internal complaints procedure. The option to approach the LGSCO is the third and final stage of the complaints procedure and is the final point of contact to attempt resolution of a complaint.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster may also receive applications from The Housing Ombudsman specific to their functions. DCLT do not have an Ombudsman, therefore any Stage 3 complaints are investigated and responded to by their Chief Executive.

Outcome and Resolution

There are three main categories for classifying the outcome of a complaint, which are as follows:

- *Upheld:* This is where we agree with the concerns raised and as a result, have put measures in place to improve service delivery going forward.
- *Partially Upheld:* We agree with some of the issues identified but not all.
- *Not Upheld:* There has been no evidence found to support the allegations of concern.

In cases where a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, an apology is always given for any distress or inconvenience caused to the resident. In some instances, the investigator of the complaint may recommend that training be carried out for relevant staff members to ensure any knowledge gaps are addressed.

There may also be instances whereby complainants are offered a gesture of goodwill for time and trouble in making their complaint. This can be monetary or an appropriate gift. In most cases where a fault has been identified and a recommendation made, the Customer Experience Officer will monitor this to ensure any agreed action is carried out.

The LGSCO can ask a Council to:

- Apologise to a customer;
- provide a service a customer should have had;
- make a decision the Council should have done before;
- reconsider a decision the Council did not take properly in the first place;
- improve the Councils procedures so similar problems do not happen again; or
- Make a payment to the customer.

The LGSCO do not have legal powers to enforce the organisations they investigate to follow their recommendations however it would be unlikely that an organisation would fail to do so.

DCST Statutory Complaint Procedure

The majority of representations that the Trust receives regarding the functions of children's social care fall under the statutory complaints procedure. The procedure is defined in The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. The statutory procedure allows for children and young people "to make representations, including complaints about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's children's social services provision. Complaints that do not fall under the statutory complaints procedure are generally those matters that do not relate to children's social care involvement or services that are not provided directly by children's social workers.

Statutory Stage 1 - Local Resolution

The aim is to resolve as many complaints as possible by the local team at this early stage. The local Team Manager should discuss the complaint with the complainant and attempt to address the issues as quickly as possible. They should exchange information and thinking behind decisions and try to agree a way forward. This should take up to 10 working days, with a maximum extension of up to 20 working days for complex complaints or due to staff availability.

Statutory Stage 2 – Investigation

When a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, they may request that the Customer Experience Manager escalate their complaint to a statutory Stage 2 investigation. The Customer Experience Manager will then make a decision on whether or not to escalate the complaint to Stage 2 based on the evidence provided by the complainant.

If the Customer Experience Manager does not agree to escalate the complaint to Stage 2, they write to the complainant and explain why they have made this decision. The complainant is advised of their right to contact the LGSCO if they are unhappy with this decision.

The investigation is conducted by an external Investigating Officer who is accompanied by an external Independent Person (whose role is to ensure that the investigation is open, transparent and fair). Both officers complete a report with their recommendations following the investigation, which is passed onto a senior manager within the Trust (Adjudicating Officer) for the adjudication process. The Adjudicating Officer is a senior manager who does not have management responsibility for the service area that has been complained about.

The Adjudicating Officer then considers the reports and responds to the complainant on behalf of the Trust. A copy of the Investigating Officer and Independent Person's reports are also shared with the complainant at this stage. The Stage 2 process should be completed within 25 working days, although this timescale can be extended to 65 working days for complex complaints.

Statutory Stage 3 – Review panel

Following a full Stage 2 investigation a complainant can request that their complaint is considered further by a review panel (Stage 3). The Customer Experience Manager will make a decision on

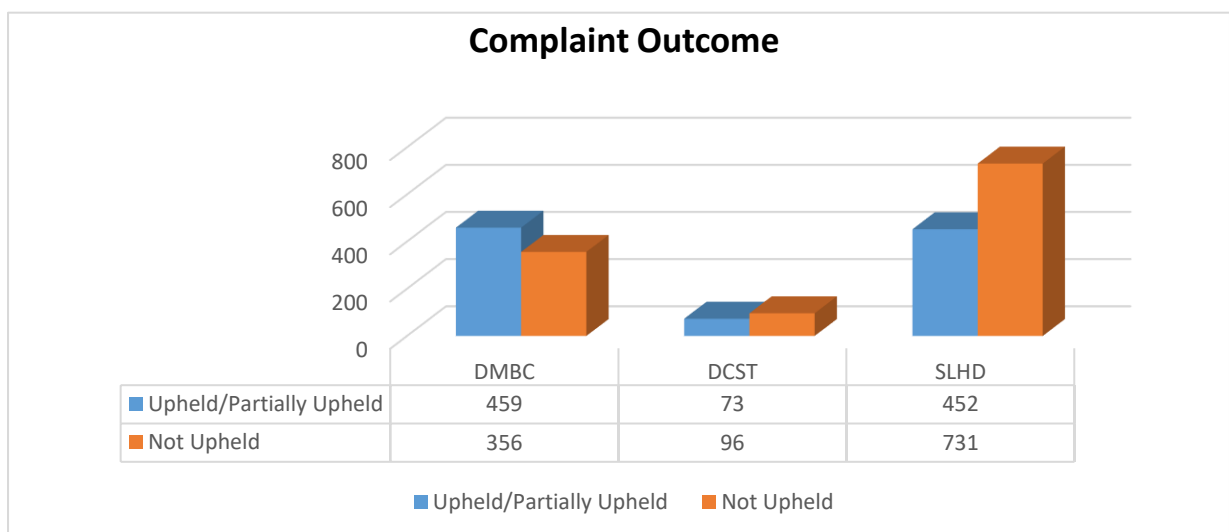
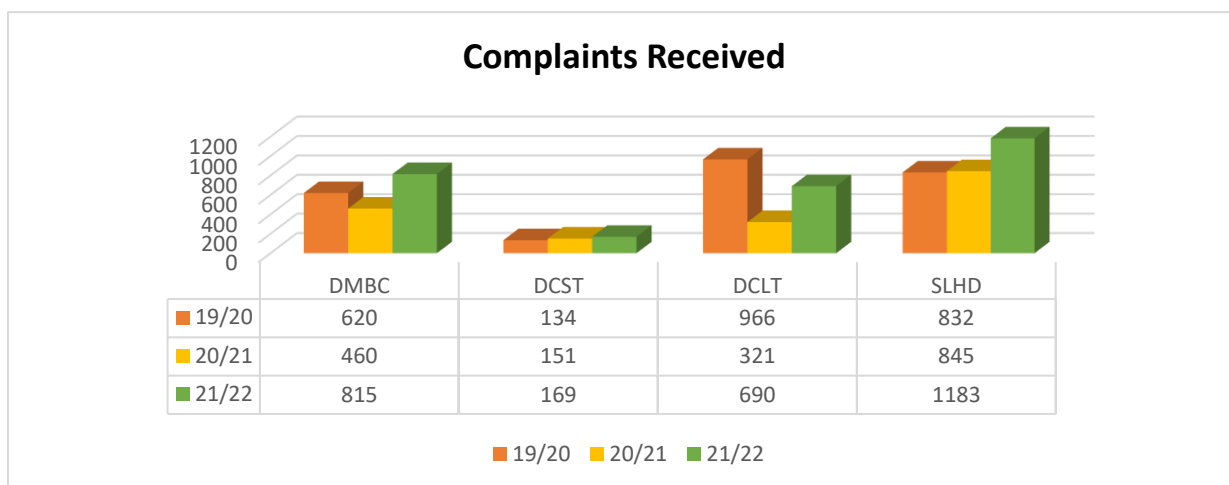
whether or not to escalate the complaint to Stage 3 based on the evidence provided by the complainant.

