



<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Governance and Audit and Standards Committee
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Overview of Portsmouth City Council complaints, including Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaints 2023/2024
<b>Report by:</b>	Corporate Customer Services Manager & Assistant Director of Corporate Services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Full Council decision:</b>	No

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## **1. Purpose of report**

To bring to the attention of the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee the Annual Review of Complaints by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) dated 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024, regarding complaints it has considered against Portsmouth City Council for the year 2023/24, and to provide an overall review of complaints.

## **2. Corporate complaint policy**

The current corporate complaint policy sets out a two-stage process for corporate complaints, including timescales the council aims to adhere to when responding to complaints in line with best practice guidance from the LGSCO.

The data in this report covers the period from April 2023 - March 2024.

The review of the corporate complaints policy has been undertaken and proposed changes have been recommended for approval by this committee in a separate report.



### 3. Corporate complaints resources

The council has one complaints officer, based in the corporate customer service team, which also includes the city helpdesk and cashiers. The complaints officer is supported in their role by senior customer service officers from the city helpdesk who help administer corporate complaints, in addition to their wider duties in the city helpdesk.

### 4. Corporate complaints overview

In 2023/24, the council managed 653 stage one and stage two complaints following the current corporate complaints policy (included in the background documents).

The below table shows complaint totals to provide a comparison with previous years.

Year	Number of complaints received
<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>653</b>
2022/2023	538
2021/2022	686
2020/2021	384
2019/2020	443
2018/2019	531

Corporate complaints exclude complaints relating to Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Social Care (CSC), which are managed in line with separate policies and referenced in section 8 (below).

#### 4.1. Stage one complaints

There were 557 stage one complaints in 2023/24

Of those 557 stage one complaints, 74% of these were managed within the 15-working day timescale for response set out in the policy.

#### 4.2. Stage two complaints

In 2023/24, 96 complaints were taken to stage two of the process.

Of the 96 complaints, 68% were managed in line with the 20-working day timescale for response.

## 5. Complaint trends

This complaints review covers the period from April 2023 to March 2024.

### 5.1. Overall complaint trends

There were 557 stage one complaints in 2023/24, compared with 477 stage one complaints in 2022/23 which is a 17% increase.

### 5.2. Trends by directorate

As in previous years and as would be expected, the services with the highest numbers of complaints are those with the highest levels of front-line customer engagement.

The increase in the number complaints at both stage one and stage two is reflected across several Directorates.

**Table two: complaints by stages, by directorate 2023/24**

Directorate	Stage one	Stage two	2023/24 total	YOY difference
Children, Families and Education	42	11	53	+152.38%
Corporate Services	17	3	20	-5%
Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services	33	4	37	-20%
Finance, Revenues and Benefits	51	1	52	+33%
Housing, Neighbourhoods and Building Services	322	55	377	+14%
Port	2	0	2	+200%
Public Health	0	0	0	n/a
Economy, Transport and Planning	90	22	112	+40%
Total	557	96	653	+21%

As the table illustrates, there was a rise in complaints for Children, Families and Education. This was related to significant delays in the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The



issues around the EHCP process are recognised and a recovery plan has been created by the department to address issues going forwards.

There were also several complaints regarding the introduction of the new Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licencing scheme and the experience of using the new portal for applications. In response to the issues identified, a dedicated team was set up to support landlords to complete applications, including running drop-in sessions in December 2023.

Complaints relating to council tax and housing benefit rose by 33% to 52, with a third of complaints during this period being linked to timeliness of responses to customers. The level of complaints remains small in comparison to the case load for council tax and housing benefit, with the increase linked in part to the challenges associated with recovering local taxes in the context of the cost of living crisis, as well as the on-going issues the service faces in responding to peaks in demand created by the legal process of reminders and summons that are required to recover unpaid council tax. The service is working to address issues around timeliness in responding to customers by improving online options, so more staff are available to support customers who are not able to self-serve.

There was also a 40% increase in complaints for the Economy, Transport and Planning directorate. These included complaints about delays in the planning process, which are being addressed by improvements to the planning service overall, as well as delays in processing blue badge applications, which were related to staff shortages which have been addressed by increasing staff capacity.