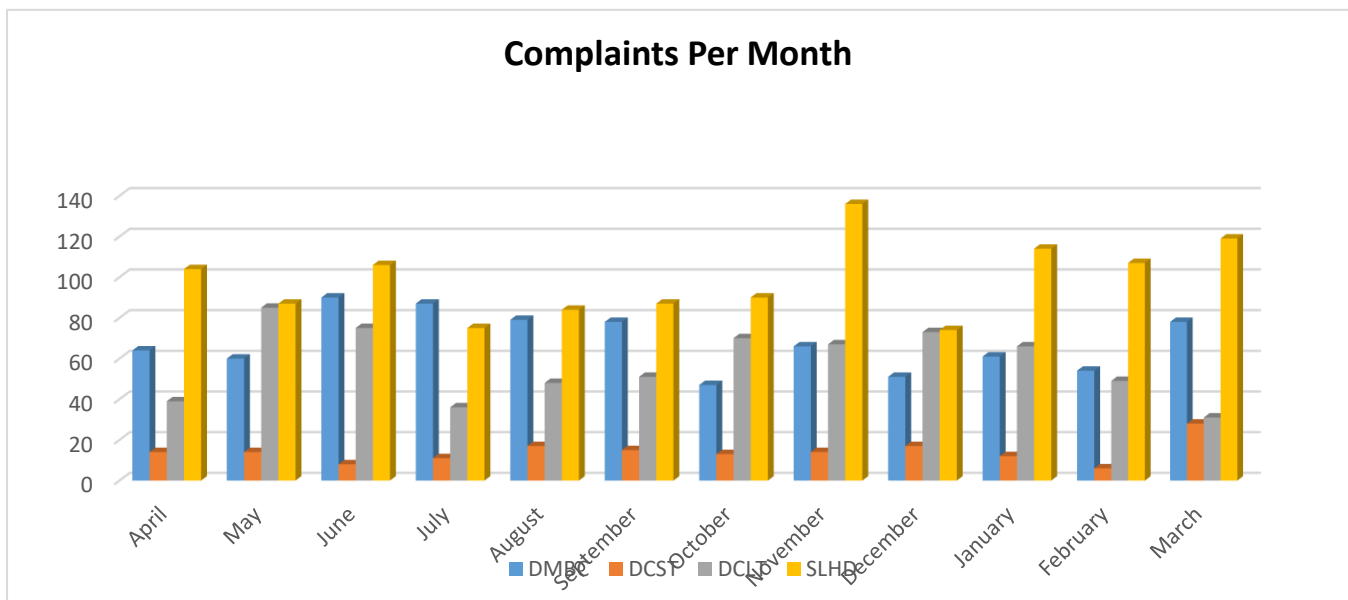
If the Customer Experience Manager does not agree to escalate the complaint to Stage 3, they write to the complainant and explain why they have made this decision. The complainant is advised of their right to contact the LGSCO if they are unhappy with this decision.

The review panel should be held within 30 working days of the request. Within 5 working days of the review panel meeting the Independent Chair will send a letter to the Chief Executive outlining the panel’s findings and recommendations. The Chief Executive will then provide the Trust’s final response within a further 15 working days. The whole process should take a maximum of 50 working days.

3. High Level Analysis

Across all the organisations in 2021/22, we saw an increase in the number of complaints received by a cumulative 1,080, resulting in 2,857 complaints being received compared to 1,777 in the previous year. The report includes a comparison to the 2019/20 year, in which the number of complaints received are similar to this year. Last year, the impact COVID had on both Council Services and residents as a whole saw the number of complaints and communication with the Council decrease significantly and for that reason is not a useful tool of comparison when assessing the final figures. Below are accompanying graphs and comments from each organisation showing these figures in more detail.





Doncaster Council

Monthly trends for 2021/22 are understandably different to last year due to the previous restrictions on services. We have seen the number of complaints rise to a number similar to previous years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As shown in the graph above, DMBC did not note any particular month or quarter in which we received a peak in complaints, the number stayed quite consistent throughout the year.

All Directorates experienced an increase in the number of complaints received last year:

- Corporate Resources – Increase of 75%
- Adults Health and Wellbeing - Increase of 57%
- LOCYPS - Increase of 59%
- Economy and Environment - Increase of 83%

Although DMBC received an overall increase in complaints of 77%, the average time to resolve complaints was just 9 working days.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster

SLHD received a total of 1183 complaints this year (2021/2022), which is an increase of 338 from the previous year.

- 67% (794) of the complaints were for Property Services.
- 32% (378) of the complaints were for Housing and Customer Services.
- 1% (11) of the complaints were for Corporate Services.

The Housing Ombudsman's recently published 'Corporate Plan' mentions a surge in complaints about landlords, unprecedented in their 25 year history. They cite the reasons for this as being related to the Social Housing White Paper, which increased resident awareness of their right to

complain and faster resolution of complaints by landlords in line with the HO Code. Future policy changes to improve access to complaints and the impact of building safety are likely to sustain higher volumes of casework. We also need to factor in when comparing with 20/21 the impact of COVID-19 on the number of complaints received.

Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust

Out of the 690 Complaints logged during this period, 23 were from repeat customers. In total, they received 667 separate complaints.

DCLT have seen a decline in cleanliness complaints compared to before the pandemic. DCLT has seen a peak in complaints received during school holiday periods, the reason for the increase is felt to be due to increased footfall during that period and the adjustments to timetables to offer a holiday programme.

The main area for complaints has been service delivery, in particular swimming lessons. After re-opening after COVID-19 closures, DCLT have struggled to recruit specialised swimming instructors. The lack of staff has resulted in lessons being cancelled. This has been highlighted as a national issue for the industry and other leisure trusts have experienced the same issue. DCLT have explored various options to resolve including offering free training, consolidating shift patterns to ensure they are utilising full capacity of existing qualified staff and offering to upskill existing staff.

DCLT have received several complaints regarding the management of their membership packages, the majority were direct issues with the external provider who collected direct debits on DCLT's behalf. This has been highlighted as a lesson learnt as DCLT have taken steps to resolve this by returning to in-house collections.

Doncaster Children's Services Trust

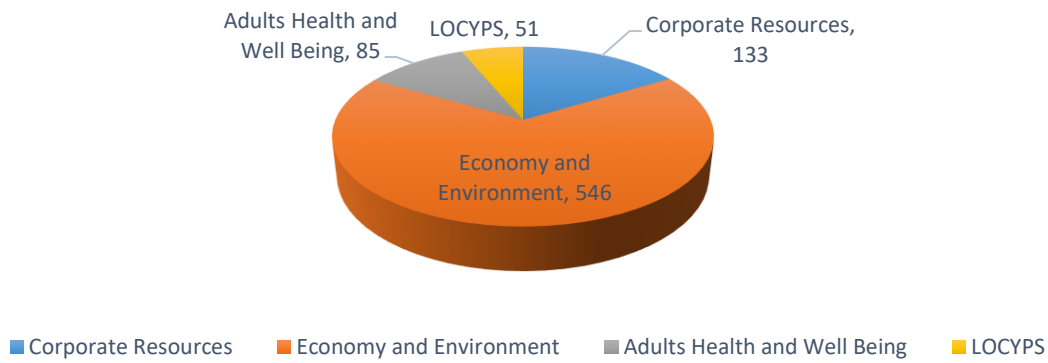
During the reporting year 303 contacts were logged which were received from 226 different people. This was a 7% increase from 2020/21 when there were 283 contacts logged which were received from 225 different people. In 2019/20 there were 229 contacts from 167 different people which shows an ongoing annual increase in the number of contacts received by the Customer Experience Team to levels which were last seen in 2017/18 (309 contacts).

One of the reasons for the increase in contacts in 2021/22 was due to the higher number of people making repeat contacts. In 2021/22 the Trust received 2 or more contacts from 45 people which is an 18% increase from 2020/21 when the Trust received 2 or more contacts from 38 people. Of the 303 contacts, 64 were accepted at Stage 1 of the statutory complaints procedure, which was 38 less than 2020/21 when 102 complaints were accepted at Stage 1 of the statutory complaints procedure. In 2021/22 there was a 114% increase (49 to 105) of people raising complaints which were dealt with through the Trust's corporate complaints procedure.

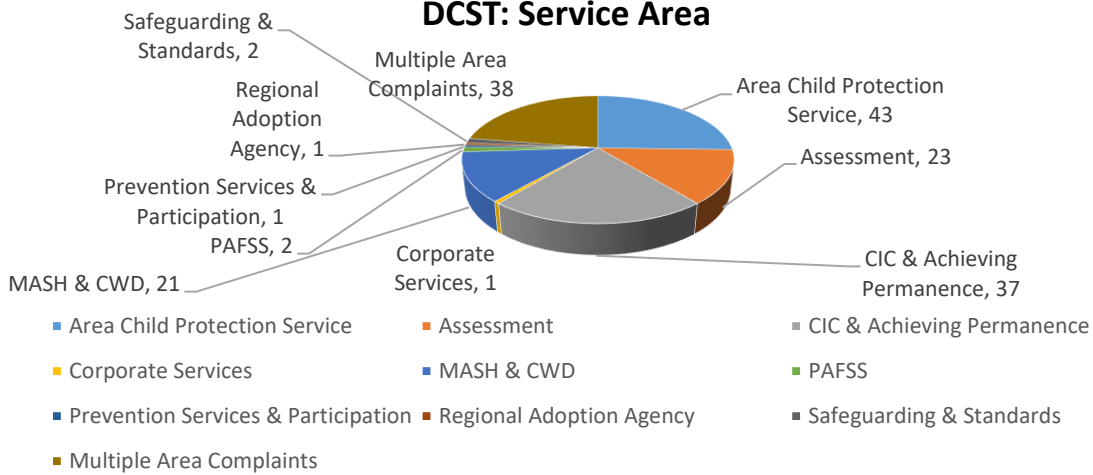
The majority of complaints were received by the Area Child Protection Service teams, followed by the Assessment Service. As these teams deal with child protection matters, which is an emotive subject and will involve the need for difficult conversations with families, it is expected that these may result in complaints being received. These teams also hold the highest proportion of cases.

4. Complaints by Organisation and Service Area

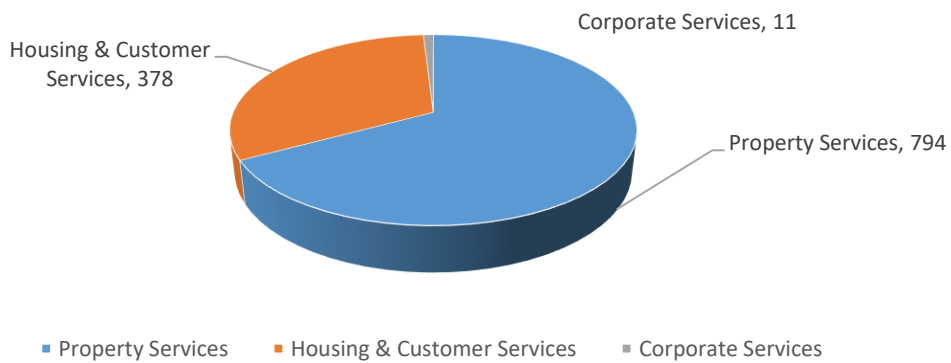
DMBC : Service Area



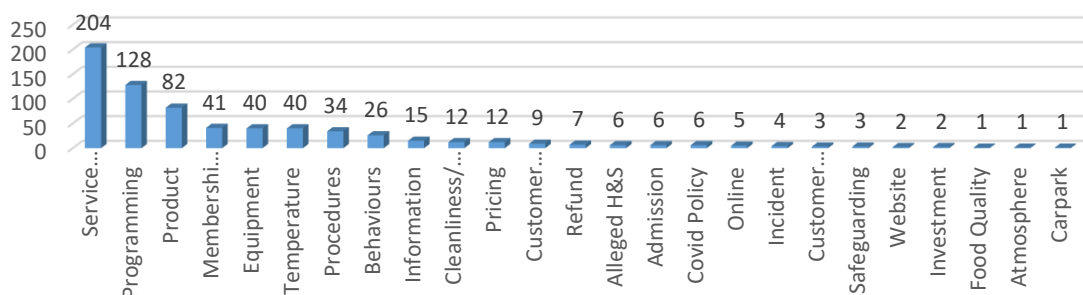
DCST: Service Area



SLHD: Service Area

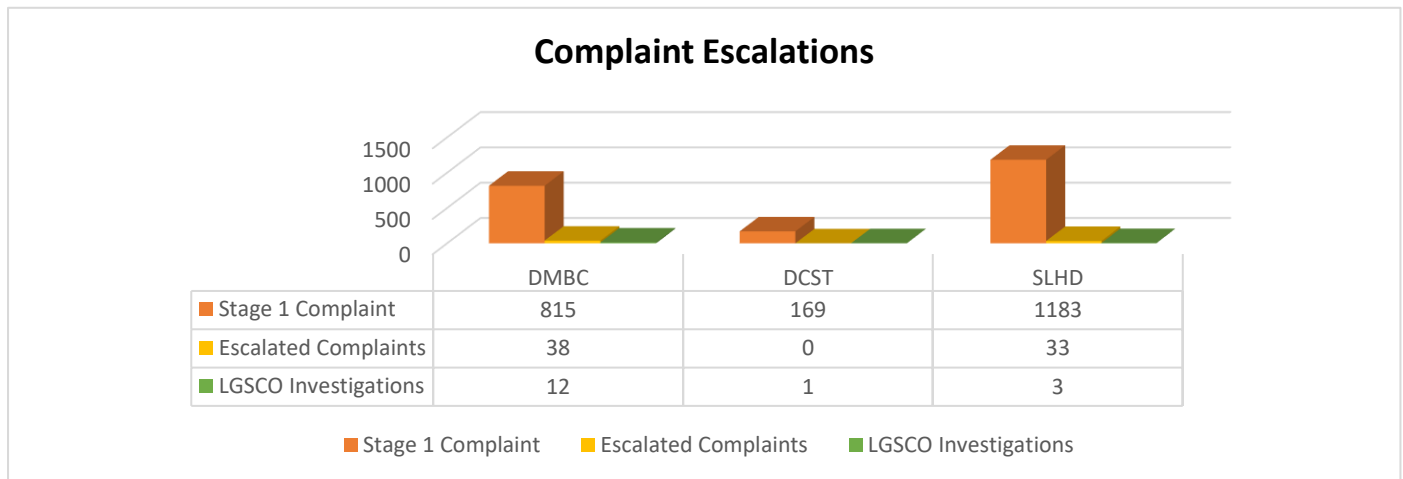


DCLT: Service Area



5. Escalated Complaints

Although the majority of all complaints will be investigated and resolved at the first stage of the complaints procedure, if a customer still feels aggrieved or they have additional evidence they wish to provide they can request that their complaint is escalated to Stage 2 of the complaint procedure. The Stage 2 investigations are carried out internally. If they are still dissatisfied with the response from their Stage 2 investigation, they may then proceed to an independent investigation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The figures relating to these investigations are as follows.



Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

As a final stage to the complaints procedure, complainants have the right to approach the LGSCO following an unsatisfactory Stage 2 response. The LGSCO will direct the customer back to the Local Authority if the complainant has not yet given the Council the opportunity to resolve the complaint through our complaints procedures. The LGSCO may also pass the complaint back to the council if they consider that there is more that could be done to resolve the complaint.

The LGSCO will request necessary information from us for review and then will contact the Council should they decide that the matter falls within their jurisdiction and wish to investigate further. The LGSCO investigate malpractice or poor service and are instructed to comment on or request changes council policies.

The LGSCO publish an annual review letter every year, which details the complaints that they have received for each authority.

During 2021/22 across DMBC, SLHD and DCST, the LGSCO carried out a total of 16 full investigations. Compensation paid to customer following an LGSCO investigation are as follows:

DMBC paid a total of £1,700 in compensation payments, SLHD paid a total of £250.00 and DCST didn't make any compensation payments.

Appendix 2 includes a copy of the LGSCO Annual Letter to Doncaster Council published in July relating to performance in 21/22 when it is received later in July. This will be included at the Executive Board and Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee.