### **5.3. Stage two complaint trends**

The overall number of stage two complaints increased in 2023/24, with 96 complaints escalated to stage two of the process, which represents 14.7% of complaints. In comparison, 11.3% of complaints were escalated to stage two complaints the previous year.

The main reason for complaints to be escalated to stage two of the complaints process is because the investigation and response at stage one is not sufficiently robust in addressing all elements of the original complaint. The complaints team continues to work with Directorates to ensure complaint responses are sufficiently robust and provides guidance for managers to support them in responding to complaints.

The corporate complaints team complete a quality check of stage two responses before being sent to the complainant to ensure all points are responded to, and any remedies documented to assist in reducing the number of upheld complaints from the ombudsman.

#### **5.4. Policy timeline trends**

The timescales to response to a complaint are:

- Stage one - 15 working days
- Stage two - 20 working days

In 2023/24, 74% of overall complaint responses adhered to policy timelines. The break down is 75% of stage one and 68% of stage two.

Corporate complaints continue to work with Directorates to improve adherence to timescales. However, there are various legitimate reasons for delays, including officer capacity to investigate complaints and provide responses, particularly where complaints are very complex, as well as time taken to gather evidence. Where the Council is unable to meet policy timelines, the customer is kept informed.

#### **5.5. Impact of policy changes on future complaint trends**

In April 2024, a change was made to the corporate complaint policy around complaints that relate to the council's role as a landlord in order to ensure compliance with the Social Housing Regulation Act. Complaints that relate to the council's role as a landlord are now managed in line with the Local Authority Housing Landlord Complaint Policy and by a team within Housing Neighbourhood and Building Services rather than by the central complaint function. Complaint performance in relation to Landlord Complaints will be reported as a separate section in future reports.

### **6. Compliments**

The complaints process also allows for suggestions and compliments. In 2023/24, the council received 108 compliments through corporate complaints, compared with 54 in 2022/23 - a 100% increase with the previous year.

Housing, Neighbourhoods and Building Services received the most compliments at 53, followed by Economy, Planning and Transport with 15.

### **7. ASC and CSC complaints and compliments**

Complaints for Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Social Care (CSC) are managed by a dedicated social care complaint team, in line with specific social care complaint policies.



### **7.1. ASC complaints and compliments**

In 2023/24, ASC received 59 statutory complaints, a 20% decrease on the 74 received in 2022/23. In addition to statutory complaints, there were 31 customer contacts, 14 possible complaints and 7 contacts that were responded to under different procedures. They also received 50 enquiries from MPs or councillors.

ASC received 51 compliments which is a 318% increase from the previous financial year.

### **7.2. CSC complaints and compliments**

In 2023/24, CSC received 35 statutory complaints, 71 non-statutory complaints: a decrease on the 34 statutory and 71 non-statutory complaints received in 2022/23.

CSC received 19 compliments compared to 15 received in the previous financial year.

## **8. LGSCO complaint review information**

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) investigates complaints about all local authorities and social care providers in England. Every year it publishes the information it sends to councils to help with transparency and improve local services for residents.

While issuing the figures, the LGSCO is keen to point out that a high number of complaints do not necessarily mean a council is performing poorly. It may indicate an authority that welcomes and encourages feedback, through a transparent system which signposts people appropriately when its own processes have been exhausted.

### **8.1. Complaints and enquiries about Portsmouth City Council**

The LGSCO received 46 complaints and enquiries about PCC in 2022/23 compared with 46 in 2022/23. During the same period, 11 decisions were made about complaints referred to the ombudsman about PCC, compared with 13 decisions in 2022/23.