6. Lessons Learned and Service Improvements

Doncaster Council

The services, which have been recognised as requiring service improvements and/or have made changes to reduce the number of complaints received, are:

Adults Health & Wellbeing - Safeguarding

We have seen Safeguarding complaints reduce from 14 in total over Q1 and Q2, to just 1 in Q3 and Q4 combined. Feedback from this team advised that during monthly team meetings they have incorporated the following:

- Discussions around the nature of complaints that have been received and lessons learned identified.
- Involvement of Senior Practitioners in responses to complaints to help recognise where improvements in service areas can be maximised, for example contacting family members and striking up dialogues in a more timely manner.
Previously the communication was delayed due to prioritisation of workloads by social workers.

In AHWB complaint training has been made mandatory to all senior managers and officers that may deal with complaints to improve letter writing and communication style with residents and families which will reduce escalation.

Economy & Environment – Licensing

During 2021/22 Economy and Environment received 52 complaints relating to the Licensing service, this is an increase of 48 complaints compared to the previous year. The majority of these complaints were due to delays in service, for both new applicants and renewals and/or related to dissatisfaction when callers were unable to speak to someone directly on the telephone.

During 2021/22 due to the challenges of COVID-19, and the continued restrictions on face-to-face customer interaction, the Council's licensing function operated solely on digital application & renewal systems. Customers who telephoned were directed to the licensing email inbox, where emails were triaged by the licensing team and responded to based on an assessment of the urgency of the request.

Whilst all of the changes to service were necessary to ensure business was able to continue in the most efficient manner, during a period of unprecedented demand on the service, the customer experience in terms of applicants and license holders not being able to speak to a person about their issue was undoubtedly compromised. Discussions are currently taking place to look at how an efficient telephony function can be reinstated at the earliest opportunity.

Despite numbers of complaints increasing the average response times for dealing with complaints was swift, equating to just 6 working days in total.

Economy and Environment – Waste and Recycling

The Waste & Recycling Team have been working closely with the Customer Experience Team to ensure that a considerable proportion of their complaints are investigated and resident contacted the same day with a view to preventing unnecessary formal action.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster

SLHD received a number of complaints about lack of communication regarding repairs appointments, alongside complaints about missed appointments. The Repairs Excellence pilot has been launched, with a new approach to communicating with customers, which includes text reminders to confirm appointments.

For Housing Management many of the complaints relate to ongoing Anti-Social Behaviour issues and complaints about tenants neighbours. SLHD are starting work on introducing VoiceScape (an automated phone system) to check in with complainants who have a live ASB case. A message will be sent each week and will provide reassurance that SLHD are working on the case and to invite tenants to press 1 if they have any new information or would like to speak with their Housing officer.

SLHD have reviewed their ASB processes and procedures using the Tenant and Resident Improvement Panel and will shortly be implementing a number of service improvements resulting from the review.

Many of the complaints for Home Options are around requests for service/enquiries and the length of time taken to respond. SLHD are reviewing their front-end access into the service to provide a quicker response at the first point of contact and immediate allocation to an officer to case manage if required. SLHD are also ensuring all homeless cases have a dedicated case manager so that customers have just the one officer they deal with and can contact if they have a problem.

SLHD have had complaints and comments from some tenants who feel they do not understand their individual or mental health needs. SLHD have piloted mental health training for front line staff and will be rolling this out corporately.

Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust

Due to capital works, DCLT pool space is limited. After returning from COVID-19 closures, programming reviews became central to ensure that the offer was fair, consistent, and equitable to all customers. This did cause issues for some customers who felt that their session should be prioritised. DCLT decisions were made to ensure they could maintain an offer for all customers, including public, learn to swim, education lessons and local swimming clubs.

With regards to DCLT's capital works and site closures, they have improved communication with customers and feedback on progress of the works. They have now published statements of progress to reduce complaints from customers and they meet regularly with stakeholders.

DCLT have experienced several communication and process errors with their external provider who managed their memberships and direct debit payments. This caused upset and distress for their customers. DCLT have taken the decision to move the process in house and to maximise their IT systems to provide a better customer experience.

The year DCLT have seen a decline in cleanliness complaints compared to before the pandemic.

Doncaster Children's Services Trust

When a complaint is raised about a matter, the complaint is looked into and responded to. However, there are occasions where learning has been identified even though the specific matter has not been complained about. On these occasions the opportunity is still taken to learn from experience and adapt services to reduce the risk of a matter being subject to complaints in the future. Examples of these are as follows: - The outcome of a complaint from potential adopters, from another agency, who were unhappy that the Trust's social worker did not provide them with information directly regarding a child was that it was the responsibility of their social worker to provide them with updates. In order to address the issue the Adoption Team advised that their procedures would be reviewed to ensure it is clearly identified who communication will be passed through if another local authority are involved in discussions about the adoption of a Doncaster child.

Following a complaint regarding a letter being printed in black and white with an address on it that was not registered as a Trust building, which caused the complainant concerns that it was fraudulent, the following communication sent out to all staff advising them that:

- It was a legal requirement to have the registered address of the Trust and company registration number on all letter headed paper.
- If a person is required to attend an appointment at an office the full address should be included in the body of the letter together with the name of the person to ask for on arrival.
- When a letter is posted which is printed in black and white the following line is to be included: "This letter has been printed in black and white, rather than in colour to reduce our environmental impact."

As the result of complaint that guidance had not been given to a young person on how to write to a half sibling that had been adopted, the Letterbox Coordinator created a sample letter for a sibling/young person to use as part of the Letterbox process. The Letterbox is used for communication between birth families and children who have been adopted.

As the result of complaints it was agreed that there should be a review of fostering processes from the outset including training, assessments and ongoing supervision so that existing and potential foster carers understand what the Trust expects of them. The outcome was that it was agreed with the Recruitment and Assessment Team that standards of conduct of foster carers, including consumption of alcohol, would be explored during the preparation course for people who are interested in fostering and also in the home study for those who wished to pursue fostering for the Trust. Standards of conduct would be addressed in supervision with existing foster carers as well as through the Annual Review Process which provides independent oversight by the Agency Decision Maker.

The Trust's Psychological Services changed its procedures to either share the outcome of any assessment they undertook directly with the young person and their families or be present when the social worker did this. This action was taken because they are best placed to answer any queries and receive direct feedback.

As the result of a complaint that a family felt that there had been a delay in them receiving a payment for a claim for expenses, the opportunity was taken to advise staff in the team that any claim

submitted takes between 3 and 5 working days to be processed and paid so that families can budget for this in future.

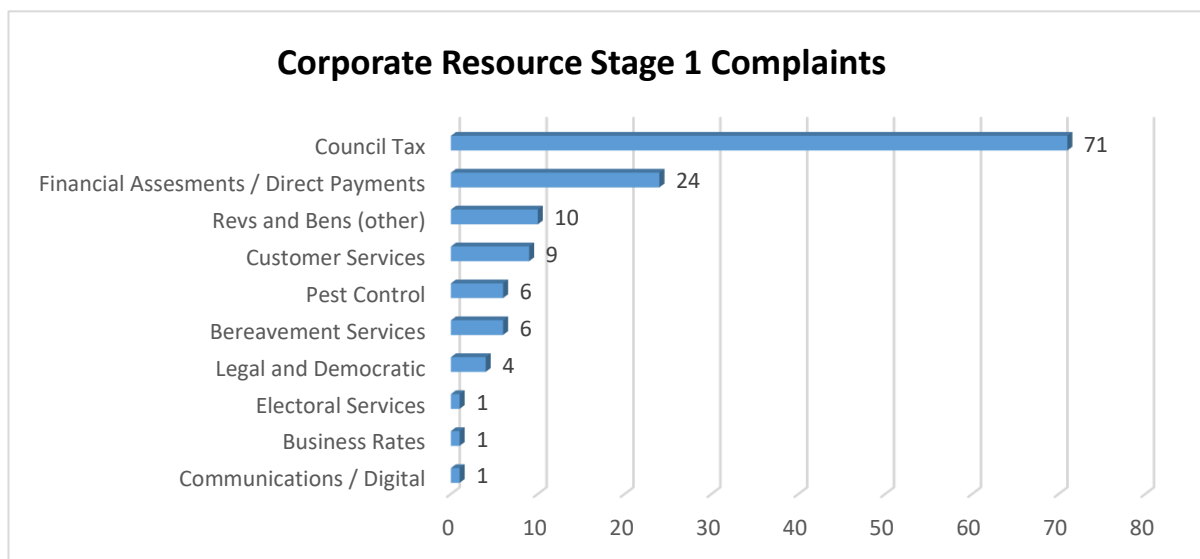
7. Doncaster Council by Directorate

Corporate Resources

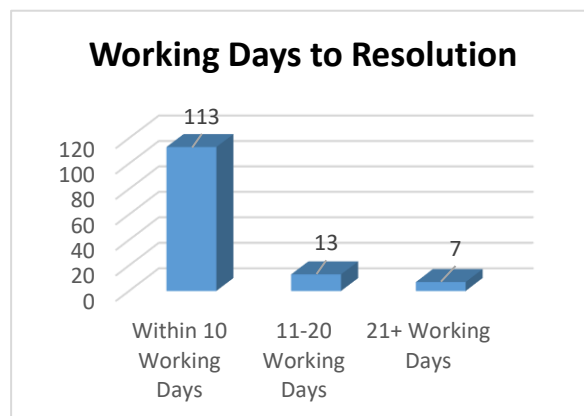
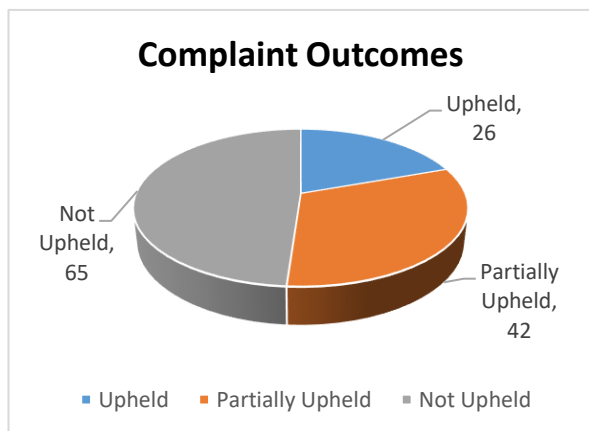
The Corporate Resources Directorate received 133 corporate complaints in 2021/22.

The Council Tax department have received the majority of complaints accounting for 71 of these. The majority of these complaints were disagreements in relation to bills and charges. Of all Council Tax complaints logged just over half, 52% were either Upheld or Partially Upheld.

We have also seen an increase in Financial Assessment complaints, 23 over the past 12 months, with the majority relating to residents either misunderstanding the care fees or disagreeing with the figure. The Upheld or Partially Upheld rate is just over 50%.



Across the Directorate, 85% of all customer complaints were responded to within the timescale of 10 working days.



Escalated Complaints

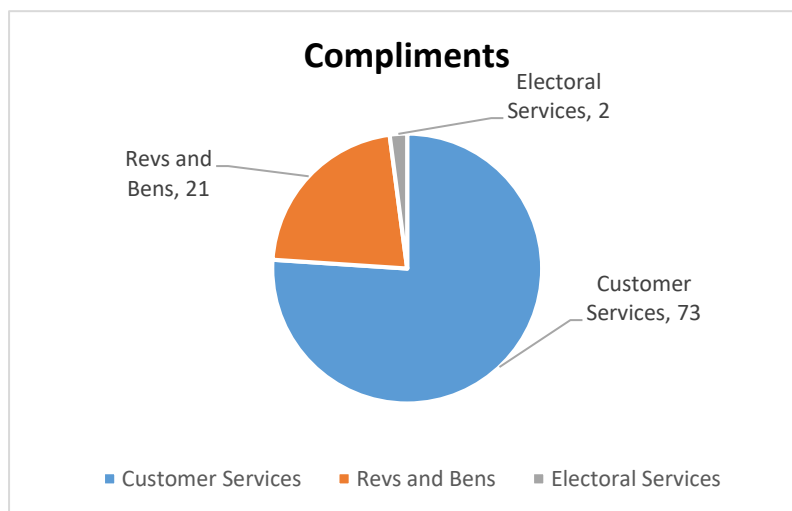
Corporate Resources investigated just two escalated complaints during 2021/22, both of which were related to Financial Assessments. Of all Corporate Resources complaints that were received last year, 5 customers sought advice from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

A summary of the LGSCO decisions;

Two customers had their LGO application upheld. One of which was a complaint about the decision not to approve a blue badge application and the other, a complaint about copies of care fee invoices being sent to the incorrect address. 1 relating to procurement was not upheld. Two customers had their investigation discontinued, as their case did not meet the criteria for a full LGSCO investigation.

Compliments

Doncaster Council have received in total 418 compliments, of which 96 were for teams across Corporate Resources. The breakdown of the directorate is below.



Economy and Environment

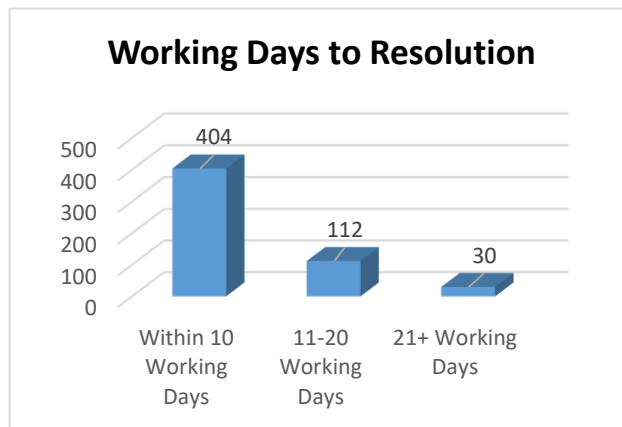
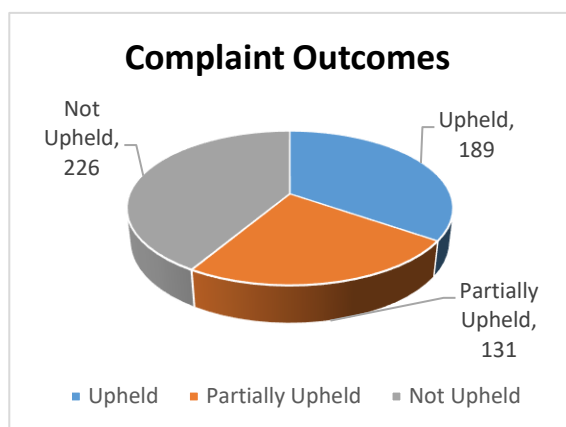
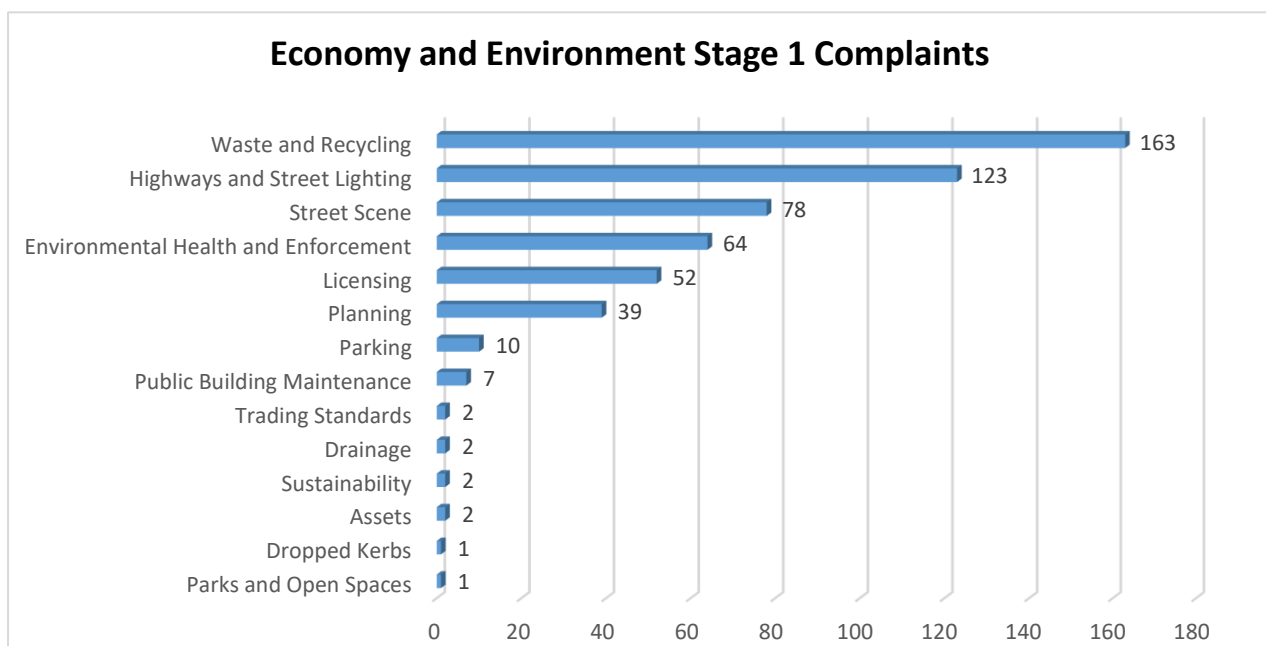
The Economy and Environment Directorate received 546 complaints in 2021/22. The services that received the most complaints were those that have the largest impact on the majority of the residents in the borough, Waste and Recycling, Highways and Street Lighting, Street Cleaning and Fly Tipping. These three services equated for 69% of all complaints received for this directorate.