**Table five: complaints and enquiries to the LGSCO about Portsmouth City Council**

Directorate	Number of complaints received						
	2023/2024	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Adult Social care	11	8	5	7	5	9	7
Benefits and Tax	3	1	2	2	1	2	4
Corporate and Other Service	1	4	2	5	5	4	3
Education and Children's Services	11	11	12	7	8	10	13
Environmental Services	4	3	5	0	3	3	4
Highways and Transport	3	4	1	1	6	8	4
Housing	6	9	4	8	5	7	7
Planning and Development	6	6	5	3	1	2	4
Other	1	0	2	1	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	46	38	34	35	45	46

## **8.2. Decisions made about complaints relating to Portsmouth City Council by the LGSCO**

The LGSCO investigated 11 cases and upheld 91%, this compares to an average of 79% of cases upheld in similar authorities (as defined by the LGSCO). The ombudsman was satisfied PCC had successfully implemented its recommendations in 100% of cases, compared with recommendations successfully implemented in 100% of cases in similar authorities. The LGSCO found the council had not provided a satisfactory remedy in any of the ten upheld cases before the complaint reached the ombudsman: this compares to the average for similar authorities where 13% of upheld complaints have already been satisfactorily remedied prior to LGSCO intervention.

The council's responses at stage two to the upheld LGSCO complaints have been reviewed to better understand why remedies were not offered in advance of the LGSCO's recommendations. In the ten cases upheld by the LGSCO, our stage two investigations concluded the council had acted appropriately, which is why early remedies were not offered. In the light of the LGSCO investigations, the council has looked again at its responses, applied all the recommended remedies, and looked at additional learning from the upheld complaints. Summaries can be found in section 10.

**Table six: decisions made by the LGSCO about complaints relating to Portsmouth City Council**

	2023/2024	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Upheld	10	6	4	2	6	8	9
Not Upheld	1	7	8	2	5	8	3
Advice given	4	2	2	4	0	2	5
Closed after initial enquiries	17	15	17	10	15	13	13
Incomplete/Invalid	2	0	4	1	3	0	1
Referred for local resolution	12	15	11	8	11	12	15
Total	45	45	46	27	40	43	46

### 8.3. LGSCO complaints: comparisons to other local authorities

The LGSCO now focuses on the following comparison data for local authorities: the number of detailed investigations and the number of complaints upheld, the percentage of cases where the ombudsman's recommendations were successfully implemented, and the percentage of cases where the local authority had implemented a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the ombudsman.

The below table provides data for Portsmouth City Council alongside data from comparable local authorities in Southampton, Luton and Brighton.

**Table seven: LGSCO complaints data for Portsmouth City Council in comparison to other local authorities**

	Portsmouth	Brighton and Hove	Luton	Southampton
Number of complaints investigated	11	26	13	8
Number of complaints upheld	10	19	9	7
% cases where LGSCO recommendations implemented	100%	100%	100%	100%



	<b>Portsmouth</b>	<b>Brighton and Hove</b>	<b>Luton</b>	<b>Southampton</b>
% of upheld cases where satisfactory remedy implemented before the complaint reached LGSCO	<b>0%</b>	16%	33%	14%

## 9. Upheld complaints

The following section includes a summary of the complaints upheld by the LGSCO.

### 9.1. Children's care services - Adoption

LGSCO Complaint number 22 017 148

Link: [22 017 148 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date: 10<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Summary:** Miss X complained we had failed to update our systems with her current address and sent correspondence informing her she needed to return overpayments to her previous address. She also complained that we included her adopted child's details in the correspondence. She said she has been caused distress and inconvenience by our actions. The LGSCO will not investigate Miss X's complaint that we sent overpayments and correspondence to her previous address. This is because we have accepted fault and agreed to resolve the complaint early by providing a proportionate remedy for the injustice caused to Miss X and make a proportionate financial payment to remedy the injustice Miss X experienced. Further investigation is not likely to result in a different outcome.

No recommendations were provided as we agreed to resolve the complaint early by providing a proportionate remedy for the injustice caused to Miss X.

### 9.2. Education - Special Education Needs

LGSCO Complaint number: 22 010 447

Link: [22 010 447 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Summary:** Mr W complained we failed to discharge our duties with respect to the education of his son, M. Mr W says that, as a consequence of this, M has received very little secondary education. The LGSCO found we were at fault, because we did not give



due consideration to our enforcement powers when dealing with a child who was refusing to attend school. We have agreed to address this fault by providing guidance to officers on the importance of clear decision-making and the robust implementation of our powers, where appropriate. The LGSCO found we were also at fault for a delay in making a formal decision to amend the child's Education, Health and Care Plan, but this did not cause an injustice. The LGSCO decided we were not at fault for failing to arrange mediation, as this was not our responsibility.