Although, across all service teams we have seen an increase in complaints, which we were expecting following last year, the most notable increase has come from Licensing who have increased the complaints from just 4 the previous year to 52 most recently. Customers informed us that they have become frustrated with the issues relating to communication both to and from the Licensing department.

For Economy and Environment the main complaint themes throughout the year were:

- Communication issues with Licensing
- Waste and Recycling Missed Collections / COVID Self Isolation Impact

Across the Directorate, 74% of all customer complaints were responded to within the timescale of 10 working days.



Escalated Complaints

Economy and Environment received 18 escalated complaints during 2021/22. Of these, 5 were either upheld or partially upheld following a further investigation. The average timescale for responding to escalated complaints within this directorate was 14 working days.

Of all Economy and Environment complaints that were received and responded to over the course of the last year, 10 customers sought the advice from the LGSCO. Of these complaints, 5 investigations were discontinued by the LGSCO, 2 relating to Planning were partially upheld, 1 relating to Environmental Health and Enforcement was fully upheld and there are 2 which remain active as the LGSCO are still carry out their investigations.

Compliments

Doncaster Council have received in total 418 compliments, of which 209 were for teams across Economy and Environment. The breakdown of the directorate is below



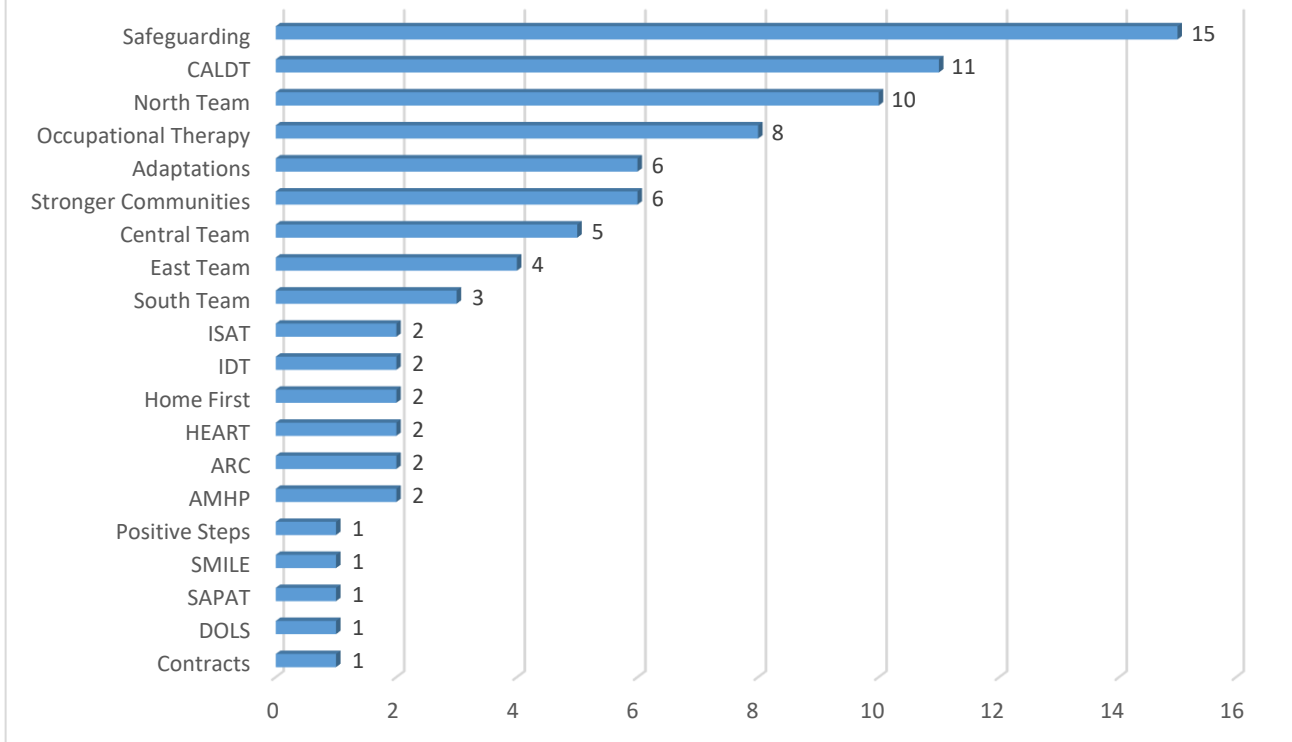
Adults Health and Wellbeing (AHWB)

AHWB received 85 complaints in 2021/22, with Adult Social Care receiving 48 of these complaints and Communities receiving 37. The departments, which generated the majority of complaints throughout the year were, Safeguarding 15 and Community Adult Learning Disability Team (CALDT) 11.

This has been discussed in quarterly meetings with the Safeguarding team implementing changes to their working practises, which has resulted in just one of the 15 complaints logged since October 2021. CALDT have had a recent increase but the cause has been determined and what appeared to be an upward trend in quarter 2 and 3 has now slowed with just 2 complaints logged since the beginning of December.

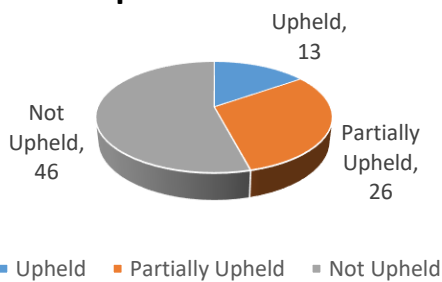
Below is a full breakdown of all Adult Health and Wellbeing complaints received throughout 2021/22.

Adults Health and Wellbeing Stage 1 Complaints

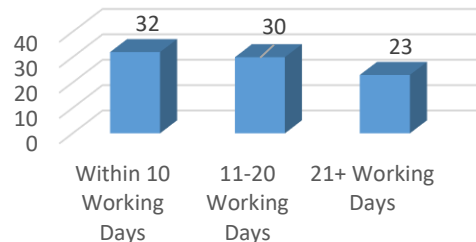


Across the Directorate, 38% of all customer complaints were responded to within the corporate timescale of 10 working days. Most complaints in this area are of a complex and sensitive nature and can be difficult to carry out a full investigation and respond within the 10 working days. If a complaint response is going to take longer, customers are regularly contacted throughout and often invited to attend a face-to-face meeting to discuss their concerns on more of a personal level. This can again have an effect on the timescales as we allow the customer to choose a time that suits their requirements.

Complaint Outcomes



Working Days to Resolution



Escalated Complaints

AHWB received 8 escalated complaints during 2021/22. The average timescale for responding to all escalated complaints within this directorate was 16 working days. Of all AHWB complaints that were received and responded to over the course of the last year, just 5 customers' sought advice from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

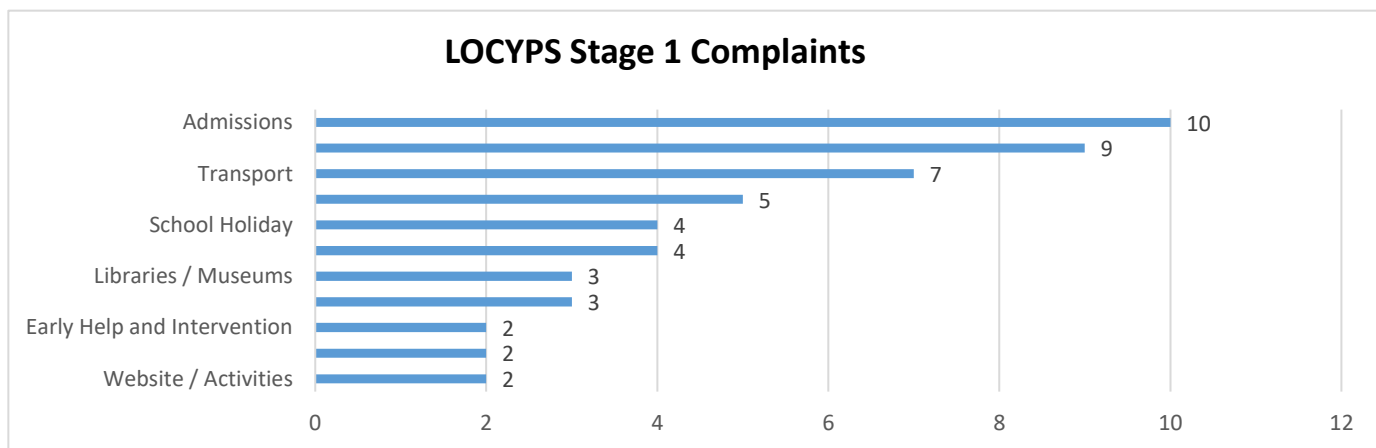
Of these 5 customers, 1 investigation was discontinued by the LGSCO, 1 was not upheld, 2 were upheld and 1 case is still active with a decision yet to be reached by the LGSCO.

Compliments

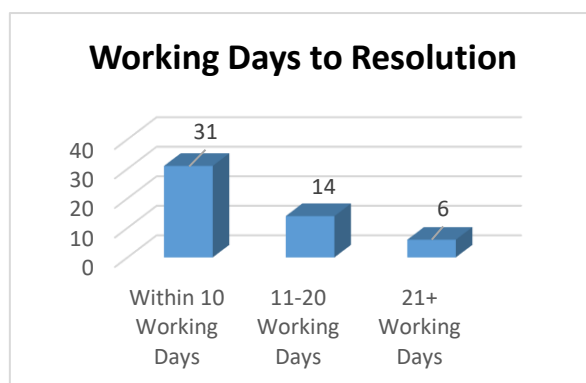
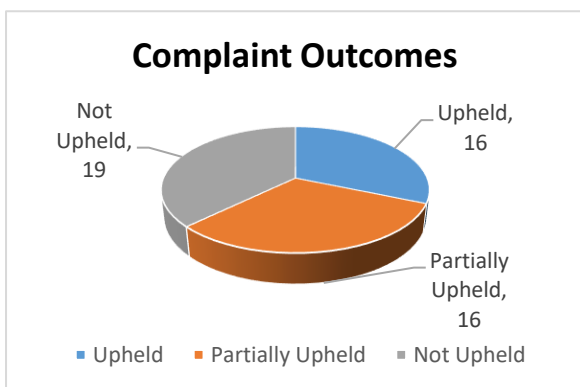
Doncaster Council have received in total 418 compliments, of which 108 were for teams across Adults Health and Wellbeing. Due to available options provided to customers to choose from when logging compliments on the Doncaster Council website we are unable to break these down into the service areas.

Learning Opportunities for Children and Young People (LOCYP)

LOCYP received 51 complaints in 2021/22. The main themes were School Admissions, 10 complaints, where parents were concerned that their child had not been allocated a place in their preferred school or that their child had not received formal education for a period due to delays in processing. Of the 10 School Admission complaints, which were recorded, 6 were either upheld or partially upheld. The number of school admissions complaints is similar to last year's total of 11, which indicates that the service has vastly improved since the 2019/20 year in which there were 29.



Across the Directorate, 61% of all customer complaints were responded to within the timescale of 10 working days. Complaints for this Directorate can be of a complex and sensitive nature and can be difficult to carry out a full investigation and respond within the 10 working days.



Escalated Complaints

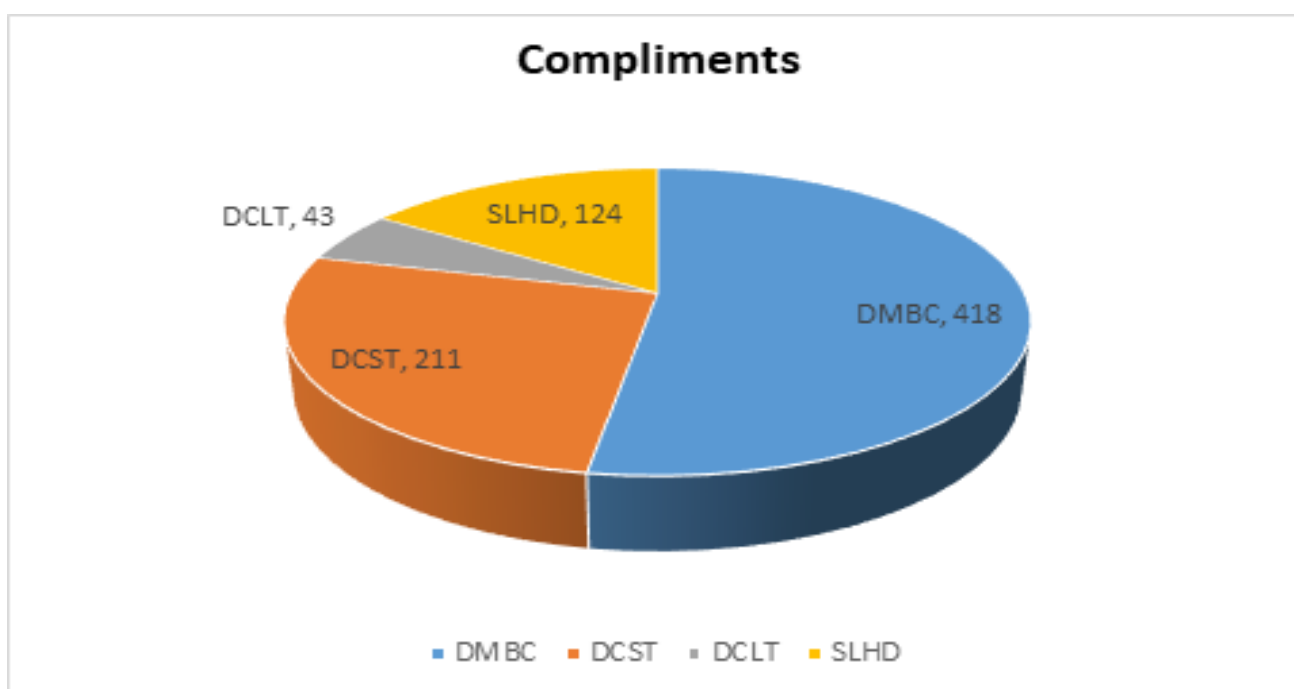
LOCYP received 10 Stage 2 escalated complaints throughout 2021/22. Of these 8 were either upheld or partially upheld following a further independent investigation.

We have also received 2 LGSCO applications. Both of these complaints were discontinued by the LGSCO.

Compliments

Doncaster Council have received in total 418 compliments, of which 5 were for teams across LOCYP. It is felt that this is because any compliments are more likely to be given to schools directly rather than through Doncaster Council. Within the coming year we will work with the schools to keep a central record of any formal compliments received across the borough.

8. Compliments Across all Organisations



Doncaster Council

"The lady I spoke to just now to help sort this out, XXX I think her name was. I would just like to say she was brilliant, her customer service skills perfect. Please can you let her team leader know after four attempts of getting this far. She was a joy to speak to positive and great communication."

"Just to say the team at council tax are fantastic. I am always in arrears slightly with my account and have to call to speak to council tax regularly to make new arrangements. These people are genuinely helpful and friendly and always sort whatever my issue is. Usually payment due to my low income. They always support me the best they can to make arrangements and give information on what's best to do to avoid any further action, etc. I always end the call feeling I've been dealt with fairly with understanding of my worries... Again fantastic team! Thank you"

"I have been on the Assisted Pull Out service for over a year since my husband was diagnosed with cancer. I just wanted to say that the bin men have been brilliant and never missed my bin. Thank you!"

"My Mum has asked me to email you to thank you for coming to see her. She is getting her perching stool tomorrow. Thank you for taking the time to check on her, it is much appreciated to know that there are people doing what you do"

"I'd like to say thank you to the bin collection crew of the XXX estate in XXX. As I don't drive, it's difficult for me to get to the tip so I rely on my bin collections to get rid of my household waste. I really appreciate your service each week which makes my life easier."

"Mr XXX rang in and asked to speak with XXX by name, he said he really wanted to pass his thanks on for all his help in a bulky he was dealing with for his mother in law. He said everyone he's spoke to has been brilliant but in particular had thanks to pass on to XXX"

"Hi I just wanted to say a big thank you for my Blue Badge and the way you helped me with the procedure. At 96 years, it's been a big help getting into and around our town."

"Today the highways team have been relaying the pavement on XXX crescent and they were superb, the team kept me informed of when I could leave my home and they did all the job inside a day"

"Customer called, she advised the young lad called XXX who cuts her grass is a very lovely lad and does a very good job. She advised when he has cut her gardens it makes her feel 100% better. She wanted to just pass this on for XXX."

"Really pleased to see weeds are dying off all over XXX after being sprayed, also grassed areas looking good after cutting, well done Team!"

"Many thanks for all the good times, laughs and friendships. Best wishes and good luck all"

"I would like to thank the employee in Building Control who I dealt with on 14 May 2021. I rang several times regarding building regulations and an application to convert a garage to a spare room. He gave me great reassurance and patience and I would like to thank him for his time and work on my behalf."

St Leger Homes of Doncaster

"A customer contacted us to thank XXX for the kind and considerate way he carried out an appointment at their home. The customer is severely disabled but said that XXX put them at ease, was really lovely and polite, and left the area clean after he finished his work. Well done!"

"A tenant got in touch to compliment XXX and XXX, saying, I would like to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for the help and support they gave me when I needed to move from my house into a bungalow, they were so very kind. I also would like to say thank you to St Leger Homes - I am so happy with my bungalow it has made such a difference to my life."

"A customer called us to compliment XXX for all of the hard work that he carries out at XXX House. The customer told us that: 'XXX is an unsung hero — he is very friendly and does a brilliant job at keeping the flats amazingly clean!' Well done!"

"A customer called up with a compliment for everyone who had helped to carry out a shower repair in his home. He said that XXX had kept in regular contact and when some members of staff had to call in sick due to Covid, she managed to quickly rearrange the appointment so that he only had to wait for one extra day. He said XXX, XXX and XXX were great, polite and professional, and the service was good."

"We received a compliment for XXX to say thank you for the level of service she provided when helping to house a vulnerable person. Due to issues the person had faced previously, there was a concern that there could be some difficulty in arranging suitable housing for them. However, thanks to XXXs help and guidance - and the work she did to prepare everything before the person arrived at the Civic Office - the whole process was carried out very smoothly, and the person was accommodated quickly."

Doncaster Children's Services Trust

"Worker A is nice she listened to me and made me smile, it's going to be ok now isn't it "

"I want to say thank you and I am in caring hands with my child protection plan" "thank you for being so kind and helpful"

"I really liked going in Worker B's car to see (family members). She's just funny. She is the best social worker ever, she listened to me. I really miss her."

Thank you for today, I really appreciate you doing that I have learned so much. Everyone was so professional and nice I learned so much from that and just like how to get your point across by just speaking so calm and relaxed."

"Just thought I would tell you how supportive Worker C has actually been ... They have helped me with anything and everything their advice has made me want to strive in life! They are always on the other side of that phone!! They always makes time for care leavers even if it's not possible! They fought my corner when I got my house Worker C is just a big credit to everyone and I wish them well for the future. Thank you"

"I can't thank you enough for all you have done for us. You are amazing and need to be proud of yourself. I couldn't have done any of this without your support, they say hero's wear capes but you have proven they don't, you have saved my life and I mean that. Keep being you because you change people lives."

".....It's quite hard to hear the children's voice written down. I never knew they felt this way. Your words were so kind about our strengths and what you liked about me. It's reassuring that a stranger can see that, I always fear people who don't know us will jump to the wrong conclusion about us. It's hard for me to feel like I have any strengths. I thank you for that"

".... I appreciate the support I have received from you and DCST, I'm very grateful and you have helped me changed mine and my kids life's for the better with the support and belief. Thank you"

"Thank you doesn't seem quite enough to cover everything you've done to help Child A over the last couple of years. We are truly grateful that you have always advocated for them, had them at the centre of everything you've done and always had their best interests at heart. We're Incredibly lucky. As for us, we still find ourselves unbelievably lucky that you decided to choose us to be Child A's forever family."

Doncaster Council Leisure trust

"We were able to access the Big Splash session yesterday. I wanted to email and say it was very well a managed and the staff there were all very welcoming, friendly, and professional. I also wanted to offer some feedback about a particular member of staff I spoke to on the booking line named XXX. She was very helpful while booking swim lessons for my children and she exceeded my expectations. I wanted to email to let you know as I feel she is doing a brilliant job. Thank you for the assistance you have provided. We are very much enjoying being able to access swimming with our 2 children after school and we have now decided to enrol them both onto the swim lessons."

"The stage 2 teacher - unfortunately I don't know her name as she's new to the class and the portal says 'casual teacher' was absolutely outstanding with our son. He has become really nervous and not joined in for the last few weeks. This week, he has done absolutely everything, all because she took the time to explain, get him comfortable and laughing! I would like a massive thank you to be passed on please! People are quick to complain these days but rarely send feedback from the positives but I feel this is very important!! Due to the lady taking the time to build his confidence and he is now looking forward to swimming again next week. We are hopeful she will be with them for the next few weeks, but please pass on a massive thank you from XXX and us! XXX has said she is the best teacher and made him feel really good about swimming."

"Just a thank you, played today and it's great to see the ground staff showing pride in the work they doing on the course. The course is so much better than under the last ground staff team. They only been working on the course for two weeks and the work they already put in is bringing the course back to the way it was years ago. So can you please thank them and tell them Crookhill Park members are talking about what a fantastic job they are doing"

"My son attends swimming lessons on Wednesday mornings accompanied by my husband with XXX and she is always great and I feel as though she's genuinely invested in XXX progress. My husband also had a first aid incident on Wednesday 23rd March, which XXX and XXX attended to brilliantly, thank you. When I accompanied as a member of staff alongside my class on Friday, XXX asked after my husband demonstrating her caring nature. Thank you Armthorpe and particularly XXX and XXX."

9. Unreasonable Behaviour Policy

In a small number of cases, we experience service users acting in an unreasonable way when accessing Council services. This could be when they have a complaint, pursuing their complaints in a way that can impede the investigation of their complaint, or taking up a disproportionate amount of Council time and resources.

There are currently 20 individuals on the Unreasonable Behaviour register and the way in which their behaviour is being managed differs vastly, ranging from complete barring of attending the One Stop Shop (due to acts of violence) or appointing a Single Point of Contact to try to streamline communication from an individual in an effort to help them.

The Customer Experience Officers have a tracking system to record all residents whose behaviour is deemed unreasonable and they are responsible for reviewing this decision within a reasonable timeframe, which is always set out to the resident from the onset. They are also responsible for keeping a central record of all letters/emails and other communication sent out or received from those residents relating to the policy.