The Council carried out the following recommendations from LGSCO:

- Within one month of the date of the final decision, we circulated guidance to all relevant staff, explaining the fault identified in this case.

The guidance highlighted:

- the importance of making a timely decision about which approach to take when a child is absent from school
- the importance of clearly recording this decision and the reason for it; and
- if we consider the absence should not engage our section 19 duties, the importance of then properly considering and implementing our powers of enforcement

The guidance also drew officers' attention to the LGSCO's recent focus report on this topic and asked officers to read and consider it, particularly the six recommendations the report makes.

**Learnings:** Following the LGSCO's recommendations, the SEND service provided relevant colleagues with a detailed briefing document, which included the following:

- It is important that in all cases where a child is absent from school that timely decisions are made and continuously reviewed. Decision making points are likely to come through any individual case work, calls with the Link Co-ordinators, Pupil absence review processes and Severely Absent meetings.
- Where it is considered likely, or is known, that a child will be absent for 15 days or more, it is crucial to consider whether the Council's [section 19 duties](#) are invoked and education other than at school should be implemented. This should be considered with particular focus on the [LGO's report](#) and the recommendations from it, which are:
  - Consider the individual circumstances of each case and be aware that the council may need to act whatever the reason for absence (except for the minor issues schools deal with on a day to-day basis) and even when a child is on a school roll.
  - Consult all the professionals involved in a child's education and welfare, and take account of the evidence when making decisions.

- Choose (based on all the evidence) whether to require attendance at school or provide the child with suitable alternative education.
- Keep all cases of part-time education under review with a view to increasing it if a child's capacity to learn increases.
- Work with parents and schools to draw up plans to reintegrate children to mainstream education as soon as possible, reviewing and amending plans as necessary.
- Put the chosen action into practice without delay to ensure the child is back in education as soon as possible.
- Where councils arrange for schools or other bodies to carry out their functions on their behalf, the council remains responsible. Therefore, retain oversight and control to ensure your duties are properly fulfilled.

### **9.3. Adult Care Services - Residential Care**

LGSCO Complaint number: 22 013 279

Link: [22 013 279 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Summary:** Mrs X complained we were at fault in the way staff at one of our care homes cared for her mother Mrs Y due to a delay in seeking medical assistance causing her to be unwell. The LGSCO found fault as the care documentation was not as robust as it could have been causing uncertainty for Mrs X over the care Mrs Y received. The LGSCO recommended a suitable remedy and completed their investigation.

The Council carried out the following recommendations from LGSCO within a month of the final decision:

- Apologised to Mrs X for the uncertainty caused to her and the family by the care home's documentation failing to contain a full explanation for decisions and the occasional unclear wording.
- Explained the action it has taken to improve the care home's care documentation noted as part of learning from the complaint.

**Learnings:** In response to the complaint, the following has also been implemented:

- Review of the way information is recorded with relevant staff, including use of descriptive wording and documenting reasons for decisions
- Review of recording processes, including factual recordings and evidence-based judgement decisions
- Presentation and discussion for care staff on the 'Ombudsman Guide for Care Providers on Good Record Keeping'
- Discussions with individual care staff on the importance of reporting information to the management team if concerns are raised by others



The following additional improvements have also been made by Adult Social Care since the complaint was upheld:

- Nourish electronic system was implemented in July 2023 and will support care homes to:
  - Recognise when a client may be deteriorating or at risk of physical deterioration
  - Act appropriately according to the clients care plan to protect and manage the client
  - Obtain a complete set of physical observations to inform escalation and conversations with health professionals
  - Speak with the most appropriate health professional to support their professional decision making
  - Provide a concise history to health professionals to support their professional decision making
- A BEACH (bedside emergency assessment course for healthcare) champion role has been put place in the care home, to promote and foster senior staff knowledge and confidence in using a structured and prioritised approach in the initial recognition, assessment, care, escalation and handover of a client who is deteriorating.
- Assistant unit managers will be completing training for Analysis in Recording in Social Care in 2023, with further courses for team leaders also planned.

#### **9.4. Education - Alternative provision**

LGSCO Complaint number: 22 008 214

Link: [22 008 214 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023

**Summary:** Mrs X complained we failed to arrange suitable educational provision for her son, C, when he became unable to attend school due to health reasons. She complains we incorrectly told her that it needed an educational psychologist report to consider an alternative placement for C. The LGSCO have upheld Mrs X's complaint because there was fault. C missed out on education for five months. To remedy this, we agreed to apologise, make Mrs X several payments, including for C's missed education and the cost of the report, and make several service improvements.

The Council agreed to carry out the following recommendations from LGSCO within four weeks of the final decision, and has:

- Apologised in writing to Mrs X for the fault causing injustice.
- Made Mrs X a payment of £300 for the significant stress and distress caused by the fault identified.



- Considered Mrs X's invoice/receipt for the private educational psychologist assessment and reimbursed the cost in full.
- Made Mrs X a payment of £500 for each school month between 24 January and end of the summer term 2022 that we failed to arrange alternative provision for C, meaning he missed out on education, covering five school months (after deducting holidays), which is to be used for C's educational benefit.

Within three months of the final decision, we also agreed to make the following service improvements and we have:

- Reviewed our policies and procedures to ensure we retain oversight and responsibility for our duties to children unable to attend school, including when it is clear from contact with the school that a child has been or is likely to be absent from school for 15 days, including the Ombudsman's six recommendations on how we expect councils to fulfil their responsibilities to provide education for children who, for whatever reason, do not attend school full-time.
- Circulated a reminder to staff that the duty to arrange section 19 alternative provision lies with the Council, not schools. This reminder included that, for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, the statutory guidance that says that if specific medical evidence, such as that provided by a medical consultant, is not quickly available, we should "consider liaising with other medical professionals, such as the child's GP, and consider looking at other evidence to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child". Moving forwards, this expectation will be clearly set out in policies and procedures; and senior members of staff in teams involved in arranging alternative provision will review and share identified learning with their teams.

**Learnings:** In addition, following the upheld complaint, the above service improvements have also been shared with colleagues in the Attendance team. Processes have been updated to ensure that where swift investigation, assessment and evidence do not lead to the conclusion that the case should be brought to Inclusion Support Panel to provide alternative provision, or the provision is not provided by school, then the case should be followed up for formal action around non-attendance and enforcement. Changes are also being made to ensure the Council tracks schools decision making and timeliness of actions in relation to this through our established processes.

## **9.5. Children's care services - Fostering**

LGSCO Complaint number: 23 001 222

Link: [23 001 222 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023



**Summary:** Mrs D complained we wrongly advised her in relation to becoming a level three foster carer. She says she has missed out financially because of the poor advice. The LGSCO find we was at fault for giving Mrs D the wrong advice and the remedy from our investigation into Mrs D's complaint does not adequately remedy her injustice. We agreed to the Ombudsman's increased recommendation to reflect Mrs D's injustice.

To address the injustice, the council agreed pay Mrs D £1,000 to reflect her uncertainty, distress and time and trouble.

**Learnings:** In response to the upheld complaint, the Council made several service improvements including:

- Using induction and supervision to ensure fostering service team members are clear in their understanding and communication around skills levels progression
- Developing a clear progression pathway for foster carers to ensure carers are informed during the prospective carer assessment and onwards from approval regarding progressing to skills levels
- Making sure skills levels are discussed in carers' supervisions and Household Reviews and a plan for progression is included as a recommendation
- Making sure changes around training pathways are clearly communicated to all foster carers in their supervisions, at Foster Carer Liaison meetings, and in carers Newsflash communications

## 9.6. Adult Care Services - Charging

LGSCO Complaint number: 23 003 798

Link: [23 003 798 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Summary:** Mr X complained that we placed his mother in a nursing home without giving her, or her family, opportunity to object. Mr X complained that we asked for payment of care home fees for this placement. Mr X also complained that we sent his mother for rehabilitation and respite care when we knew she would not be able to walk or live independently again. The LGSCO found fault in our delay in referring Mr X's mother to a physiotherapist. The LGSCO do not consider this fault caused a significant personal injustice to either Mr X or his mother.

No recommendations were provided.

## 9.7. Planning - Planning applications

LGSCO Complaint number: 22 016 183

Link: [22 016 183 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)



Decision Date 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**Summary:** Mr X complained about the way we decided a planning application for a neighbouring property, and his complaints about this matter. The LGSCO found no evidence of fault in the way the Council considered the application that caused injustice to Mr X and found no fault in how we considered Mr X's complaints.

We exceed the statutory deadlines for deciding Mr X's neighbour's planning application. This is fault. However, the LGSCO did not consider the delay caused Mr X an injustice as he was unaware of the application and so was not caused uncertainty because of the delay.

No recommendations were offered.

**Learnings:** The Council has recognised there have been issues adhering to statutory deadlines for deciding planning applications and has already taken steps to improve processes.

## 9.8. Education - Special Education Needs

LGSCO Complaint number: 23 005 143

Link: [23 005 143 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Summary:** The LGSCO found we were at fault because of a delay in completing a child's Education, Health and Care needs assessment. This delay caused the complainant frustration, for which we agreed to formally apologise, but had no other significant impact. We also provided evidence to show we are taking positive action to improve the timeliness of its service, and so LGSCO made no recommendations for any other improvement.

The Council agreed to carry out the recommendation from the LGSCO within one month of the final decision and has written a formal letter of apology to Miss F, acknowledging the fault and its impact on her.

**Learnings:** The Council has acknowledged the issues around delays in completing Education Health and Care needs assessments and is implementing a recovery plan to improve the service.

## 9.9. Education - Alternative provision

LGSCO Complaint number: 23 007 556





Link: [23 007 556 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Decision Date 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

**Summary:** Ms X complained that we failed to provide education to her child, Y, since July 2022. Ms X also complained that we failed to provide her child with special education provision detailed in their Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). The LGSCO found fault in that we failed to provide suitable alternative provision of education for Ms X's child for two full terms. They also found fault in that we delayed production of Ms X's child EHC Plan and failed to put in place the provision detailed in the EHCP for seven months. We agreed to apologise to Ms X and her child and pay Ms X £200 for the frustration and uncertainty the delays have caused. We also agreed to pay Ms X £4,000 for her child's missed education.

The Council agreed to carry out the recommendations from LGSCO within one month of the decision, and has:

- Provided an apology to Mrs X, and a separate apology to Y
- Paid Ms X £200 for the frustration and uncertainty caused by the delays in completing Y's EHC Needs Assessment.
- Paid Ms X £4,000 to address our failure to provide suitable alternative provision of education for Y and failing to provide the SEN support detailed in Y's EHC Plan for two terms. Ms X may use this as she sees fit for Y's educational needs.

**Learnings:** The Council has acknowledged the issues around delays in completing Education Health and Care needs assessments and is implementing a recovery plan to improve the service.

## 10. Summary

The overall number of complaints handled by the council increased in 2023/24, largely because of issues relating to specific services and specific challenges that have already been recognised and have been or are being addressed.

The complaints team continues to support directorates in meeting timescales by providing reminders around deadlines but the ability of services to respond is affected by several factors including availability of staff and the complexity of complaints. Where there are delays in responses, customers are kept informed.

While the number of complaints being escalated to stage two of the process has increased slightly, the percentage remains low at under 18%. This indicates the work done to ensure complaint responses at stage one are comprehensive has been successful, as the majority of complaints (around 82%) are not escalated by our customers.





Portsmouth City Council continues to compare well to other similar local authorities in relation to its performance around LGSCO complaints. The number of complaints both investigated and upheld by the LGSCO has remained relatively stable following changes to the corporate complaints policy, which suggests the two stage process is sufficiently robust.

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Signed by: **Charlotte Smith**

**Appendices:** Nil

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Portsmouth City Council: Corporate Complaints Policy	<a href="#">Corporate complaints policy - Portsmouth City Council</a>
Southampton City Council LGSCO complaints data	<a href="https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/southampton-city-council/statistics">https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/southampton-city-council/statistics</a>
Luton Borough Council LGSCO complaints data	<a href="https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/luton-borough-council/statistics">https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/luton-borough-council/statistics</a>
Brighton and Hove City Council LGSCO complaints data	<a href="https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/brighton-hove-city-council/statistics">https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/brighton-hove-city-council/statistics</a>

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

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Signed by: