

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Date and Time :- Wednesday, 7 November 2018 at 11.00 a.m.
Venue:- Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
Membership:- Councillors Brookes, Cowles, Cusworth, Evans, Keenan, Mallinder, Napper, Sansome, Short, Steele (Chair) Walsh and Wyatt.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Democratic Services Officer of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

3. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press

To receive questions from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

4. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

For Discussion/Decision:-

5. Request for Review of Petition Response - Return of Publication (Pages 1 - 16)

To consider a request to review a response to a petition.

- 6. Children's Services Financial Monitoring and Review 2018/19 (Pages 17 - 40)**
Cabinet Portfolio: Children's Services and Neighbourhood Working
Strategic Directorate: Children and Young People's Services
- 7. Annual Complaints Report (Pages 41 - 98)**
Cabinet Portfolio: Corporate Services and Finance
Strategic Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive's Office

For Information/Monitoring:-

8. Youth Cabinet/Young People's Issues

To receive an update on the activities of the Youth Cabinet and other Young People's Issues.

9. Work in Progress - Select Commissions

To receive updates from the Chairs of the Select Commission on work undertaken and planned for the future.

10. Call-in Issues


To consider any issues referred for call-in from the Cabinet meeting held on 22 October 2018.

11. Urgent Business

To determine any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

12. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held on Wednesday 14 November 2018 at 11.00 a.m. at Rotherham Town Hall.



SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

Summary Sheet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 7 November 2018

Report Title

Request for Review of Response to Petition – Return of Publication

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

James McLaughlin, Head of Democratic Services
01709 822477 or james.mclaughlin@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

A request has been received for Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to review the response provided by the Council to a petition calling for the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services (or the Chief Executive) in Rotherham Borough Council (RMBC) to issue a public statement giving the reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication 'Voices of Despair Voices of Hope'.

Under the petition scheme, Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will determine the request for the review and may take various actions depending on the information provided to it. This report is submitted to enable the Board to discharge its responsibilities in accordance with the scheme.

Recommendations

1. That consideration be given to the request to review the Council's response to the petition.
2. That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board write to the lead petitioner to outline the outcome of the board's consideration.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A Petition Scheme

- Appendix B Response to Lead Petitioner
- Appendix C Request for review by Lead Petitioner
- Appendix D Transcript – Council (23 May 2018) – Presentation of Petition
- Appendix E Rotherham support services for people affected by child sexual exploitation leaflet
- Appendix F Collecting Public Information leaflets

Background Papers

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 23 May 2018

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Request for Review of Response to Petition – Return of Publication

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That consideration be given to the request to review the Council's response to the petition.
- 1.2 That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board write to the lead petitioner to outline the outcome of the board's consideration.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Petition Scheme was amended in May 2017 to provide the public with a clear route to call for action on particular issues of concern and to register support or opposition in respect of any proposal. The current Petition Scheme is appended to this report (Appendix A).
- 2.2 Under the petition scheme, a lead petitioner may request a review of the Council's response by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. In doing so, the lead petitioner must set out in writing why the Council's response is considered to be inadequate.
- 2.3 On 23 May 2018, the Council received a petition containing 40 signatures calling on the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services to issue a statement regarding the return of 1,400 copies of a publication. As the petition had more than 20 signatures, the lead petitioner addressed the Council meeting and, in accordance with the scheme, the petition was referred to the relevant officer for response.
- 2.4 On 26 June 2018, a response was sent by the then Acting Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services to the lead petitioner. A copy of the response is attached as Appendix B.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The lead petitioner has submitted a request for Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to review the response received to the petition. A copy of the request is attached as Appendix C. The lead petitioner has included a number of supplementary documents to support the request for a review and these are included as Appendices D to F.
- 3.2 The lead petitioner has been invited to attend the Board and may make verbal representations for up to five minutes. The Board then has the opportunity to seek further information from the lead petitioner through questions.
- 3.3 In considering the request to review the response to the petition, Members may seek and have regard to additional information to inform the review.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 Should the Board determine that the petition has not been dealt with adequately it may instigate an investigation and make recommendations to the relevant officer or the Council's Cabinet.
- 4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board may also decide that the authority's response to the petition should be discussed at a meeting of the Council.
- 4.3 Once the review request has been considered the lead petitioner will be informed of the result in writing by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board within 10 working days of the meeting.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is responsible for considering the request to review the petition and communicating the outcome of the review within ten working days to the lead petitioner.
- 5.2 If Members determine that the request is valid and requires further investigation then Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will provide direction on whether it requires further consideration by an officer, the Cabinet or whether the response should be considered by the Council. The petition scheme does not provide a timescale for this to be completed, but where consideration is required by either Cabinet or Council this will be listed on the agenda for the next available meeting.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial or procurement implications associated with this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly associated with this report.

8. Human Resources Implications

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications directly associated with this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults directly associated with this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 10.1 There are no equalities or human rights implications associated with this report.

11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

11.1 There are no implications for partners or other directorates arising directly from this report.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 There are no identified risks associated with this report.

Report Author: *James McLaughlin, Head of Democratic Services*
 01709 822477 or james.mclaughlin@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-
<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

Guidelines for submitting a petition

1.1 Petitions to the Council must include:

- A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the Council to take.
- The subject matter of the petition must relate to a function of the Council, or its partner authorities if the petition relates to an improvement in the economic, social or environmental well being of the District which a partner authority could contribute to. Petitions may also relate to matters which are sub-regional and cross-authority.
- The petition should contain the name, address and signature of at least 20 people who either are resident, work or study in the borough of Rotherham. This includes under 18 year olds.

1.2 Petitions should be accompanied by the contact details of the lead petitioner, including an address and/or telephone/email details. This is the person the Council will contact to explain the process for considering petitions. The contact details of the lead petitioner or any of the petitioners will not be published by the Council. If the petition does not identify a lead petitioner, we will contact signatories to the petition to agree who should act as the lead petitioner.

1.3 If the petition does not follow the guidelines set out above a letter will be sent to the lead petitioner explaining that the guidelines have not been met and that the petition has been forwarded to the appropriate Strategic Director for consideration.

2. How the petition will be dealt with

2.1 The petition will normally be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of receipt although there may be a delay if it is not clear from the petition who the lead petitioner is.

2.2 The lead petitioner will need to confirm how he/she would prefer the petition to be dealt with and assistance will be provided by Democratic Services to help the lead petitioner decide which is the most appropriate route. Petitions will be progressed in one of the following ways:

Officer (relevant Strategic Director)

On receipt the petition will be forwarded to the relevant Strategic Director who has responsibility for the subject matter of the petition. The Strategic Director will nominate a Named Senior Officer to deal with the petition and the Named Senior Officer will contact the lead petitioner within 3 weeks to inform them of what action will be taken on the petition. As a lead petitioner you will be informed within the 3 week period if action has already been taken on the matter before the petition was received, or is in the process of being taken.

The Named Senior Officer will consult with the councillor who is the Member of the Cabinet holding the relevant portfolio for the service area, and if the

subject matter of the petition is concerned with a particular locality, the ward councillors, to determine the action to be taken. The lead petitioner will be notified of the outcome in writing. However, it may be appropriate for the Named Senior Officer to take a report to a meeting of the Cabinet or another council committee. The lead petitioner and local ward councillors will be informed of the date of the meeting with an invitation to attend. After the meeting the Named Senior Officer will confirm the outcome to the lead petitioner, local ward councillors and any other relevant Member in writing within 10 working days.

Meetings of Full Council

Petitions can be presented to a meeting of Council. All 63 of the Councillors on the Metropolitan Borough Council of Rotherham are Members of Council, so attending one of these meetings will provide the opportunity for the views in the petition to reach all Councillors.

The ordinary meetings of Council are held approximately every six weeks, and as a limit of 5 petitions are considered at each meeting, the lead petitioner should contact Democratic Services at the earliest opportunity. If there are more than 5 petitions then it will be necessary to consider the petitions that were received latest at the next meeting. At the Council meeting, a representative of the petitioners may speak on the subject matter of the petition for 5 minutes after presenting their petition to the Mayor. Council will not debate the petition but can refer the petition to the appropriate committee, panel or officer for response. Further details can be obtained by contacting Democratic Services on 01709 822054 or emailing petitions@rotherham.gov.uk.

Full Council debates

If a petition contains more than 2,000 signatures it will be debated at a meeting of Council. Normally the petition will be considered at the next ordinary meeting of the Council, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will then take place at the following meeting. A representative of the petitioners will be given 5 minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes. The Council will then decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting. They may decide to take the action the petition requests, not to take the action requested for the reasons put forward in the debate, or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee. Where the issue is one on which the Council's Cabinet is required to make the final decision, the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will be sent written confirmation of this decision within 10 working days. This confirmation will also be published on the Council's website.

Calling an Officer to account

A petition may ask for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting about a service for which the officer is responsible as part of their job. For example, the petition may ask a senior council officer to explain progress

on an issue or to explain the advice given to elected members to enable them to make a particular decision.

If the petition contains at least 600 signatures, then the relevant senior officer will give evidence at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. A relevant senior officer would be the Chief Executive or a Strategic Director or Assistant Director. The officer called to give evidence may be supported by other officers who have been involved in the matter. If the officer named in the petition is unavailable – for instance if the named officer has changed jobs – the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board may need to decide to call another senior officer. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board may also decide to call a relevant councillor to attend the meeting such as the member of the Cabinet who holds the portfolio for the service mentioned in the petition.

A report will be presented to a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board setting out the background to the matter. The lead petitioner will be able to attend the meeting to present the petition for up to 5 minutes. At the meeting the senior officer will be questioned by the Committee members. If the public is to be excluded during any part of the meeting under the provisions of Part 5A of the Local Government Act 1972 this will be set out in the attendance notification to the lead petitioner. The Committee will then make recommendations in accordance with the Council's delegation scheme. It may be necessary for the Committee to defer making the recommendations to a future meeting, for instance, if further information is requested. When the Committee has finalised its recommendations written notification will be sent to the lead petitioner within 10 working days and be published on the Council's website

3. Matters excluded from the Petitions Scheme

3.1 A petition cannot be dealt with through this scheme if it addresses or includes:

- a planning or licensing application for which other arrangements are in place.
- Matters subject to prescribed statutory requirements, e.g. an elected mayor.
- Matters where there is already an existing right of appeal, such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates, where other procedures apply.
- Repetitive or vexatious correspondence
- Potentially libellous, false or defamatory statements.
- Material which is commercially sensitive
- Material generated by local political parties
- The names of individuals in relation to criminal accusations or information which easily identifies an individual
- Statements which contravene equalities and anti-discrimination legislation

- Matters subject to appeal processes or legal actions, e.g. enforcement action.
 - Refers to a particular official of a public body
 - Material which is vexatious, abusive or is deemed otherwise inappropriate
- 3.2 If the petition contains any of the above the lead petitioner will be informed of the reason for not accepting the petition in writing.
- 3.3 If the petition is about a matter over which the Council has no direct control your petition will be forwarded to the relevant organisation. However, if the petition relates to a partner organisation the Council will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. The Council works with a large number of local partners and where possible will work with these partners to respond to your petition. The lead petitioner will be informed of any action the Council has taken to progress the petition.

Please consult with Democratic Services if clarification is required.

4. The Council's response to petitions

- 4.1 The Council's response to a petition will depend upon what the petition is asking for and which of the options is taken for dealing with the petition, but the response will include one or more of the following:
- Writing to the lead petitioner and relevant Ward Councillors setting out the Council's views about the request in the petition
 - Taking the action requested in the petition
 - Commissioning research on the matter
 - Holding a consultation
 - Holding a meeting with petitioners
 - Holding a public meeting
 - Undertaking a referendum in a locality
 - An inquiry
 - Referring the petition for consideration by the Cabinet or relevant Scrutiny Committee (committees responsible for scrutinising the work of the Council and holding the decision makers to account)
 - Discussing the petition with other relevant organisations
 - Publish notification on the Council's website on how the petition is being dealt with.

5. Review

- 5.1 If the lead petitioner feels that the Council has not dealt with the petition properly, the lead petitioner has the right to make a request to the Assistant Director of Legal Services that the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Board review the steps that the Council has taken in response to the petition. The lead petitioner will be asked to provide a short explanation

in writing of the reasons why the Council's response is not considered to be adequate.

- 5.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will endeavour to consider the request at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible, and consideration will take place at the following meeting. The lead petitioner will be invited to attend the Committee and make verbal representations for up to 5 minutes. Should the Committee determine that the petition has not been dealt with adequately it may instigate an investigation and make recommendations to the relevant officer or the Council's Cabinet.
- 5.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board may also decide that the authority's response to the petition should be discussed at a meeting of the Council.
- 5.4 Once the appeal has been considered the lead petitioner will be informed of the result within 10 working days.

6. E-petitions

- 6.1 The council welcomes petitions which are created and submitted through our website. E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper petitions as outlined above. The petition organiser will need to provide us with their name and email address. You will also need to decide how long you would like your petition to be open for signing.
- 6.2 When you create an e-petition, it may take five working days before it is published online. This is because we have to check that the content of your petition is suitable before it is made available for the public to sign. If we feel we cannot publish your petition for some reason, we will contact you within this time to explain why. You will then be able to change and re-submit your petition if you wish.
- 6.3 When an e-petition has closed for signing, it will automatically be submitted to Democratic Services in the same way as a paper petition, you will receive an acknowledgement within five working days. It will ask you how you prefer to progress the petition in line with the Council's petition scheme. Assistance will be provided to help you decide which is the most appropriate route.

From: Bartram, Catherine on behalf of Meggs, Mel
Sent: 26 June 2018 16:22
To: BTContactaddress
Cc: Hatton, Lesley
Subject: Council Petition

Dear Mr Harron

On 23 May 2018 the Council received the petition presented by the survivor known as 'Elizabeth' which requested the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services issue a public statement detailing his reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication 'Voices of Despair, Voices of Hope'.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services at that time was Ian Thomas, who left the employment of Rotherham MBC in May 2018.

As Mr Thomas is no longer employed by Rotherham MBC, the Council cannot action the specific request made in the petition. However in a further petition a request has been made to disclose an email from Mr Thomas to the Commissioners, dated 5 August 2015, and that email sets out the reasons for the decision. The Council will be disclosing that email with appropriate redactions to preserve the anonymity of third parties.

Regards,
Mel Meggs
Acting Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Email: mel.meggs@rotherham.gov.uk

Before printing, think about the environment
Working with children, families and our partners, for Rotherham's
Children's Services to be rated
outstanding by 2018;

Children and young people are healthy and safe from harm
Children and young people start school ready to learn for life
Children, young people and their families are ready for the world of work

This will mean our children, young people and families are proud to live
and work in Rotherham

Review of the response to the petition heard in the RMBC Council meeting on 23.5.18 - 22.10.18

For the Oversight and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) Meeting on 7.11.18

Please find included: **OSMB 7.11.18 RMBC Council Meeting on 23.5.18 – Petition transcript**

As noted in the transcript of the Council meeting on 23 May:

Therefore this petition calls on the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services **(or the Chief Executive)** in Rotherham Borough Council (RMBC) to:

issue a public statement giving the reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication.

The statement needs to take note of:

- 1 the fact that it was agreed that a leaflet produced by RMBC would be distributed along with Voices of Despair Voices of Hope;**
 - 2 the further arrangements suggested in a meeting in April 2015 by the officer who facilitated and joined the trip to the Houses of Parliament and Downing Street on 25 March 2015.**
-

With regard to the email from Mel Meggs on 26 June 2018 please note the following:

- 1 The petition on 23 May was addressed to **the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services AND the Chief Executive.**

To state *"As Mr Thomas is no longer employed by Rotherham MBC, the Council cannot action the specific request made in the petition."* is EVASIVE and unacceptable.

- 2 Point 1 has not been addressed.

Please refer to (included):

OSMB 7.11.18 Rotherham support services for people affected by child sexual exploitation – leaflet 400 copies collected on 16.2.15

OSMB 7.11.18 Jo Smith - Collecting Public Information leaflets 16.2.15

- 3 Point 2 has not been addressed.
- 4 To state that *"that email sets out the reasons for the decision."* is demonstrably **FALSE**.

Please also note below my email to Mel Meggs on 27 June (in response to her email on 26 June).

Sincere regards

Liam Harron

----- Original Message -----

From: Liam <lgha@btinternet.com>

To: Meggs, Mel <Mel.Meggs@rotherham.gov.uk>

Cc: McLaughlin, James <James.McLaughlin@rotherham.gov.uk>

Sent: 27/06/2018 06:22:47

Subject: Council Petition addressed on 23 May 2018 - response

Dear Mel

I wish I could thank you for your email (as far as I can recall your first ever contact with me), but I cannot.

I am not able to express adequately in words how profoundly shocking this first response is to the petition addressed by the adult survivor 'Elizabeth' on behalf of another adult survivor on 23 May, an adult survivor who in her own words *"joined a trip to the Houses of Parliament on 25 March 2015 ... Rotherham Borough Council paid for the coach for the trip."*

I can hardly believe that you have listened to what Elizabeth actually said in the Council Chamber on 23 May.

I am attaching a full copy of the transcript.

The first response to your email by the Adult Survivors Kampaign (ASK) has been the submission (by me on ASK's behalf) of an e-petition calling on the Council to ASK you as Acting Strategic Director of CYPS to apologise to adult survivors of CSE for the mistakes you have made in your email – please see copy attached.

If you are minded to quickly apologise and retract what you have said in your email yesterday there will be no need to proceed with the e-petition. I will copy James McLaughlin (Head of Democratic Services) into my email.

Regards,

Liam

PS

I note the statement at the bottom of your email and I genuinely look forward to the day, hopefully soon, when Rotherham's Children's Services will be rated outstanding.

From: Meggs, Mel
Sent: 26 June 2018 16:25
Cc: Hatton, Lesley
Subject: Council Petition

Dear Mr Harron

On 23 May 2018 the Council received the petition presented by the survivor known as 'Elizabeth' which requested the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services issue a public statement detailing his reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication 'Voices of Despair, Voices of Hope'.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services at that time was Ian Thomas, who left the employment of Rotherham MBC in May 2018.

As Mr Thomas is no longer employed by Rotherham MBC, the Council cannot action the specific request made in the petition. However in a further petition a request has been made to disclose an email from Mr Thomas to the Commissioners, dated 5 August 2015, and that email sets out the reasons for the decision. The Council will be disclosing that email with appropriate redactions to preserve the anonymity of third parties.

Regards,

Mel Meggs
Acting Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Email: mel.meggs@rotherham.gov.uk

Before printing, think about the environment

Working with children, families and our partners, for Rotherham's Children's Services to be rated outstanding by 2018;

Children and young people are healthy and safe from harm
Children and young people start school ready to learn for life
Children, young people and their families are ready for the world of work

This will mean our children, young people and families are proud to live and work in Rotherham

https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/352894

6.28 Mayor – the first petition is from Mr Harron.

Off mike – it is actually from an adult survivor ... Elizabeth has agreed to read out a statement

6.50

The lead petitioner is an adult survivor of childhood sexual exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham. The lead petitioner does not want to take any risk about her identity being revealed. As another adult survivor of CSE I have been asked to read the statement that follows.

On the 10th February of this year, this petition was sent to Democratic Services. Coincidentally ten days later, on 20th February, a statement was issued by the National Crime Agency saying that their staff estimated that 1510 children were abused in Rotherham and that the NCA was actively engaged with about 260 of those victims. Therefore, it is likely that at least 1250 victims have not yet engaged with the NCA, probably many more than 1250.

Everyone in this chamber needs to reflect very seriously about this.

Many of those who provided their voices for the publication **Voices of Despair Voices of Hope** will never trust anyone holding an official position in Rotherham following the lies told about our voices.

Having freely worked on their publication for three months and having fully consulted officials at RMBC and South Yorkshire Police, on 28 February 2015, Chrissy Meleady MBE and Liam Harron bravely published at their own expense 500 copies of Voices of Despair Voices of Hope. Ten days later an officer at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) ordered 1500 copies (at a cost of £6000) and these copies were delivered to Rotherham Council before the end of March 2015.

I joined a trip to the Houses of Parliament on 25 March 2015. There is information in the online version of this petition including a link to a radio broadcast made during that trip. I strongly encourage EVERY SINGLE COUNCILLOR to listen to that radio broadcast – especially to the statement made at the beginning by the former Deputy Leader of the Council

We held a meeting with MPs and a Lord in the Houses of Parliament, then handed copies of Voices of Despair Voices of Hope into 10 Downing Street. We handed in more than 100 copies, one for every member of the Cabinet and the Shadow Cabinet and one for every member of several Select Committees.

Rotherham Borough Council paid for the coach for the trip. An officer (and his daughter) joined us and this officer spoke in the meeting in the Houses of Parliament. He then photographed us handing copies into 10 Downing Street. Please also listen to this officer's voice in the radio broadcast.

Following the dreadful intrusion on 5th September 2015 by the so-called Britain First into Rotherham, Liam Harron emailed the same RMBC officer who joined us on 25 March 2015 and the Head of Children's Services about the urgent need to produce a second edition of Voices of Despair Voices of Hope about those who were suffering from hate and racism. On 15 September 2015 this officer replied by stating that a decision has been made by officials in RMBC to not distribute 1400 copies. **The reasons this officer gave were completely false. And since then lies have been told over and over again by other officers.**

The time has come for officials at RMBC to issue a true statement.

Therefore this petition calls on the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services (or the Chief Executive) in Rotherham Borough Council (RMBC) to:

issue a public statement giving the reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication.

The statement needs to take note of:

- 1 the fact that it was agreed that a leaflet produced by RMBC would be distributed along with Voices of Despair Voices of Hope;**
- 2 the further arrangements suggested in a meeting in April 2015 by the officer who facilitated and joined the trip to the Houses of Parliament and Downing Street on 25 March 2015.**

But can I also add that these people in this publication have been let down. We've been through enough and they deserve to have their voices heard. And it's about time that they actually got the truth. Thank You.

11.28 Mayor – Thank you for that. Leader do you want to make any comment? You don't. Okay. The petition will be referred to the relevant strategic director for a response.

11.39 Councillor Brian Cutts. Mr Mayor would it be appropriate if I make a comment.

Mayor – No. Not at this moment in time.

Rotherham support services for people affected by child sexual exploitation Leaflet

400 copies collected from Jo Smith on 16.2.15

Rotherham support services for people affected by child sexual exploitation

It's important that victims and survivors affected by child sexual exploitation get the support that's right for them.

To recover, restart, to begin again.
To stop this happening to anyone else.

Get support for you or your family.

24/7 Helpline: 0800 731 9256

Sometimes it's just someone to speak to. Sometimes it's practical help for your own family – about accommodation, benefits or how to move on.

Everybody's story is different.

This leaflet gives you information on the support services in Rotherham for people affected by child sexual exploitation.

Read this leaflet so that you get the right support for you or your family.

Rotherham sexual exploitation helpline

Call confidentially or use the email address; both are staffed 24 hours-a-day, seven days a week:

- 0800 731 9256
(free from a landline)
- rotherhamcsesupport@NSPCC.org.uk

Rotherham Women's Counselling Service (RWCS) and Pit Stop for Men

For men and women who have experienced rape, sexual abuse or domestic abuse.

- 01709 835482
- 07914 768473
- rwcs@live.co.uk
- www.rwcs.org.uk

GROW

Emotional wellbeing and practical services and support for individuals up to 25 years old, plus support for the survivor's family in their recovery to help their child/young person.

- 01709 511171
- info@growproject.org.uk
- www.growproject.org.uk

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

A one stop service for males and females who have experienced any kind of sexual violence aged 13 or older. Offering support for people who wish to report to the police but also those that don't wish to. SARC's fully trained nurses and crisis workers will work with people in the first instance to ensure their health and wellbeing needs are met and will refer on to appropriate other organisations across the South Yorkshire area.

- 01709 427327
- SARC@rothgen.nhs.uk

Victim Support

For anyone who has been a victim of any crime or has been affected by a crime committed against someone they know. Regardless of whether or not the crime has been reported and regardless of when it happened.

- 0808 168 3111
- www.victimsupport.org.uk

Rotherham Women's Refuge (RWR)

For young people aged 12 to 18 years and women aged 18 plus to provide family support and counselling for victims and survivors. Also providing accommodation and support to victims of domestic violence.

- Accommodation services: 0870 850 2247
- All other services: 0844 225 4411
- enquiries@rothwr.co.uk
- www.rothwr.co.uk

Youth Start

Mental health and emotional well-being support for young people in Rotherham from 10 to 25 years. It provides support for young people affected by abuse and those at risk of experiencing abuse.

- 01709 255266
- youthstart@rotherham.gov.uk



Approved by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

24/7 Helpline: 0800 731 9256

----- Original Message -----

From: [Smith, Jo](#)

To: [Liam](#)

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 8:31 AM

Subject: RE: Public information leaflets

Hi Liam,

I am free 1 -2 today – In meetings all day other than that. I can always drop them off – I'm in Anston tomorrow.

Jo

From: Liam [<mailto:lgaha@btinternet.com>]

Sent: 15 February 2015 20:57

To: Smith, Jo

Cc: Chrissy

Subject: Public information leaflets

Hi Jo – apologies for not getting back to you. It has been hectic, especially getting "Voices of Despair, Voices of Hope" to our printer.

I am at Rotherham Women's Counselling Service at 11 am tomorrow. Can I pick up the leaflets after that?

Hope things are going well

Liam

----- Original Message -----

From: [Smith, Jo](#)

To: [Liam](#) ; [Chrissy](#)

Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 12:39 PM

Subject: Leaflets

Hi Liam & Chrissy,

I finally have some public information leaflets, could I drop some off for you to give out please?

Regards,

Jo

Jo Smith

CSE Support Services Co-ordinator

Integrated Youth Support Service

Children & Young People's Services

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Eric Manns Building

45 Moorgate Street

Rotherham

Tel: 01709 822125

Internal from new: 22125

<http://www.youthi.org.uk>

<p>Rotherham support services for people affected by child sexual exploitation</p> <p>It's important that victims and survivors affected by child sexual exploitation get the support that's right for them.</p> <p>To recover, restart, to begin again. To stop this happening to anyone else.</p> <p>Get support for you or your family.</p> <p>24/7 Helpline: 0800 731 9256</p>	<p>Sometimes it's just someone to speak to. Sometimes it's practical help for your own family – about accommodation, benefits or how to move on.</p> <p>Everybody's story is different.</p> <p>This leaflet gives you information on the support services in Rotherham for people affected by child sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Read this leaflet so that you get the right support for you or your family.</p> <p>Rotherham sexual exploitation helpline</p> <p>Call confidentially or use the email address; both are staffed 24 hours-a-day, seven days a week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0800 731 9256 (free from a landline)• rotherhamsesupport@NSPCC.org.uk	<p>Rotherham Women's Counselling Service (RWCS) and Pit Stop for Men</p> <p>For men and women who have experienced rape, sexual abuse or domestic abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 01709 835482• 07914 768473• nrcs@live.co.uk• www.rwcs.org.uk <p>GROW</p> <p>Emotional wellbeing and practical services and support for individuals up to 25 years old, plus support for the survivor's family in their recovery to help their child/young person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 01709 511171• info@growproject.org.uk• www.growproject.org.uk <p>The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)</p> <p>A one stop service for males and females who have experienced any kind of sexual violence aged 13 or older. Offering support for people who wish to report to the police but also those that don't wish to. SARC's fully trained nurses and crisis workers will work with people in the first instance to ensure their health and wellbeing needs are met and will refer on to appropriate other organisations across the South Yorkshire area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 01709 427327• SARC@rothgen.nhs.uk	<p>Victim Support</p> <p>For anyone who has been a victim of any crime or has been affected by a crime committed against someone they know. Regardless of whether or not the crime has been reported and regardless of when it happened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0800 768 9111• www.victimsupport.org.uk <p>Rotherham Women's Refuge (RWR)</p> <p>For young people aged 12 to 18 years and women aged 16 plus to provide family support and counselling for victims and survivors. Also providing accommodation and support to victims of domestic violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accommodation services: 0870 850 2247• All other services: 0844 225 4411• enquiries@rothwr.co.uk• www.rothwr.co.uk <p>Youth Start</p> <p>Mental health and emotional well-being support for young people in Rotherham from 10 to 25 years. It provides support for young people affected by abuse and those at risk of experiencing abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 01709 255266• youthstart@rotherham.gov.uk <p>24/7 Helpline: 0800 731 9256</p>
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Name of Committee and Date of Committee Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 7 November 2018

Report Title

Children's Services Financial Monitoring and Review 2018/19

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jon Stonehouse, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

Report author(s):

Neil Hardwick, Head of Finance - CYPS,
01709 254508 or neil.hardwick@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

This briefing note is submitted to OSMB as part of its ongoing financial monitoring and review of Children and Young People's Services. OSMB has asked for quarterly updates to be scheduled on its work programme. This is the second update of the 2018/19 municipal year.

The attached briefing paper and appendices outline the current budget position and pressures; in-year mitigations; future plans and progress of sustainability plan and demand management initiatives.

Recommendations

1. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board note the briefing
2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board determine what action it wishes to take in light of the information herein.

List of Appendices Included

Briefing Paper: Children's Services Financial Monitoring and Review 2018/19

Appendix 1 – Budget Saving Update

Appendix 2 - 2016/17 Budget Investments & Savings

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

N/A

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

BRIEFING NOTE

**Children's Services Financial Monitoring and Review 2018/19
Overview & Scrutiny
October 2018**

Background

Demand on Children's Services is high and continuing to rise across all key areas which include children in need of help, protection and children requiring care. The main factors that have impacted on demand are:

- Complex abuse inquiry and Operation Stovewood – the service has worked with over 600 children that have been referred from these investigations and there are currently over 200 open cases where children are in need, have a child protection plan or are in care;
- Improved social work practice intervention in legacy cases specifically re neglect; and
- National increase in statutory intervention and a national budget shortfall of £2bn predicted by 2020.

The Children's Services current budget for 2018/19 is £58.7m with forecast expenditure at £71.7m (including a contribution of £1m from reserves for 2018/19 only). An in year pressure of £13m which has increased compared to the £10m previously reported after mitigations due to a continued net increase in the number of children admitted into care.

The table below shows the Rotherham position compared to its 'neighbours' up to March 2017.

Looked after Children - numbers (position at end of March)						Increase since March 2014	
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		
Nearest neighbours							
1	Barnsley	235	225	240	280	290	28.9%
2	Rotherham	390	395	405	430	487	23.3%
3	Telford and Wrekin	320	310	295	300	380	22.6%
4	Stoke-On-Trent	480	535	610	655	655	22.4%
5	Tam eside	385	425	415	430	515	21.2%
6	Darlington	210	190	200	205	220	15.8%
7	Kirklees	650	610	620	655	700	14.8%
8	Stockton-On-Tees	360	380	375	375	435	14.5%
9	Gates head	390	355	335	345	380	7.0%
10	Wakefield	440	490	495	480	520	6.1%
11	Doncaster	500	500	480	485	510	2.0%
12	St Helens	440	430	410	410	425	-1.2%
13	Calderdale	335	320	320	300	315	-1.6%
14	Wigan	510	495	505	485	445	-10.1%
15	Dudley	730	755	740	725	675	-10.6%
16	Rochdale	505	530	525	480	460	-13.2%
Statistical neighbours							
1	Redcar and Cleveland	175	175	185	200	235	34.3%
2	Barnsley	235	225	240	280	290	28.9%
3	Hartlepool	185	200	165	205	255	27.5%
4	Rotherham	390	395	405	430	487	23.3%
5	Telford and Wrekin	320	310	295	300	380	22.6%
6	Tameside	385	425	415	430	515	21.2%
7	Wakefield	440	490	495	480	520	6.1%
8	Doncaster	500	500	480	485	510	2.0%
9	St Helens	440	430	410	410	425	-1.2%
10	Wigan	510	495	505	485	445	-10.1%
11	Dudley	730	755	740	725	675	-10.6%

At the end of March 2017, as can be seen from the table above the number of looked after children was 487, at the beginning of this financial year it was 628 and it has increased to 655 in September 2018. This rise in LAC numbers has been compounded by the increasing complexity of children admitted to care requiring more expensive accommodation and rising prices due to market forces. As a result, the in-year cost pressure attributable to a higher number of placements and the increase in unit costs continues to rise. Of this pressure, a significant amount relates directly to complex child protection work, the associated costs of which are substantial.

Budget Changes

It is important to understand the background to the Children's Service Budget and to look at the overall investment and savings into the service.

In November 2016 Children and Young People's Budget Sustainability proposals were presented to Cabinet as part of a wider report updating the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The report recommended setting a budget and financial plan over the period through to 2020/21 which would enable the delivery of sustainable children's social care services.

The council's medium term financial strategy allowed for investment into the service during 2017/18 through a budget increase of £8.346m which has been further increased by £2.056m in 2018/19, with a further £2.056m to be invested in 2019/20.

There have also been additions to the budget for pay awards and contract inflation.

Further investment and savings were planned and budget increases and reduction made accordingly:

Budget Reductions	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	Total £m
Investment Bids 16/17: Investment	0.179	3.428	0.108	(0.188)	0.051	3.578
Investment Bids 16/17: Saving		(2.276)	(2.914)	(2.871)	(1.540)	(9.601)
ASRs in 2017/18: Saving		(2.610)	(0.891)	(0.288)		(3.789)
Budget Setting 2018/19: Saving			(1.432)			(1.432)

In year mitigations

Early monitoring reports indicated that there remained pressure on the Children's Service Budget.

A number of mitigating actions or spend reduction projects have been implemented to reduce in year demand and spend by an estimated £5.7m.

Further savings were identified to reduce the spend (budgets were not reduced), however some of the areas monitored under the banner of demand management savings (business support, regional agency rate and CPQ staffing) were included within the original budget savings so they weren't all 'additional' savings.

In year Mitigations	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	Total £m
Demand Management			(5.571)	(14.595)		(20.166)
Additional mitigations			(0.280)	(0.050)		(0.330)
2018/19 ASRs			(0.960)			(0.960)

2019 and beyond

Business Cases were presented to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 26 October 2018 outlining budget reduction plans for the following:

Business Case	Description	Savings 2018/19 £m	Savings 2019/20 £m	Savings 2020/21 £m	Total Savings £m
Demand Management	Focusses on right decision being made and right reviews taking place.		(0.317)	(0.683)	(1.000)
Early Help & Social Care Pathway	Focusses on how demand for social care and early help can be effectively signposted to		(1.435)	(4.305)	(5.740)

Business Case	Description	Savings 2018/19 £m	Savings 2019/20 £m	Savings 2020/21 £m	Total Savings £m
	the right service, and managing the collaboration and movement of the supporting teams.				
Performance & Quality Review	Review of service area and functions	(0.050)	(0.150)		(0.200)
Market Management	Block commissioning, and initiatives to rebalance the mix of LAC placements that are with IFAs and in house fostering	(0.037)	(0.277)	(2.753)	(3.607)
		(0.087)	(2.179)	(7.741)	(10.007)

It is intended that these business cases should expand on the work being undertaken to achieve existing demand management savings, and ultimately replace the demand management savings value so that there is no confusion over the total amount of savings required. Therefore, there will be work done to ensure that some of the demand management savings plans continue to be progressed to reduce the overspending in the current year and to avoid any overspending in 2019/20.

Progress of Sustainability Plan and Demand Management Initiatives

A report to Cabinet on 17th September 2018 showed there is a projected £13m overspend in the current year, which is a combination of additional demand and initiatives taking time to achieve full impact.

The list of savings / demand management initiatives and values are shown in Appendix 1 with narrative on the specific 2016/17 investments and savings in Appendix 2. To provide the holistic view on the progress of the savings plans and the risks identified to achieving these savings, they have been grouped, irrespective of origin of saving, under the following headings:

- Staffing related savings

Staffing

The overall employee budget (excluding grant funded and traded services) is forecasting an overspend of £1.1m due to the heavy reliance on agency in the first few months of the year and the delay in implementing the review of CYP business support which had received a £750k reduction to its base budget in 2017/18 and this is unlikely to achieve any significant in 2018/19.

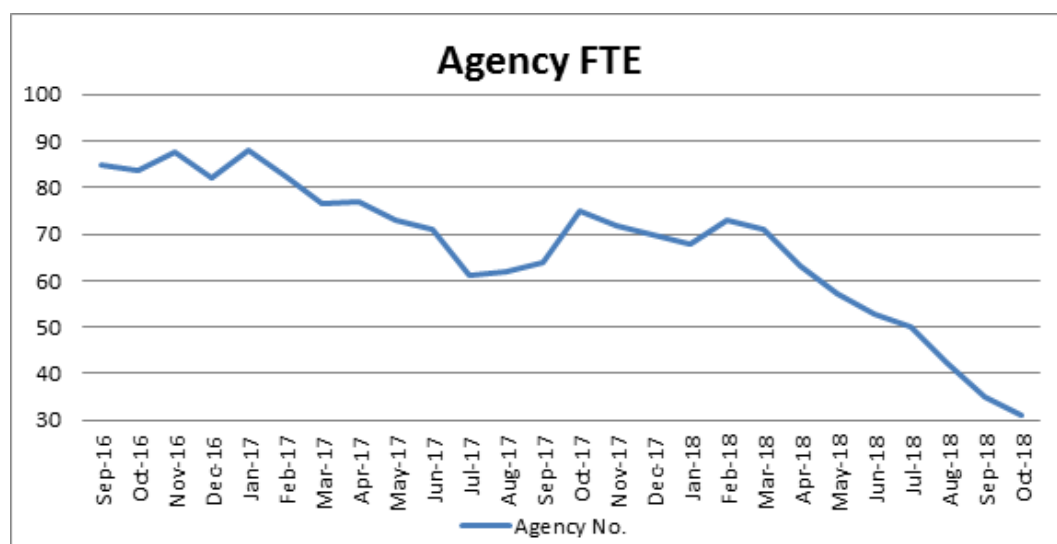
However the overall staffing pressures are reducing month on month linked to the controls on release of vacant posts and the trend of reduced agency workers each month.

	Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m
Basic pay & oncosts	24.9	23.6	(1.3)
Agency	0.6	3.0	2.4
Total	25.5	26.6	1.1

Agency

Agency costs have reduced from £4.8m in 2017/18 to a forecast spend of £3.0m in 2018/19, a cost reduction of £1.8m on agency expenditure compared to last financial year and it is estimated to have a further significant reduction in 2019/20 due to the full year effect of reduced agency numbers and the expectation that they continue to reduce.

The graph below shows the reduction in the number of agency staff over the last year.



In addition, the council monitors its agency rate for social work staff, this is currently running at 8.58% compared to the national average of 10%.

- Early Help, Edge of Care, Preventative and Support Related Savings

The number of looked after children has stabilising at circa 650 over the last four months and there is evidence to suggest that investment is now having an impact on children being looked after, see table below:

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
	2017	2017	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018
LAC	535	568	592	607	610	626	624	639	645	652	655	651
Admissions	39	37	27	18	44	16	37	19	34	22	16	21
Ceased	6	13	12	15	28	18	22	13	27	19	20	13
Net +/-	33	24	15	3	16	-2	15	6	7	3	-4	8

As can be seen from the table above the number of admissions in care has reduced from 121 for the period November 17 to February 18 down to 93 for the period July 18 to October 18 and discharges have increased from 46 for the period November 17 to February 18 to 79 for the period July 18 to October 18.

It is anticipated that if this trend continues the number of looked after children should now start to reduce.

- Looked After Child Related Savings

Budget reductions for the majority of initiatives are made against the looked after children placement budgets, and work is being undertaken to monitor the targeted reduction of children in care placements linked to the various projects which have seen the placement budgets reduced. The placement budget is currently projection an overspend of £10.3m (see table below), but as outlined under early help and prevention the projects such as Right Child Right Care (RCRC) are beginning to have a positive impact in reducing down placement spend.

CYPS Placements			
Placement Type	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Fore - Bud)
Adoption Allowances	1,030,746	1,030,746	0
Special Guardianship Orders	1,165,406	1,782,632	617,226
In-house Fostering Allowances	3,494,279	3,434,279	-60,000
Independent Fostering Placements	7,030,586	10,755,011	3,724,425
Child Arrangement Orders	1,257,197	1,649,936	392,739
Residential OOA Placements	6,108,100	9,808,176	3,700,076
Liberty House	794,191	884,098	89,907
Leaving Care Supported Accom	421,811	2,242,203	1,820,392
Summary	21,302,316	31,587,081	10,284,765

Achieving a financially sustainable budget is reliant on each of the savings strategies as outlined in Appendix 1, with a key element being to increase the number of 'in house' foster care places. The RCRC approach is absolutely the correct thing to do but it may not be a 'quick fix' to budgetary issues as the legal process takes some to allow for the plans to come to fruition.

- Commissioning & Other Service Expenditure Related Savings

Commissioning initiatives are broadly around developing more cost effective children in care placements in the Rotherham district, and supporting the sufficiency strategy.

One of the main elements is to establish residential provision through block contracts within the Rotherham district and reduce the number of high cost out of area residential placements.

- Education Related Savings

The education savings have or are on target to be delivered, see details in Appendix 1.

A challenging examination of potential efficiencies is underway, recognising the need for these to be thoroughly reviewed, discussed and considered so that the Directorate can bring forward options for immediate implementation. Proposals are being actively pursued to identify savings in the current financial year, having due regard for the continued safeguarding of vulnerable children. Reducing the budget pressure remains a priority for the service.

Source of Saving	Project name	Reference No.	Description	2017/18 Original Saving	2018/19 Original Saving	2019/20	2020/2021	TOTAL SAVING DUE
				£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Staffing Related Savings								
16/17 Investment Bids	9 - Appointment of Newly Qualified Social Workers	CYPS9	Investment Additional agency staff to support NQSW. Saving / Outcome: Agency release. To meet the demands of the Workforce Development Improvement actions in the Children and Young People's Service Improvement Plan, the Council embarked on a recruitment drive to bring in a cohort of Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW) into the Children and Young People's Services. Although agency workers were additionally required to support the NQSW, the intention was to reduce the agency requirement overall in following years.	330.0	385.0	110.0	0.0	825.0
Demand Management 18/19	Social Care staffing. MVF		Social Care staffing. MVF	0.0	300.0	300.0	0.0	600.0
17/18 Savings	Regional Agreement for Agency Social Workers	CYPS10	Agreement to decrease hrly rate by £3 (to £32.95). Aim is to reduce agency to 10% of workforce which would be 40 (currently 62). Saving of £200k (40x261daysx7hrsx£3). Every further £1 reduction will save circa £70k	0.0	200.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
Demand Management 18/19	Regional Agreement for Agency Social Workers		Regional Agreement for Agency Social Workers	0.0	200.0	200.0	0.0	400.0
			Regional Agreement for Agency Social Workers		(200.0)	(200.0)	0.0	(400.0)
Demand Management 18/19	Agency social care staff - reduced percentage		Agency social care staff - reduced percentage	0.0	200.0	300.0	0.0	500.0
Demand Management 18/19 Further mitigations	Review of case holding agency workers		Review of case holding agency workers	0.0	150.0	0.0	0.0	150.0
Demand Management 18/19	Advanced Social Worker posts, MVF		Advanced Social Worker posts, MVF	0.0	489.0	489.0	0.0	978.0
16/17 Investment Bids	8 - Single Assessment Review Duty Team	CYPS8	Investment: Duty Team 5 - 1 TM; 2 SW. Moving from a four to a five Duty team structure and a cycle of 20 days between each duty week will improve the ability to progress work and afford the team manager sufficient time to provide robust management oversight and complete all management tasks. This investment in a fifth duty team is time limited for two years from 2017/18 by which time performance is expected to have improved sufficiently through embedded improvements in work practice and with a settled workforce.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
16/17 Investment Bids	10 - Workforce Development and Practice Improvement	CYPS10	Investment in the training and development of Social Workers, in order to improve practice and produce better outcomes for children (potentially leading to longer term savings across the corporate function), reduce the risk of continued inadequate OFSTED judgements and help to improve the retention of Social Workers in the borough in the longer term.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ASR 17/18	Safeguarding, Children & Families	CYPS-07 A	Childrens Social Care Management	0.0	300.0	0.0	0.0	300.0
17/18 Savings	Early Help Review	CYPS1	Whole service delivery redesign to develop new job roles and more efficient and effective ways of working. There is a proposed reduction in the total number of Early Help FTE from 249.84 to 239.28	0.0	175.0	175.0	0.0	350.0
Business Case 19/20 to 20/21	Early Help & Social Care Pathway		Focusses on how demand for social care and early help can be effectively signposted to the right service, and managing the collaboration and movement of the supporting teams.	0.0	0.0	1,435.0	4,305.0	5,740.0
17/18 Savings	Early Years	CYPS11	Early Years Reduced Staffing	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Demand Management 18/19	Workforce Transformation		Workforce Transformation	0.0	0.0	822.0	0.0	822.0
ASR 17/18	Commissioning, Performance & Quality	ASR-CPQ-A	Review of Business Support	750.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	750.0
Demand Management 18/19	Business Support Review		Business Support Review	0.0	200.0	750.0	0.0	950.0
Demand Management 18/19	Business Support Review		Business Support Review	0.0	(200.0)	(750.0)	0.0	(950.0)
Demand Management 18/19	CPQ additional efficiencies		CPQ additional efficiencies	0.0	150.0	75.0	0.0	225.0
ASR 17/18	Commissioning, Performance & Quality	ASR-CPQ-B	Performance & Quality Review	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Demand Management 18/19	Commissioning, Performance & Quality		Commissioning, Performance & Quality	0.0	47.0	47.0	0.0	94.0
Demand Management 18/19	Commissioning, Performance & Quality		Commissioning, Performance & Quality	0.0	(47.0)	(47.0)	0.0	(94.0)
Demand Management 18/19 Further mitigations	Review of non-social care vacancies		Review of non-social care vacancies	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Demand Management 18/19 Further mitigations	Review of consultancy		Review of consultancy	0.0	30.0	50.0	0.0	80.0
Total Budget Savings / Demand Management Cost Reductions				1,180.0	2,494.0	3,756.0	4,305.0	11,735.0
Early Help, Edge of Care, Preventative and Support Related Savings								
16/17 Investment Bids	1B - Therapeutic Service	CYPS1B	Investment: Therapeutic Team - Recruitment of new posts x 3 - Commissioning of 2.5 clinical practitioners. Saving / Outcome Built into the savings in 1A. Additional clinical practitioners to deliver highly responsive and intensive interventions	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
16/17 Investment Bids	2 - Family group conferencing	CYPS2	Investment: New FGC team - Recruitment of new posts x 4 within budget - Training and other costs within budget Saving / Outcome Family Group Conferencing is an effective tool for identifying and engaging with wider family members at an early stage of concern about a child. This initiative seeks to minimise the financial pressure within the LAC budget by working to prevent children entering the care system.	165.0	462.0	627.0	660.0	1,914.0
Demand Management 18/19	Pause		Pause	0.0	0.0	42.0	0.0	42.0
16/17 Investment Bids	6 - Multi-systemic Therapy	CYPS6	Investment: Costs are funded from Troubled Families Grant. Saving / Outcome: Prevention of children and young people at CPP coming into care. MST is an intensive therapeutic programme that works within the whole ecology of a young person. The MST therapist will work with the whole family; the parents, the community and the school at the same time. The aim is to work in a solution-focused, strengths-based approach to empower the family to take responsibility for solving problems and to improve family functioning. The model acknowledges the fact that the family will be there for the young person into the future and beyond any service intervention.	44.0	88.0	88.0	88.0	308.0

Source of Saving	Project name	Reference No.	Description	2017/18 Original Saving	2018/19 Original Saving	2019/20	2020/2021	TOTAL SAVING DUE
				£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
16/17 Investment Bids	5 - Edge of Care	CYPS5	Investment: The team is operational comprising a team coordinator and 6 members of staff. The team work intensively with families, practicing systemically and with support through a consultant psychologist and consultant systemic family therapist. All referrals are made via Edge of Care panel and include children at risk of going into care as well as children where there is an opportunity for LAC to return home. Saving / Outcome: The implementation of Edge of Care and the expected reduction in LAC could lead to long term savings on the overall Looked After Children budget. It is estimated that Edge of Care could prevent 15 children entering care in the first year, increasing to 25 – 30 per year thereafter.	165.0	429.0	594.0	660.0	1,848.0
17/18 Savings	Edge of Care Interventions	CYPS9	A combined stretch of 15 (to 30) above the existing targets (15) for these initiatives will deliver savings of £112k next year, i.e. 15 additional LAC prevented based on the cost of an in-house foster placement (£15k)	0.0	112.0	113.0	0.0	225.0
17/18 Savings	Troubled Families - Payment by Results	CYPS4	Planned approach for drawing down additional Payments by Results income from the Troubled Families programme by increasing conversion rates and widening the cohort and number of families engaged on the programme	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	30.0
ASR 17/18	Education & Skills Service	ASR-ESS-A	Increase in centrally retained Early Years funding	200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
ASR 17/18	Early Help	EH Major Project	Reshaping of the Early Help offer will see a more targeted approach to the provision of Youth Services.	421.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	421.0
ASR 17/18	Early Years and Childcare	CYPS-03 D	Early Years and Childcare Service funding to reduce further through continued efficiency savings and finding smarter ways of working	27.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.0
2018/19 in Year ASRs (September)	Early Years & Childcare		One-off savings to be achieved in year	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	40.0
2018/19 in Year ASRs (September)	Children's Centre		One-off savings to be achieved in year	0.0	18.0	0.0	0.0	18.0
Total Budget Savings / Demand Management Cost Reductions				1,022.0	1,179.0	1,464.0	1,408.0	5,073.0
Child Related Savings								
16/17 Investment Bids	1A - Foster Carer Payments Scheme, Support & Development	CYPS1A	Investment: Foster Carer Payments, Support & Development. Success measures: - Increase in Fostering places (places as a % of overall LAC), - Increase in ratio of children to carer. Saving / Outcome: Step down of 15 placements into in-house fostering. Success measures: - Reduction in OOA - Reduction in IFA. The implementation of the allowances offer, better wraparound support and a dedicated marketing officer	1,374.0	1,286.0	1,320.0	0.0	3,980.0
17/18 Savings	IFA First Preference	CYPS6	Expanding the fostering offer within Rotherham will help to address the placement shortage in the borough and re-direct some children from more expensive placements outside of the authority	0.0	150.0	0.0	0.0	150.0
Demand Management 18/19	In-House Fostering		In-House Fostering	0.0	500.0	1,000.0	0.0	1,500.0
17/18 Savings	Foster Care Recruitment	CYPS8	Builds upon the success from the investment proposal in 2017/18 with performance likely to be 20 additional foster placements compared to the original target of 15 per year. It is estimated that the savings generated will be circa £20k per place based on a move from an IFA (£40k-45k) to an in-house carer (£15k-20k).	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
16/17 Investment Bids	3 - Special Guardianship Looked After Children	CYPS3	Investment: Additional investment to support +6 SGOs. Saving / Outcome: LAC reduction of 6. Offer the opportunity for family, friends or existing foster carers to give a permanent home to the child without Social Care input.	66.0	132.0	132.0	132.0	462.0
16/17 Investment Bids	7 - Reunification Project	CYPS7	Decommissioned and savings now to be delivered through over overachievement of CYPS 5 Edge of Care.	132.0	132.0	0.0	0.0	264.0
Demand Management 18/19	Right Child, Right Care		Right Child, Right Care (includes discharges from original cohort and those 'turned 18') (NB net reduction figure in savings)	0.0	2,000.0	7,500.0	0.0	9,500.0
Business Case 19/20 to 20/21	Demand Management		Focuses on right decision being made and right reviews taking place.	0.0	0.0	316.7	683.3	1,000.0
Demand Management 18/19	Special Guardianship Orders		Special Guardianship Orders	0.0	60.0	250.0	0.0	310.0
Demand Management 18/19	House Project		House Project	0.0	0.0	250.0	0.0	250.0
Demand Management 18/19	Emergency Placements Recovery		Emergency Placements Recovery	0.0	425.0	850.0	0.0	1,275.0
Demand Management 18/19	Operation Stovewood		Operation Stovewood	0.0	200.0	200.0	0.0	400.0
Demand Management 18/19	Complex Abuse Team		Complex Abuse Team	0.0	0.0	420.0	0.0	420.0
Demand Management 18/19	Multi Systemic Therapy - Family Intergrated Transitions		Multi Systemic Therapy - Family Intergrated Transitions	0.0	0.0	300.0	0.0	300.0
Total Budget Savings / Demand Management Cost Reductions				1,572.0	4,985.0	12,538.7	815.3	19,911.0
Commissioning & Other Service Related Savings								
ASR 17/18	Transport	ASR-Transport-A	Review of transport assistance policies and usage	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
17/18 Savings	Block Contracts (Residential)	CYPS7	Initial modelling indicates that, by purchasing two placements in a Rotherham residential home, £50k per per year could be saved compared to some of the more expensive out of authority residential provision.	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
ASR 17/18	Commissioning, Performance & Quality	ASR-CPQ-C	Market Development - Contracts Review	559.0	241.0	0.0	0.0	800.0
Demand Management 18/19	Market Development		Market Development	0.0	800.0	800.0	0.0	1,600.0
Business Case 19/20 to 20/21	Market Management		Block commissioning, and initiatives to rebalance the mix of LAC placements that are with IFAs and in house fostering	0.0	37.0	277.0	2,753.0	3,067.0
ASR 17/18	Commissioning, Performance & Quality	ASR-CPQ-D	Pooled budgets by integration and closer working with Adults and Health	250.0	250.0	0.0	0.0	500.0
Business Case 19/20 to 20/21	Performance & Quality Review		Review of service area and functions	0.0	50.0	150.0	0.0	200.0
2018/19 in Year ASRs (September)	Translation of Documents		One-off savings to be achieved in year	0.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	8.0
2018/19 in Year ASRs (September)	Restrict Travel		One-off savings to be achieved in year	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	30.0
ASR 17/18	Early Years and Childcare	CYPS-03 E	Income generation from delivering training to Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Early Years providers	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0
Total Budget Savings / Demand Management Cost Reductions				912.0	1,566.0	1,227.0	2,753.0	6,458.0
Education Related Savings								
17/18 Savings	Education Psychology Services	CYPS2	Replacing revenue budget for statutory Education Psychology Service with funding from High Needs Block (DSG). No impact on service delivery.	0.0	383.0	0.0	0.0	383.0
17/18 Savings	Admissions and Appeals	CYPS3	Proposal agreed by schools forum to fund all admissions and appeals work from DSG	0.0	84.0	0.0	0.0	84.0
17/18 Savings	School Improvement Service	CYPS5	A functional analysis will review the services future structure which is expected will deliver further income and/or savings of around £132.5k per year, whilst core statutory functions around raising standards, monitoring, challenge and intervention remain as core responsibilities of the Council	0.0	133.0	0.0	0.0	133.0
ASR 17/18	Education & Skills Service	ASR-ESS-B	Provide a lean Education & Skills service	200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
Total Budget Savings / Demand Management Cost Reductions				200.0	600.0	0.0	0.0	800.0

16/17 Budget Investments & Savings

• CYPS 1A – Foster Carer Payments Scheme, Support and Development

	Target 2018/19	Forecast 2018/19	(Favourable) / Adverse
Investment (£m)	0.442	0.442	0.000
Cost Reduction (Gross £m)	(1.286)	(1.286)	0.000
Cost Reduction (Net £m)	(0.844)	(0.844)	0.000
Additional Foster Placements	15	15	0

The implementation of the allowances offer, better wraparound support and a dedicated marketing officer have been successful in exceeding the targeted growth in the net number in local authority foster carers. There have been 3 foster carers approved so far in 2018/19 with a further 15 assessments in progress.

• CYPS 1B – Therapeutic Service

This budget investment was for additional clinical practitioners to deliver highly responsive and intensive interventions for Rotherham's children in care identified as needing it most. The recruitment process was completed in 2017/18.

• CYPS 2 – Family Group Conferencing

	Target 2018/19	Forecast 2018/19	(Favourable) / Adverse
Investment (£m)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cost Reduction (Gross £m)	(0.462)	(0.462)	0.000
Cost Reduction (Net £m)	(0.462)	(0.462)	0.000
LAC Reduction	27	27	0

Family Group Conferencing is an effective tool for identifying and engaging with wider family members at an early stage of concern about a child. This initiative seeks to minimise the financial pressure within the LAC budget by working to prevent children entering the care system. The team are currently accepting 15 referrals a month. As at the end of the last financial year, the FGC team had accepted referrals for 146 families and completed conferences for 61 families or 138 children.

• CYPS 3 – Special Guardianship Looked After Children

	Target 2018/19	Forecast 2018/19	(Favourable) / Adverse
Investment (£m)	0.051	0.051	0.000
Cost Reduction (Gross £m)	(0.132)	(0.132)	0.000
Cost Reduction (Net £m)	(0.081)	(0.081)	0.000
LAC Reduction	6	6	0

Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) offer the opportunity for family, friends or existing foster carers to give a permanent home to the child without Social Care input. There has been an increase during the first two months of 2018/19 with the figure moving from 226 to 243 as at the end of May 2018.

• CYPS 4 – Pause Project

Rotherham works with a number of mothers who have had multiple children taken into care. 'Pause' works entirely outside of the usual local authority structure and independently of the social care services. The programme engages with mothers on a one-to-one basis, creating a bespoke programme of intensive therapeutic activities and practical support. Women working with 'Pause' are supported to focus on themselves to take control of their lives. The 'Pause' report was has previously been presented to DLT identified that over a three year period 434 children were affected.

• CYPS 5 – Edge of Care

	Target 2018/19	Forecast 2018/19	(Favourable) / Adverse
Investment (£m)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cost Reduction (Net) (£m)	(0.429)	(0.429)	0.000
Net Saving	(0.429)	(0.429)	0.000
LAC Reduction	24	24	0

The Edge of Care Service offers structured direct support to young people and their families in crisis, to enable them to remain within their immediate or wider extended family. As at the end of the last financial year the Edge of Care team had worked with 81 children. Of these 8 were looked after with a plan to return to birth families. To date, 2 children have been reunified and 5 are on track to return home. 1 young person will remain 'looked after'. However, the work with the Edge of Care team has established that this is the most positive outcome for the young person. 2 young people have become looked after whilst on caseload, and a family of 3 children has moved away from Rotherham whilst on caseload. All other children on caseload have not become looked after.

• **CYPS 6 – Multi-systemic Therapy (MST)**

	Target 2018/19	Forecast 2018/19	(Favourable) / Adverse
Investment (£m)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cost Reduction (Net) (£m)	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.044)
Net Saving	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.044)
LAC Reduction	4	4	0

MST is an intensive therapeutic programme that works within the whole ecology of a young person. The MST therapist will work with the whole family; the parents, the community and the school at the same time. The aim is to work in a solution-focused, strengths-based approach to empower the family to take responsibility for solving problems and to improve family functioning. The model acknowledges the fact that the family will be there for the young person into the future and beyond any service intervention. A shared service agreement is in place between Barnsley and Rotherham. This means that each authority shares fifty percent of the cost and fifty percent of the capacity. The cost of this to RMBC is met through the Troubled Families Grant and so there is no call on mainstream resources to fund this investment. It is estimated that MST could prevent four children entering care per year.

• **CYPS 7 – Reunification Project**

The reunification scheme was delivered from April 2016 by the NSPCC and was due to run for two years. The second year was decommissioned at the end of March 2017 following a review of the expected outcomes. The expected reduction in LAC and cost reduction will instead come from over achievement of Family Group Conferencing. An alternative reunification service is being developed through an application to the Life Chances Fund. It will involve delivery of a new adaptation of MST (Family Integrated Transition) and is earmarked for implementation in early 2019.

• **CYPS 8 – Single Assessment Review Duty Team**

As part of the improvement journey the timeliness and quality of assessments has been a key focus. Moving from a four to a five Duty team structure and a cycle of 20 days between each duty week will improve the ability to progress work and afford the team manager sufficient time to provide robust management oversight and complete all management tasks. This investment in a fifth duty team is time limited for two years from 2017/18 by which time performance is expected to have improved

sufficiently through embedded improvements in work practice and with a settled workforce. Duty Team 5 was in place, effective 1st April 2017.

- **CYPS 9 – Appointment of Newly Qualified Social Workers (x22)**

	Target 2018/19	Forecast 2018/19	(Favourable) / Adverse
Investment (£m)	(0.450)	(0.450)	0.000
Cost Reduction (Net) (£m)	(0.330)	(0.330)	0.000
Net Saving	(0.780)	(0.780)	0.000
Agency reduction	11	11	0

In order to meet the demands of the Workforce Development Improvement actions in the Children and Young People's Service Improvement Plan, the Council embarked on a recruitment drive to bring in a cohort of Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW) into the Children and Young People's Services. The recruitment of 22 permanent newly qualified social workers filled existing social worker vacancies and enabled the reduction in 22 agency workers; reducing cost and creating a permanent stable workforce.

It is important to note that because of the statutory nature of social work a need to keep caseloads manageable and meet the statutory timescales for service delivery a level of agency staff will always be required. The Directorate intends for this to be less than 10%, it is currently 12%, against a national average of around 16%.

The number of agency workers in Social Care has fallen from 77 as at 1st April 2017 to 57 as at the end of May 2018, a reduction of 20 or 26%.

- **CYPS10 – Workforce Development and Practice Improvement**

Professional social work practice in Rotherham has been the subject of much scrutiny in recent years. The quality and impact of Social Work is one of the key issues leading to the inadequate OFSTED judgement in 2014. In order to ensure that the quality of Social Work practice consistently and systematically improves, a learning and development programme for Social Workers, through the professional journey from 'Assessed and Supported Year in Employment', through the practitioner career and into Management and Leadership levels is essential. The most improved local authorities (Hackney/Leeds) have demonstrated the importance of linking social work development to professional methodology in achieving better outcomes (both for children and on inspection).

It is essential that Rotherham Council invest in the training and development of its Social Workers, in order to improve practice and produce better outcomes for children (potentially leading to longer term savings across the corporate function),

reduce the risk of continued inadequate OFSTED judgements and help to improve the retention of Social Workers in the borough in the longer term.

Across the directorate the new methodologies of Signs of Safety and Restorative Practice have been rolled out. Care leavers and Looked after Children have also been trained in Social Pedagogy.

In year mitigations

Early monitoring reports indicated that there remained pressure on the Children's Service Budget. A report to Cabinet on 17th September 2018 indicated that this is projecting a £13m overspend.

A number of mitigating actions or reduction projects have been implemented to reduce in year demand and spend by an estimated £5.7m.

- **In-house fostering (£500k)**

The initial plan was that there would be a net increase of 20 placements with in-house foster carers, assuming the placements are not taken to address any growth, and would deliver a cost reduction of £1m full year equivalent in 2019/20, depending on the existing placement cost.

In respect of Fostering processes, the recruitment of foster carers remains a key priority and a significant challenge for the LAC Service. At present recruitment is only just keeping up with de-registrations/resignations.

There has been six new foster families approved however there has been three resigning due to illness and bereavement plus a further five being de-registered due to safeguarding concerns.

Once an Expression of Interest has been received the team seem to be far more capable of progressing this to assessment in a timely manner but the actual Expressions remain low (only 9 in July).

There are currently 13 assessments ongoing and two more new foster families undertaking the Skills to Foster training which means there are likely to be 21 (6+13+2) new foster families in place by December. Two of these assessments are foster carers transferring from an IFA which may be a trend of recruitment for the future.

The launch of Challenge 63 proved to have disappointing outcomes however it is being re-launched in September. If each elected member nominates only one viable carer every other year this process in itself would surpass the recruitment target. The marketing plan around this area is currently being refreshed and a report is due to be delivered to the Directorate's Leadership Team.

The Muslim Foster Care Project is about to commence with the first meeting having been convened in August and this should support recruitment of more foster carers from the Muslim community. This is already beginning to have some beneficial impacts with the local Muslim community looking to engage in offering every LAC of Muslim faith a host family to help them celebrate Eid. This 'hosting' offer was suggested by the LAC Council following one of their members accessing such an arrangement which enabled her to have the first real experience of Eid since coming into care. It is also hoped that as host families develop a relationship with a looked after child they may express more of an interest in the fostering role.

The planned saving of £500k in-year will be substituted by: over achieving the number of SGOs (£190k – see below); better than forecast cost benefit from the reduction in the number of agency social care staff (£100k); and a further £210k still to be confirmed.

An outline business case has been prepared to manage the children's social care market more effectively through specific activities, including re-balancing the mix of LAC placements that are Out of Area (OOA), Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) and In-house Fostering - which will keep children in the local area and reduce Rotherham's unit cost for looked after children.

- **Special Guardianship Orders (£60k)**

The transfer of six looked after children from foster care to SGO will achieve a minimum cost reduction of £60k.

Within the RCRC project there were 78 children originally identified as having the potential to be discharged from care via an SGO. Of these children 47 are no longer deemed to be in scope primarily due to carers declining this as a permanence plan, three have already been discharged from care, 14 have a plan for discharge deemed to be 'on-track' and 14 are yet to have the plan confirmed either way. Therefore, 17 new SGOs are expected to deliver the additional £190k referred to above taking the total savings from SGOs to £250k. Further work is being done to be able to manage the tracking of cost changes across the various categories of placements for this as part of the RCRC tracking.

- **Reduction in the use of agency social workers (£200k)**

Continuing the drive to reduce the use of agency to 10% of the social care established workforce (the national average is 16%), linked to the success of investing in newly qualified social workers, is expected to reduce staffing costs by £300k as against the original planned £200k.

In August this figure has reduced to 41 social workers, 10.29% of the social care workforce. Several of the agency social workers leaving were long term, senior, high

cost agency workers. The cost avoidance of these roles makes a significant impact on the savings associated with this initiative. As an example, for three of those individuals this amounts to a full year savings of £300k.

- **Regional agency social worker rate (£200k)**

A regional agreement regarding the rate paid for agency social workers was expected to save £200k in addition to budget savings for reducing agency workers. The hourly rate falls from £35.95 to £30 immediately for newly engaged social workers. There was a high risk associated with reducing existing worker rates and the strategy has been to end contracts when appropriate to do and not the service vulnerable. We took the approach of bringing in more NQSW's earlier to enable us to finish agency contracts and that's why that initiative is ahead of target savings. Due to the use of agency workers being severely restricted and the availability of suitable workers this has not resulted in the cost savings identified. However, the focus on reducing/eliminating agency social workers has resulted in higher cost avoidance being met.

- **Business Support (£200k) / Performance (£47k) & Commissioning (£800k) / Staffing (£789k)**

A review of business support is underway and a revised operating model is now due for implementation in January 2019. There has been a delay from the previously reported October 2018 due to challenges in identifying and testing the technology that will support a reduction in staff time but still deliver high level recordings of key meetings and decision making. A £750k saving will come from the new operational staffing model for Business Support achieved through the introduction of new IT and other practice and process changes.

Phase 1 was originally expected to be completed by September, implementation from October 2018 (saving of £200k in 18/19). This is now forecast for implementation in January 2018. The full year impact is estimated to be £400k with a part year effect in 2018/19 of £100k.

Phase 2 originally earmarked for implementation in June 2019 can be brought forward to run concurrently with phase 1 from Jan-19. The full year savings will be £350k with savings of £87k forecast for effect in 2018/19

If recruitment to the new structure can be completed by early December together with consideration of agreed workforce realignment arrangements (voluntary requests and if necessary the issue of compulsory notices) then in-year savings from implementation in January 2019 will be in the region of £187k.

The saving of £47k within Commissioning, Performance and Quality has now been met through staff leaving the service and posts not being immediately re-recruited to.

Commissioning savings through market management to be delivered in 2018/19 are above forecast. The additional saving is proposed to be used to fund the up-front costs of the MST-FIT service.

The commissioning service and the looked after children's service have been working together to identify 17 year old looked after children who are in residential care provision and whose needs are not being fully met by this provision. We are working with these young people and accommodation providers to deliver an alternative offer of care via semi-independent accommodation. The proposal to deliver savings is through a commitment that for those young people where it is appropriate they will be provided with a semi-independent accommodation when they are approximately 17 years old as opposed to them remaining in residential care which we know does not always provide the best preparation for adulthood. This will save in the region of £130k per young person. This financial year to date four young people (aged 16+) have transferred from residential LAC into semi-independent accommodation. Savings of £778k have been achieved during the first quarter of 2018/19, £286k is forecast from planned moves in quarters 2, 3 and 4.

Savings of £789k are projected to be delivered through effective vacancy management throughout Children's Services. The further reduction of agency social workers through appointment of Newly Qualified Social Workers in July 2018 resulted in vacancies being filled by permanent staff as opposed to temporary agency staff. The Advanced Social Worker Practitioner posts will be funded through vacancy management in 2018/19 and going forward will be funded through the efficiencies achieved in the review of the social work pathway.

- **Performance and Commissioning – stretch savings (£150k)**

The Commissioning Performance and Quality Service will find a further £150k in efficiencies which will reduce overall expenditure in the service by over 10%. The saving in-year will come from contributions from the CCG in recognition of joint working and joint commissioning. In addition, commissioning and performance officers who work on Education and SEND services will be part-funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant. The performance and quality team have provided much needed capacity and resource throughout the improvement journey.

The time is now right to review the service need going forward and to plan resource accordingly to maintain the quality of service to CYPS whilst recognising the fact the Council's and CYPS expenditure needs to reduce to achieve medium and long term financial sustainability.

An outline business case to rationalise Performance and Commissioning has been developed for 2019/20 and work is being done to try and enable £50k savings to be brought forward into this financial year.

- **Emergency Placements (£425k)**

Recruitment of permanent casual staff to reduce reliance on commissioned agency staff for emergency placement cover and a review of the process for approval will mitigate the existing pressure. The impact of this initiative (£425k) will start to show in expenditure from September/October 2018.

- **Operation Stovewood and Complex Abuse Investigations (£200k)**

The complex abuse team had already reduced in size by the removal of three social workers from the team. The remainder of the team ceased to be a separate team during September 2018, with the case responsibility transferring to the appropriate mainstream parts of the service. Alongside this, learning is being cascaded across the service to ensure the lessons learned from the investigation are embedded within the service. Operation Stovewood is generating significant work for Children's Services. The DfE (through the Fusion funding) contributes £500k per year against the original estimated cost of £700k. We are currently working to identify the real costs of Operation Stovewood which we believe to be higher than £700k (which was the front door work) and are lobbying central government for further contribution. This work to identify the true cost will include the costs relating to Children In Need, Child Protection Plans and of placements for the Looked After Children.

- **Right Child Right Care (£2,000k)**

Table 1 (below) estimated the maximum potential discharges from Looked After Care (LAC) prior to the project being initiated and before any work being undertaken to assess the feasibility of individual children being discharged from care over a 12 month period between April 18 and March 19 along with the potential timescales for those discharges to be achieved.

Right Child, Right Care

LAC numbers	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
	616	605	599	590	581	572	552	551	547	479	475	470	616
Admissions	29	28	28	28	27	27	26	26	26	23	22	22	312
Discharges	-22	-22	-22	-21	-21	-21	-20	-20	-20	-17	-17	-17	-239
Right Child, Right Care	-18	-12	-16	-16	-15	-26	-7	-10	-74	-10	-10	-10	-224
LAC reduction	-11	-5	-9	-10	-9	-20	-1	-4	-68	-5	-5	-5	-151
	605	599	590	581	572	552	551	547	479	475	470	465	465

Following this estimate more focussed work was undertaken with managers, social workers, IROs and carers in order to identify those LAC who could realistically have a plan for their discharge from care being implemented between the start of the project in February and the end of 2018.

At set up of the implementation of the RCRC project there were 170 LAC confirmed as being identified as having the potential to be discharged from care if more focussed social work activity was supported by senior managers. The projected discharge plan was then revised as set out in table 2 (below).

Table 2: Right Child, Right Care

Date of update: 4th September 2018

	TARGET DISCHARGES				ACTUAL DISCHARGES (In Month)				PROGRESS ON BASELINE (Cumulative)		
As at month end (or date of update)	Within workstream	Will Turn 18	Original Total Target	Projected completion month – those still in care and in scope	Target workstream	Turned 18	Others not in workstream	Total Actual	Number Remaining	Reduction	% Reduction
Jan-18					2		1	3	601	3	0.50%
Feb-18	6	1	7	0	7	1	5	13	588	16	2.60%
Mar-18	17	4	21	0	16	3	4	23	565	39	6.50%
Apr-18	9	10	19	0	6	9	1	16	549	55	9.10%
May-18	8	4	12	0	8	6	2	16	533	71	11.80%
Jun-18	11	2	13	0	4	2	2	8	525	79	13.10%
Jul-18	15	8	23	0	6	8	6	20	505	99	16.40%
Aug-18	8	4	12	0	1	4	1	6	499	105	17.40%
Sep-18	26	2	28	7	0	1	0	1	498	106	17.50%
Oct-18	2	5	7	10	0	0	0	0			
Nov-18	5	5	10	18	0	0	0	0			
Dec-18	63	6	69	36	0	0	0	0			
TOTAL	170	51	221	71	50	34	22	106		Target	37%

The total cohort was divided into a number of work-streams including reconciliation with birth parents, adoption, discharge of Care Orders for children living at home subject of Placement with Parents Regulations and supporting long-term foster placements to Special Guardianship Orders.

Of the original 170 LAC, 67 have subsequently been taken out of scope for a variety of reasons including children displaying a period of unsettled behaviour leading to concerns that an early discharge from care may not be in their best interests, protracted legal processes such as when birth parents legally contest the Permanence Plan and foster carers not wishing to become SGO carers for financial or other reasons.

As a counter-balance to this, the core principles of the project have been so well embraced by the wider CYPS so that some children not included in an original work-stream and therefore not considered appropriate for ending their care period at the instigation of RCRC have also been discharged from care.

As a result it can be evidenced that since the start of the project 50 children in scope have been discharged from care and a further 34 LAC have reached the age of 18. A further 22 children outside of a work-stream have also been discharged from care meaning that a total of 106 LAC have left care since the initiation of the project.

This equates to 29% of the total original RCRC scope (49% if you take out those 67 children who have been taken out of scope). In total, 17.5% of the 604 children in care at the project's baseline have now ceased care.

It has been consistently stated that the most significant impact is not likely to be noted until towards the end of 2018 given the timescales involved in the legal processes required to discharge a child from care and so this 29% has arguably been achieved ahead of schedule.

A full review of the children in the individual work-streams is underway to assess whether anymore of the remaining c 480 LAC can be brought into scope and supported to a more accelerated discharge from care.

The RCRC project has had such a direct and indirect impact on the discharge process that, over the course of the past 12 months, 207 children have been discharged from care – almost exactly 32% of the total current of LAC population (645 at 4th September).

There is the potential risk that if the numbers of LAC admissions continue to increase the LAC social workers will have less capacity to undertake the labour intensive tasks necessary to facilitate these discharges from care thus creating some delay in the process. However, senior managers are working on a range of options to address this risk.

RCRC, in 18/19 has generated gross savings of £891.9k – this is a significant improvement from using an average cost, but it is very much work in progress and we need to track the costs we are still incurring, if any, for those children whose placement arrangements have changed. Those in the original target group have contributed £360k towards this saving.

- **Right Child, Right Plan**

Building on the successful and ongoing work of the right child right care project the acting assistant director for safeguarding is leading a piece of work encompassing the concept of right child right plan. There is not a determined cohort of children within the scope of this work as it could apply to all children open to the service, therefore as opposed to working with pre-determined cohorts of children there is work being developed to review plans for children at a variety of stages of intervention. This includes a variety of activity led by a number of senior managers; some of the activity is described below.

The work within right child right plan seeks to build on the signs of safety and restorative practice methodologies and assist in practitioners being asked the right questions at the right time to maximise the chances of the right interventions to achieve positive change being put in place. There is a separate piece of work required to fully review the social work pathway to help us move from a process driven service to a service which minimises transfer points whilst still supporting

team managers and practitioners to have manageable spans of control. It is anticipated that the work to progress the review of the social work pathway will take place during July – Oct 2018 with full recommendations being presented in November 2018.

Activity	Responsible Officer(s)	Timescales
Regular review of child in need planning, in particular over 9 months, to ensure timely progression of plans and maximising use of early help to support step down from social work services and family group conferencing to help identify strength within families to develop a sustainable safe plan. This work commenced in the locality social work service during 2016 and is now embedded within the service but remains a high priority.	Service managers – locality social work service reporting to the head of service for locality social work.	Work commenced in 2016 and remains scheduled throughout the year to ensure minimal drift.
Reviewing in detail all children who have become looked after to understand in 'live' time why they became looked after and reflect this learning back into the service.	Acting assistant director alongside heads of service. It is anticipated that this work will become a shared responsibility between heads of service and the service managers for locality social work and duty services with oversight from the assistant director.	Commenced in May 2018 and is scheduled to continue monthly.
Robust challenge being led by the safeguarding chairs in respect of querying whether child protection planning is required as opposed child in need planning.	Service manager for safeguarding reporting to head of service for safeguarding, quality and learning.	Commenced March 2018, some more work is required to detail activity for next 6 months.
Review of decision making process in respect of legal planning.	The work is being led by the head of service for first response in conjunction with the other heads of service and reporting to the acting	Commenced June 2018 anticipate recommendations during July 2018.

Further savings for implementation in this, and future, financial years are being evaluated and include

- A review of the use of consultancy;
- A further review of non-social care vacancies;
- A review of case-holding agency workers will be progressed and will evaluate the impact on average caseloads of reducing these agency staff numbers. The financial appendix assumes a reduction of agency workers to result in an average caseload of 20.

Work is underway to look at how to best scale up existing evidence based interventions to further reduce expenditure in 2018/19 and future years.

A realignment of the Early Help budget to release up to £1m to redirect into targeted edge of care services has been delayed until the end of 2018/19. The urgency to maximise benefits in 2018/19 and to guarantee the full year cost benefit in 2019/20 would support upfront investment in order to enhance the Edge of Care offer.

Further work as outlined above is underway and will include possible acceleration of any schemes brought forward for savings in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Summary Sheet

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 7 November 2018

Report Title

Annual Compliments and Complaints Report

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

Jackie Mould, Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement
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Stuart Purcell, Corporate Complaints Officer
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Ward(s) Affected

All wards

Summary

The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received in 2017/18 in line with statutory requirements.
- b) Identify key trends within complaints and compliments over a five year period.

Recommendations**Members of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are asked to:**

1. Note the Annual Compliments and Complaints Report for 2017/18.
2. Provide comments on areas that require further improvement regarding complaints handling and reporting.

List of Papers Included

1. Annual Compliments and Complaints Report, 2017/18

Background Papers

N/A

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

N/A

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Annual Compliments and Complaints Report

1. Recommendations

1.1 Members of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are asked to:

1. Note the Annual Compliments and Complaints Report for 2017/18.
2. Provide comments on areas that require further improvement regarding complaints handling and reporting.

2. Background

2.1 In December 2017, a review of Whistleblowing and Complaints was undertaken by the Commissioners' Office. Based on the findings of this review as well as the feedback received from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for the Annual Compliments and Complaints Report for 2016/17, it was recommended that the report be redesigned for 2017/18.

2.2 The review included a series of recommendations regarding how the annual report should be redesigned. These recommendations were as follows:

- Graphical tables should be used to indicate trends over a longer period of time – (the previous report was limited to comparing trends over two years.)
- There should be less of an emphasis on the Directorate breakdowns, with more of a focus on lessons learned and the impact on the service.
- The previous report was found to be too long and difficult to navigate. It was recommended that future reports should be streamlined.
- It was determined that there was too much confusion surrounding the distinction between 'informal' and 'formal' complaints and that one classification would be preferable.

2.3 The review also noted that whilst the annual report is shared with senior staff in directorates, it is not routinely shared at the highest level and could be included in strategic council-wide improvement discussions.

2.4 This feedback has influenced the production of this annual report as well as the recommended next steps for 2018/19 to continue to improve the way that complaints are handled and reported on.

3. Key Issues

3.1 The performance headlines outlined within the report include:

- The overall number of complaints received by the Council increased to 1,304 in 2017/18 from 1,284 in 2016/17. This is the first time in several years that the overall number of complaints has increased. The biggest increases were in Regeneration and Environment Services which received 39 more complaints in comparison with 2016/17 and Children and Young People's Services which received 21 more.

- The two highest areas for complaints were Housing (427) and Regeneration and Environment Services (426). The third highest area was Children's and Young People's Services (258). This is consistent with previous years' figures, as these three areas typically receive the highest volume of complaints.
- Overall, 79% of complaints were responded to within timescales, compared with 80% in 2016/17. The response rate dropped significantly in Children and Young People's Services (68% 2016/17 to 59% 2017/18). The response rate also dropped slightly in Adult Social Care (73% 2016/17 to 71% 2017/18) and Finance and Customer Service's (96% 2016/17 to 91% 2017/18). Response rates in other areas were maintained or improved.
- Despite the increase in complaints, the number of compliments received has increased at a faster pace - 1,064 received in 2017/18, in comparison to 979 in 2016/17.
- The most frequent category of complaints received by the Council was 'quality of service', accounting for approximately two thirds of all complaints (834 of 1,304.)
- In comparison with the previous year, more complaints were escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure, at 52 (in contrast with 38 in 2016/17.) Additionally, of the 1,087 complaints that were taken through the Council's formal complaints procedures, more were upheld in 2017/18 at 260 or 24% in contrast with 209 or 20% in 2016/17.

3.2 The Annual Review letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) was received on 18th July 2018, setting out their records of referred complaint investigations. In total 58 complaints and enquiries were directed to the LGO, of which 5 were subject to full investigation, which is a historically low figure. Out of the 5, 4 were upheld and 1 was not upheld (80% upheld rate). This compares to 42 enquiries, 13 investigations with 8 upheld and 5 not upheld in 2016-17 (62% upheld rate).

3.3 Based on a statistical comparator group of 16 other Local Authorities, Rotherham Council had the fewest number of complaints and enquiries investigated by the LGO.

3.4 A number of service improvements have been made over the year, based on the feedback from customers. Key themes of service improvements have included the training and performance management of staff; reviews of processes and policies; and the revision of communication materials. Examples of the improvements made are included within the report.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 The annual report includes several recommendations regarding how complaints handling and reporting can be improved over 2018/19, including:

- Exploring how the new e-case management system can be utilised to keep Elected Members routinely appraised of progress regarding complaints.
- Developing the training offer for officers who sit outside of the Complaints Team.
- Focussing more on the lessons learned from upheld complaints and how these can be addressed effectively.
- Continuing to report the key themes emerging from customer feedback into Directorate Leadership Teams and including complaints as a key source of intelligence within the performance review sessions for senior officers.
- Working to improve performance within statutory timescales.
- Reporting on improved intelligence around complainants, particularly with regards to equality and diversity information.
- Developing further the way that complaints are categorised and tracked, to better reflect the complexity and diversity of the feedback received.
- Using the new neighbourhood working model to work with residents on the issues that matter most to them, including any opportunities to learn from feedback and complaints.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The findings of this report have been reported to each Directorate Leadership Team to enable key areas for improvement to be identified.
- 5.2 There has been no further consultation on this report beyond the requirements of internal processes, alongside consultation with the Cabinet member.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The proposed improvements outlined in section 4 are to be implemented in 2018/19. Progress against these actions will be reported on as part of the annual report for 2018/19.
- 6.2 The Complaints Team will be accountable for leading on these improvements and for engaging with Directorates on how the approach to handling complaints can be improved. Each Directorate will be responsible for ensuring that the improvements identified are disseminated and implemented within each area of the organisation.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 Where appropriate, financial remediation is occasionally offered to complainants in the form of refunds or corrections. This is determined on a case-by-case basis depending upon the grounds of the complaint.
- 7.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 The Council's approach to handling complaints is informed by the following key pieces of legislation:

- i. Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (Making Experiences Count).
- ii. The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.
- iii. Localism Act 2011 (for Housing Services complaints)

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. However, Human Resources will provide support on further developing the training offer on handling complaints for officers outside of the Complaints Team.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The statutory complaints procedure for Children's and Adult Social Care provides an opportunity for children and young people and vulnerable adults to have their voices heard and to improve service delivery.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 Investigations through the complaint procedure consider all relevant policy and legislation, including those relating to equalities and human rights.

11.2 Improvements have been made to the way that complaints are recorded to ensure that information relating to equality and diversity are captured where the complainant is comfortable to disclose this information.

11.3 This information will be reported on to Directorate Leadership Teams throughout the year and will be included within the 2018/19 annual report.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 As outlined in the annual report, improving the way that complaints are dealt with requires a whole-Council approach, with services committing to responding to complaints in a timely fashion and using the intelligence provided by the Complaints Team to make service improvements. It is the responsibility of every service to make responding to complaints and learning from customer feedback a priority.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The Council continues to face budget pressures and the need to deliver significant financial savings in 2018/19. There is a risk that the impact of delivering these savings will lead to a rise in complaint volumes.

13.2 It will therefore, be vital that the Council continues to manage customer expectations around what is sustainable for the Council to deliver. One way of approaching this will be through the upcoming budget consultation.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Jackie Mould, Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement

Approvals obtained from:

	Named Officer	Date
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Judith Badger	30/10/18
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Dermot Pearson	29/10/18
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)	N/A	N/A
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	Lee Mann	16/10/18

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>



ANNUAL REPORT COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS

1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018

www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints

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1 INTRODUCTION

Rotherham Council is committed to being a responsive organisation that listens to customers and treats everyone with respect. Therefore, both customer feedback and the way that the Council responds to this feedback are vital indicators of the overall performance of the organisation.

The purpose of this report is to outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received 1st April 2017-31st March 2018, including key themes in customer feedback and identifying trends over five years.

It should be noted that based on the feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the annual report for 2016/17 and a review of complaints that was undertaken by the Commissioners' Office in 2017/18, there have been a number of changes in the way that this report is presented. These changes include using graphs and infographics to present the data more visually and reducing the volume of text.

The most notable change has been eliminating the distinction between 'informal' and 'formal' complaints and moving towards one classification. This means that the overall complaints figures within this report refer to all of the complaints received by the Complaints Team each year, regardless of whether or not they were taken through the formal complaints procedures.

Whilst customer feedback provides a valuable insight into how the Council is performing, complaints and compliments figures do not reflect the full picture. This report should therefore, be understood within the context of the number of customers interacting with each service, key developments that occurred within 2017/18 and the quarterly performance reports on the Council Plan.

2 KEY HEADLINES 2017/18

**20 more
complaints**

More complaints were received (1,304 in 2017/18 compared with 1,284 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 1.56 %)



More compliments were received (1,064 in 2017/18 compared with 979 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 8.68 %)



More complaints were upheld at 262 (203 upheld in 2016/17)



79 % of complaints were responded to within timescales (compared with 80 % in 2016/17)



A historically low number of complaints were investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman (5 in 2017/18 in comparison with 13 in 2016/17)



More complaints around quality of service (an increase of 27.12 %)



Fewer complaints around actions of staff (a decrease of 18.66 %)



More complaints relating to Regeneration and Environment Services and Children's and Young People's Services



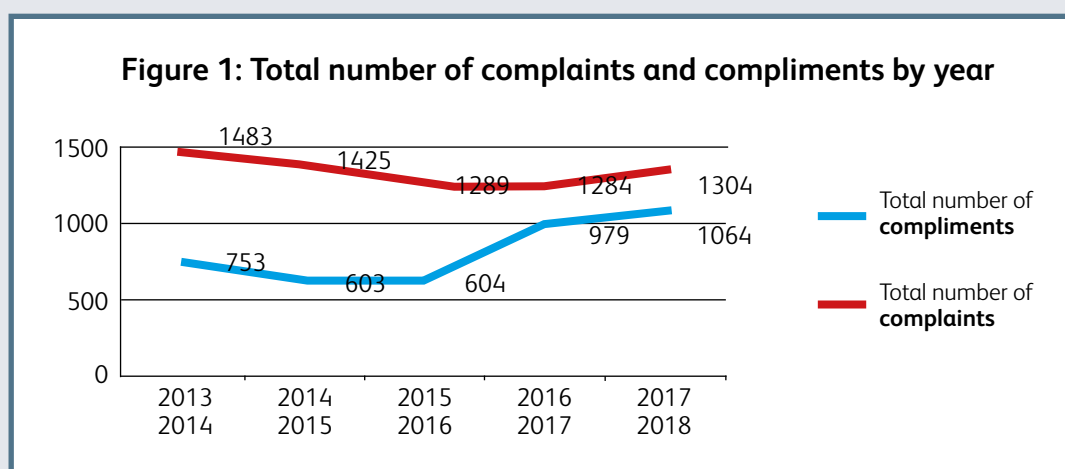
Fewer complaints relating to Finance and Customer Services and Adult Social Care Services



Approximately the same number of complaints received for Housing Services and Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate

3 OVERVIEW

3.1 Summary



In 2017/18, the overall number of complaints received by the Council increased by 1.56%, going from 1,284 in 2016/17 to 1,304. However, this moderate increase has not brought the total volume of complaints up to the numbers recorded in 2014/15 and the preceding financial year. Furthermore, Rotherham Council provides a wide variety of services to over 263,400 residents. In this context, 1,304 complaints is only a fraction of the number of customers interacting with services each year (see Appendix Two which provides an indication of the number of customer contacts received through the Council's customer service centres in 2017/18).

The number of compliments received by the Council also increased, from 979 in 2016/17 to 1,064 (amounting to an increase of 8.68%). The fact that both compliments and complaints increased over the year is a positive indicator that the Council is making it easy and accessible for customers to provide feedback. Additionally, the fact that compliments are increasing at a faster pace than complaints reflects positively on the performance of the organisation.

The overall increase in complaints is explained by a rise in two areas: Regeneration and Environment Services which received 39 more complaints in comparison with 2016/17 and Children and Young People's Services which received 21 more. In contrast, complaints regarding Adult's Services and Finance and Customer Services both decreased over the year, with complaints for Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate and Housing remaining approximately the same. Further details are available within each of the Directorate sections.

Subsequently, there was an increase in compliments received for most areas.

The following diagrams show the breakdown of complaints and compliments by Directorate in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

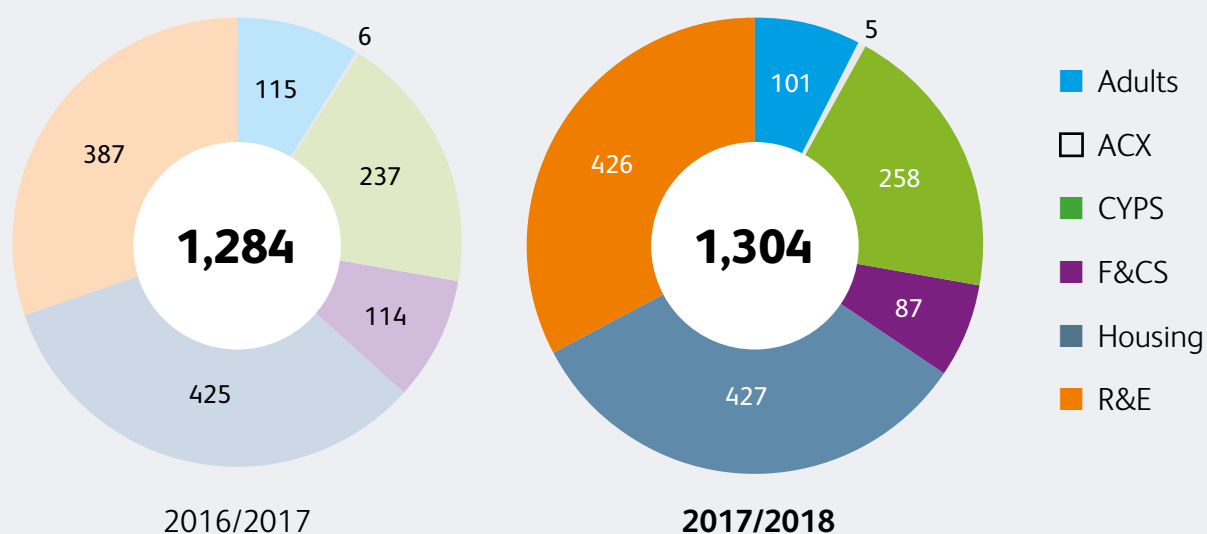
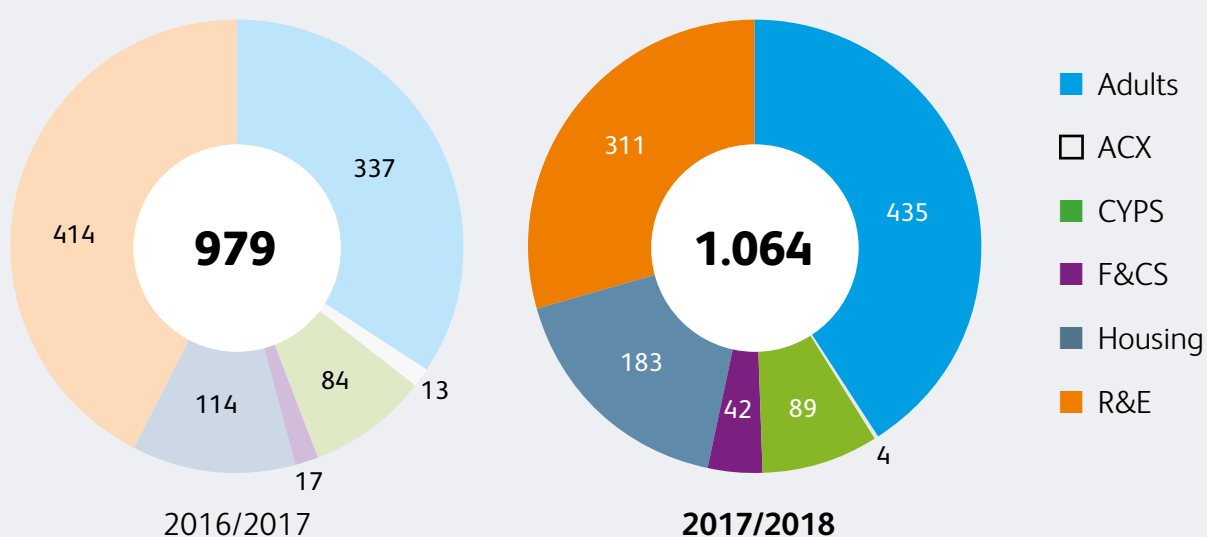
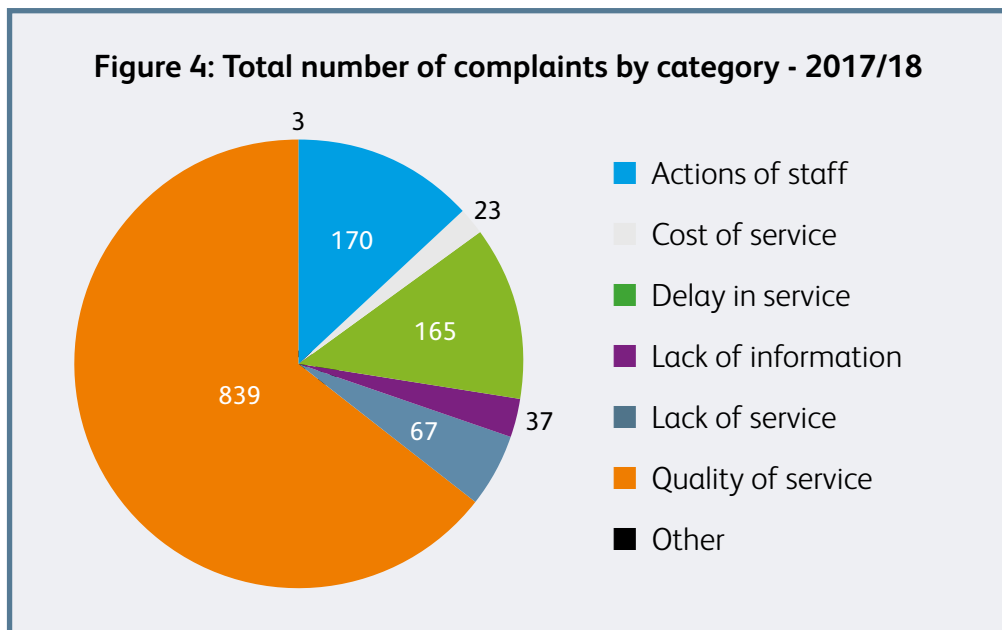
Figure 2: Total number of complaints by Directorate – 2016/2017 and 2017/2018**Figure 3: Total number of compliments by Directorate – 2016/2017 and 2017/2018**

Figure 2 demonstrates that the two highest areas for complaints were Housing and Regeneration and Environment Services, followed by Children and Young People's Services. This is consistent with previous years' figures, as these three areas typically receive the highest volume of complaints.

It is also evident from these diagrams that some areas receive a lower volume of overall customer feedback and this is generally correlated to the number of customers that are served by the Directorate. Therefore, a Directorate receiving a higher volume of complaints is not necessarily reflective of poor performance and should be understood within the context of services provided as well as the overall direction of travel of the figures.

As part of the process of monitoring and handling customer feedback, the Complaints Team is responsible for categorising complaints based on the subject matter. The following diagram outlines the categories of complaints received in 2017/18.



Approximately 64 % of all complaints were categorised as quality of service. Moreover, complaints within this category have increased from 660 in 2016/17 to 839 in 2017/18 (which is an increase of 27.12 %).

On the other hand, complaints around actions of staff decreased from the previous year, with 170 complaints in 2017/18 in contrast with 209 complaints in 2016/17 (which is a decrease of 18.66 %).

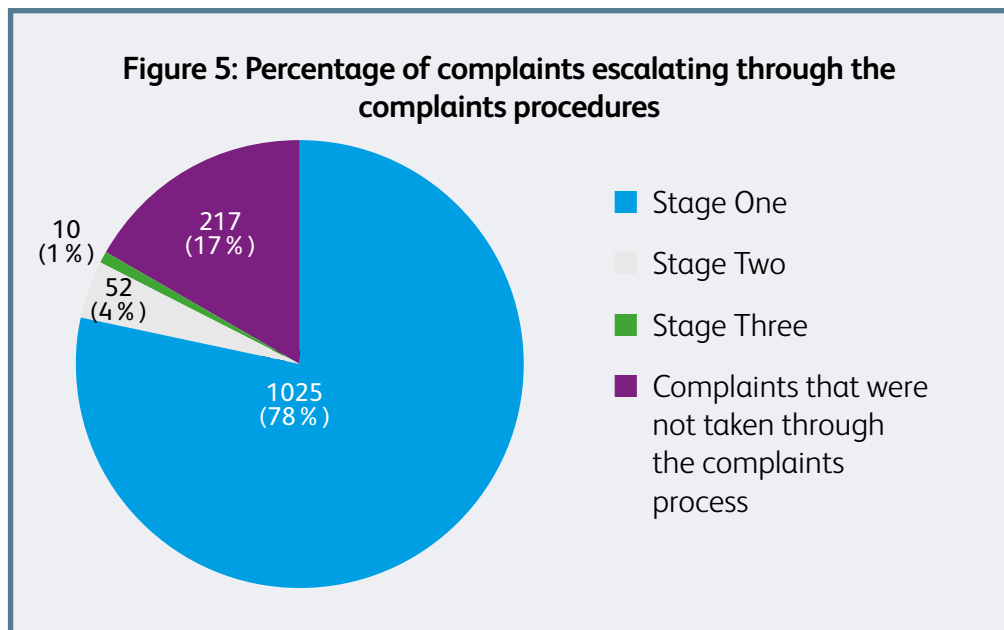
Delays in service also accounted for a substantial portion of complaints, with 165 complaints (or 12.65 % falling into this category). Whilst quality of service and actions of staff were significant categories across all Directorates, delays in service emerged as a prevalent category within Housing Services in particular, with 116 of the 165 complaints around delays in service coming from this area (see section 7).

These categories are broad and aim to give a high-level overview which reflects the standard approach taken to complaint categorisation taken within other local authorities. However, due to the fact that these categories are broad, it is important to acknowledge that they don't necessarily capture the complexities of each complaint. Reviewing the approach to complaints categorisation is one of the key areas for improvement for 2018/19, as outlined in section 11.

3.2 Dealing with Complaints

RMBC follows four different complaints procedures: housing, children's social care, adult social care and the corporate complaints procedure. The former three complaints procedures are legislative and involve individual statutory requirements around timescales.

A relatively small portion of complaints are not taken through the formal complaints procedure – (formally referred to as informal complaints). These are complaints that are in relation to Council policy or decisions that have been formally approved in Cabinet. In these cases, the complaint is not taken through the formal procedure as it cannot be upheld, however all complainants receive a formal response. This report includes these complaints in the overall total figures. In 2017/18, this amounted to 217 out of a total of 1,304 complaints.

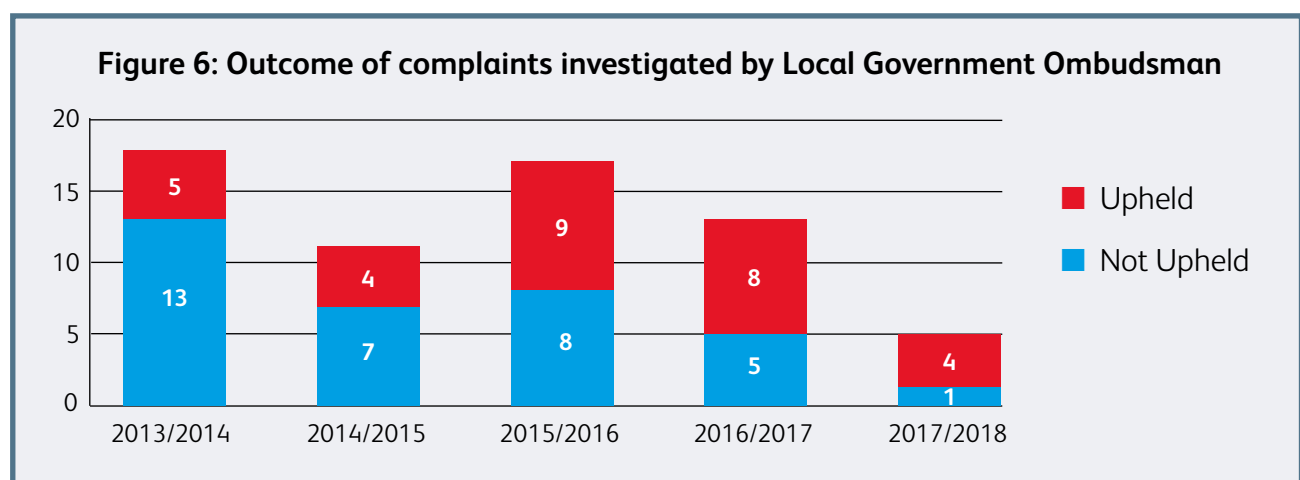


The diagram above outlines the number of complaints that reached the various stages of the complaints procedures.

The extent to which complaints escalate through the complaints procedure is an important measure, as it is preferable to find resolutions for customers at the earliest possible stage. In comparison with the previous year, in 2017/18, more complaints escalated to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure, at 52 (in contrast with 38 in 2016/17). Additionally, of the 1,087 complaints that were taken through the Council's formal complaints procedures, more were upheld in 2017/18 at 260 or 24% in contrast with 209 or 20% in 2016/17.

3.4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

If complainants are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint as investigated through the Council's complaints procedures, they can involve the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO). 58 complaints and enquiries were directed to the LGO in 2017/18, and of these 58, the LGO only investigated 5 which is a historically low figure. Figure 6 (see below) provides some context; on average, approximately 15 complaints were investigated by the LGO per year between the financial years of 2013/14 and 2016/17.



The unusually low figure in 2017/18 meant that although a greater percentage of investigated complaints were upheld by the LGO (80% in contrast with 62% in 2016/17) this still amounted to fewer complaints being upheld overall (4 in contrast with 8 in 2016/17).

Appendix One outlines the LGO decisions for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council for 2017/18 and how these compare with statistical neighbour authorities.

This demonstrates that in 2017/18, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council was subject to fewer LGO investigations than all statistical neighbours. Furthermore, it shows that the majority of complaints that were brought to the LGO were deemed invalid or incomplete, referred back for local resolution or closed after initial enquiries. This along with the low number of investigations reflects positively that the Council's complaints procedures are working effectively to find fair and appropriate local resolutions.

Of the 4 complaints that were investigated and upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman, one was related to Children and Young People's Services, one was related to Adult Services, one was related to Finance and Customer Services and another was related to Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate. The complaint that was investigated and not upheld was in relation to Children and Young People's Services.

3.4 Housing Ombudsman

From April 2013, the Housing Ombudsman has dealt with all complaints regarding social housing. There was one decision taken by the Housing Ombudsman in 2017/18. This complaint was in relation to vandalism at the complainant's property and was not upheld.

4 PERFORMANCE

4.1 Performance Overview

Performance relating to complaints is monitored via the Council Plan and reported to the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The plan includes the following actions and measures:

Priority 3 – A strong community in a clean, safe environment

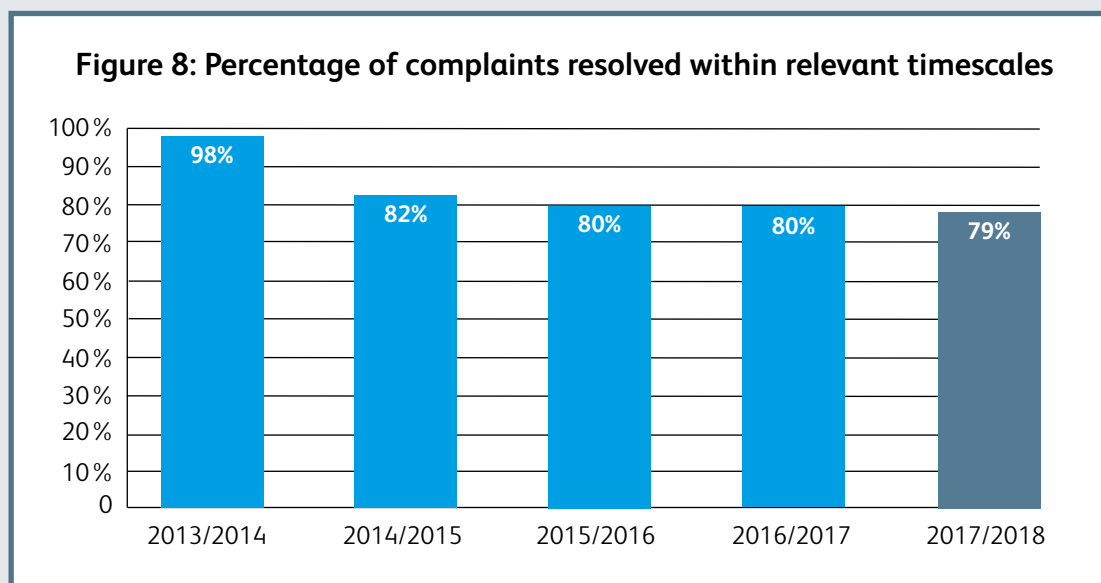
- Action – Deliver a cleaner, greener Rotherham to ensure that it is a safe and attractive place to live, work and visit
 - Measure - Total number of customer contacts by service area and overall total – Service areas include a) Street Cleansing, b) Grounds Maintenance, c) Litter, d) Waste Management. Contacts measured are: i) Official complaints, ii) Compliments received, iii) Service Requests (75 cumulative official complaints target)

Priority 5 – A modern efficient council

- Action – Treating customer complaints with respect and dealing with them in an efficient and outcome-focussed way
 - Measure - % of complaints closed within timescale (85 % target)

Performance is also monitored through service plans and regular (monthly or quarterly) performance reports are presented to Directorate Leadership Team meetings.

The following graph compares the overall Council performance against timescales for the past five years:



Despite the increase in complaints in 2017/18, performance remained roughly stable with 79% of complaints being responded to within timescales – (80% were responded to within timescales in 2016/17). However, this means that the percentage of complaints closed within the relevant timescale remained short of the target within the Council Plan of 85%. Performance was partially caused by challenges in responding to complaints within Regeneration and Environment Services, Adult Services and Children and Young People's Services. Despite not achieving the target, performance improved during the quarter 4 period.

There is also a separate measure within the Council Plan to monitor the number of customer contacts for street cleansing, grounds maintenance, litter and waste management. In 2017/18, 84 complaints were taken through the complaints procedure for these areas against a target of 75.

4.2 How we are improving

Improving the way that complaints are dealt with requires a whole-Council approach, with services prioritising complaints and making improvements based on the feedback from customers. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every service to make responding to complaints and learning from customer feedback a priority.

A number of service improvements have been made over the year based on feedback from our customers. Key themes of service improvements have included the training and performance management of staff; reviews of processes and policies; and the revision of communication materials. More detail is provided on the specific lessons learned and service improvements that have been made within each Directorate section.

Further work will be undertaken in 2018/19 to continue to improve the approach to dealing with complaints. This is outlined in the 'Next Steps, 2018/19' section at the end of this report.

5 ADULT SERVICES

Figure 9: Total number of complaints and compliments relating to Adult Social Care

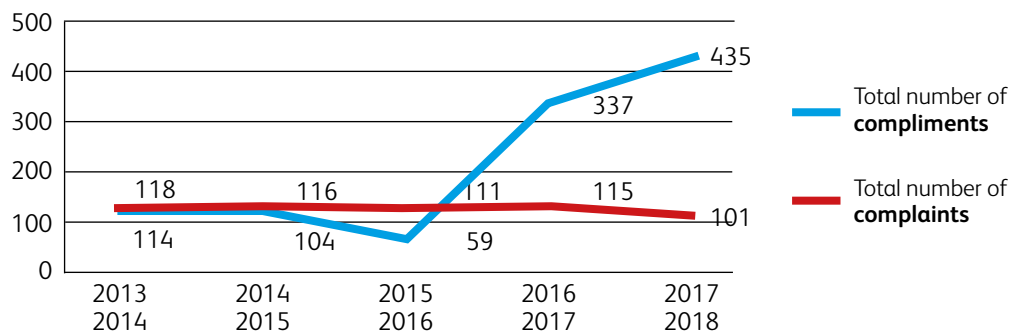


Figure 10: Percentage of complaints relating to Adult Services responded to within timescales

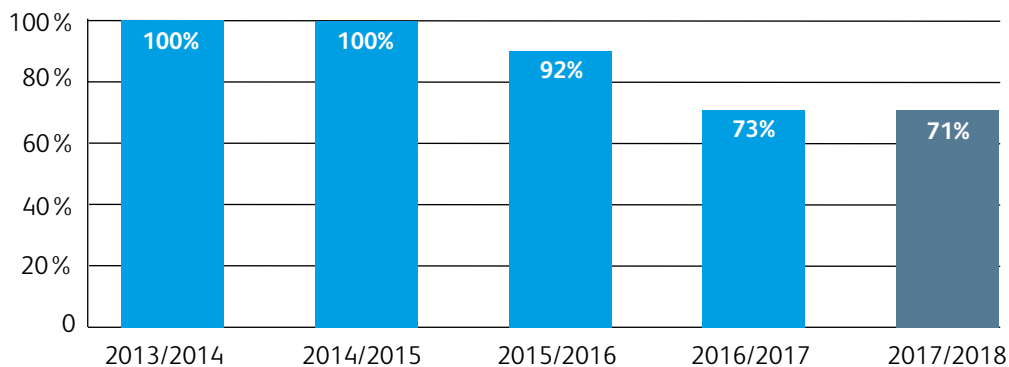
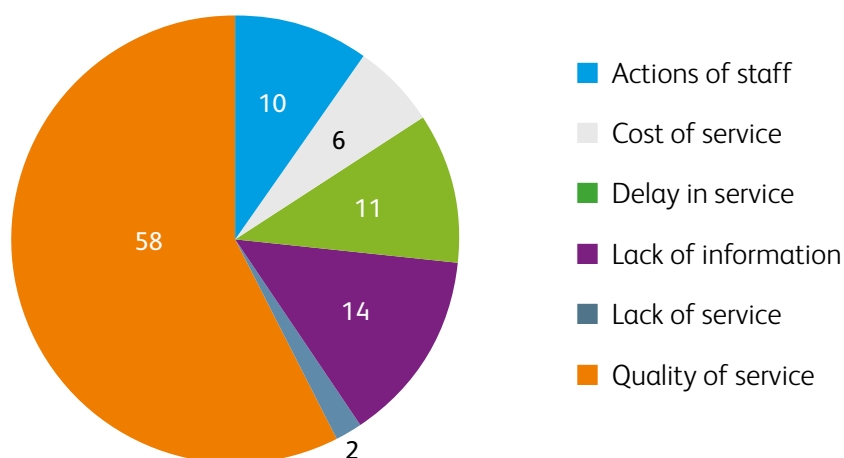


Figure 11: Complaints about Adult Services by category - 2017/18

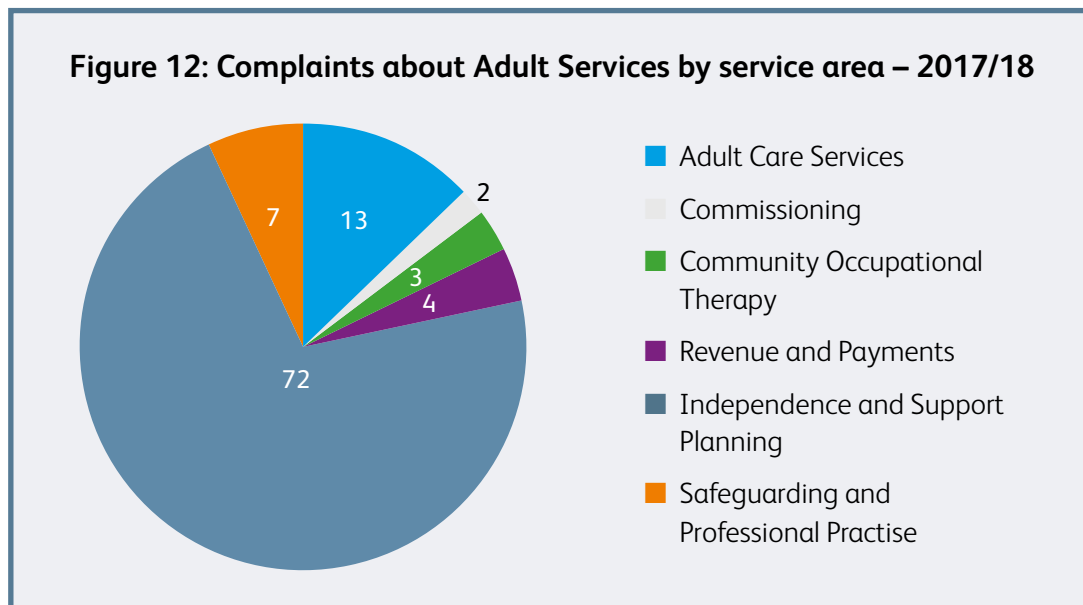


5.1 Key Headlines

- Fewer complaints about Adult Services were received (101 in 2017/18 compared with 115 in 2016/17, which is a decrease of approximately 12.17 %).
- More compliments were received about Adult Services (435 in 2017/18 compared with 337 in 2016/17 and amounting to an increase of 29.08 %).
- 91 complaints were taken through the formal complaints procedure. Of these complaints, 81 reached Stage One, 8 reached Stage Two and 2 reached Stage Three.
- More complaints were upheld (25 in 2017/18 compared with 14 in 2016/17).
- One complaint was investigated and upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- Over half of complaints were regarding quality of service (58 of 101 complaints).
- 71 % of complaints were responded to within statutory timescales (65 of the 91 complaints).

5.2 Complaints

The following diagram outlines the complaints within Adult Services in 2017/18 by service area:



The highest number of complaints received was in relation to Independence and Support Planning services, with this area accounting for over 70 % of all complaints relating to Adult Services. The high proportion of complaints relating to this area is consistent with previous years, and is reflective of both the nature of the services provided by this area and the high volume of customers using the service. Comparatively, the other areas received a relatively minimal number of complaints.

The overall decrease from 2016/17 in complaints relating to Adult Services is explained by a moderate decrease in every area, with the exception of Community Occupational Therapy which received the same number of complaints and Revenue and Payments which received two more complaints than the previous year.

Of the 91 complaints that were taken through the formal complaints procedures, 25 were upheld and 32 were partially upheld. Examining the themes within upheld and partially upheld complaints is particularly important to determine how the service can be improved. Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Adult Services complaints were:

- Delays in service, including around transitions and assessments
- Lack of contact and poor communication
- Inaccuracies around information provided

It is therefore recommended that these are key themes for Adult Services to monitor and address in 2018/19.

Furthermore, 71 % of complaints were responded to within timescales. This is below the Council average of 79 % and falls short of the Council Plan target of 85 %. This is partially explained by the more complex process relating to the adult social care complaints procedure and the complexity of some of the complaints that are received for this area.

It is a statutory requirement to report annually on the complaints received for Public Health services. No complaints were received in 2017/18 in relation to Public Health.

5.3 Lessons Learned

Adult Services has made several service improvements in 2017/18 following the feedback from customers. Examples of these are outlined below:

Complaint	Lessons Learned
Lack of information about changes to care package following discharge.	Improvements were made to invoicing to include a weekly breakdown of charges due. This was implemented from October 2017.
Little or no communication from the Locality Teams and had the complainant not made enquiries to the Financial Assessment Team, they would have continued to assume that their family member was in temporary care.	It was identified that these issues may have arisen due to the pressures in the system across localities, backlogs and the volume of work assessments. To address this, six teams have become three, and this has enabled a more controlled and efficient approach. Additionally, temporary and crisis cases are at the centre of a review programme.
Standard of care at Davies Court.	Individual supervisions were completed with the team and communication and dignity was discussed. A review of communication between NHS, Therapists and RMBC staff was also undertaken which has led to the introduction of conference calls each morning. The feedback on this has been positive as it has established improved lines of communication.
Concerns over the way the customer advice leaflet 'Access to Rotherham' is written, specifically the advice around 24 hour care in the home.	The distribution of the booklet was stopped pending a review of the content. The content was reviewed and revised. This has helped to ensure the information distributed is clear and consistent.

Case Study: Approach to Transitions

Complaints were received over transitions and the way this had been handled. Shaped by this customer feedback, a new Transitions Team was established in October 2017, to work with Children and Young People's Services, Health and Housing colleagues to ensure improved outcomes for young adults.

The purpose of the Transitions Team is to:

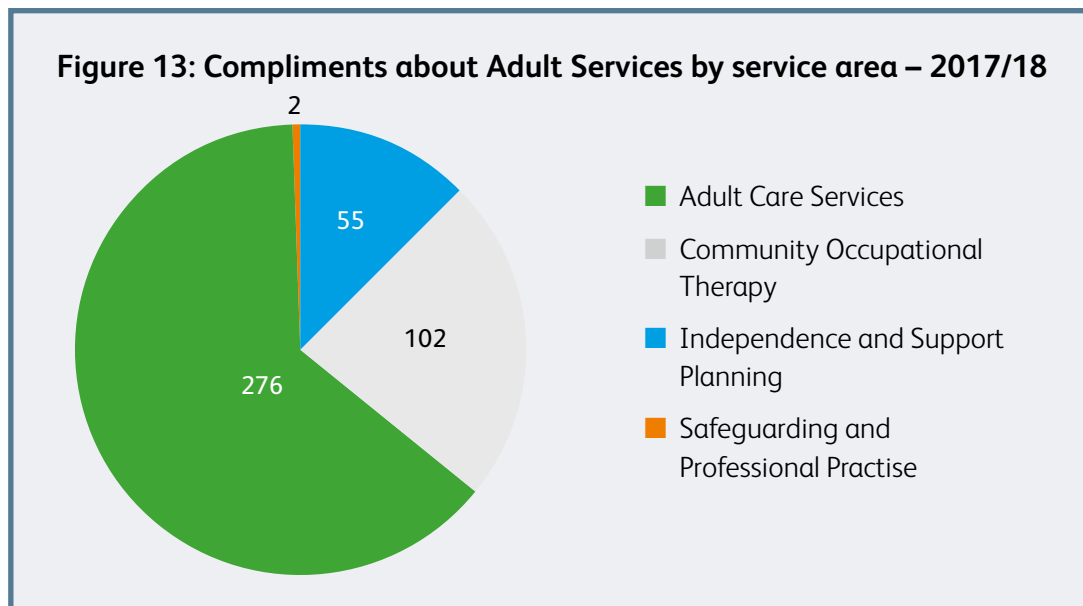
- Take lead responsibility for the young person when they reach 18 years
- Maintain responsibility for young adults on an education, health and care plan who remain in education and have social care needs

- Complete a full Care Act assessment prior to transferring the cases to locality teams for ongoing reviews.

The team now attend joint meetings with Children and Young People's Services around current cases, have clear lines of communication and actively work in partnership with involved professionals. It has been evidenced (following audits) that the standards of assessments and support planning are of an excellent standard. The team is also now an integral part of the local special educational needs and disability offer. There are future plans to recruit an additional full time social worker to further improve timeliness of response and reinforce the Council's post-18 provision.

5.4 Compliments

The following diagram outlines the compliments received about Adult Services by area:



The area that received the highest volume of compliments was Adult Care Services, at 276 (or over 63 %). Within Adult Care Services, Enablement Services (Provider) received a significant portion of these compliments at 123.

It is also notable that Community Occupational Therapy, which only received 3 complaints over the year, also received a significant volume of compliments at 102 (or approximately 23 %). This is a positive indicator that this area is achieving positive outcomes for Rotherham residents.

Examples of compliments received are outlined below.

Adult Care Services:

- “All the carers were efficient, caring and friendly. They made you feel you were supported at this difficult episode in your life....very comforting knowing you could get the help and advice you needed. Thank you all so much.”
- “I can honestly say I have never been looked after by such professional caring and thoughtful people - thank you all of you”
- “My grateful thanks for the way you have responded and cared for my mother, you cared for me as well giving me peace of mind knowing you would be there for her 24 hours a day - you are outstanding.”

Community Occupational Therapy:

- “The service could not have been any better, I was surprised by the speed that it was carried out, thank you very much”
- “Sincere thanks for the improvement made to my home thanks to the auspices of your department.... everyone concerned acted most professionally and the works were carried out with a minimum of disruption and without any mess”

Independence and Support Planning:

- “Thank you for your prompt response and dealing with this emergency at such short notice”
- “The understanding and compassion you showed us made what to us was a traumatic experience more bearable....we will not forget your concern and kindness.”
- “Hi Jo, we just wanted to reiterate a very big THANK YOU to you. You have got so much done for Sash in the short space of time you’ve been dealing with us. Like I said some people are lovely both inside and out and go that bit further for someone else, you are one of those people and we will not forget you.”

Safeguarding and Professional Practice:

- “Sincerely grateful for the professionalism and kindness of Liz and her colleagues - they were calm, clear and professional - thank you so much.”

6 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Figure 14: Total number of complaints and compliments about Children and Young People's Services

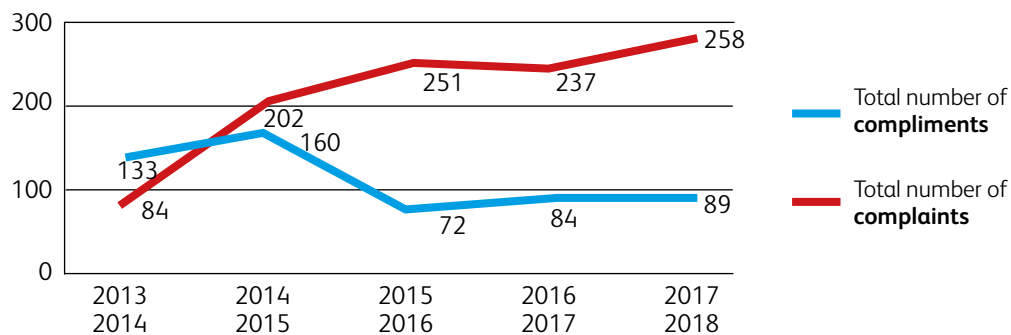


Figure 15: Percentage of complaints about Children and Young People's Services responded to within timescales

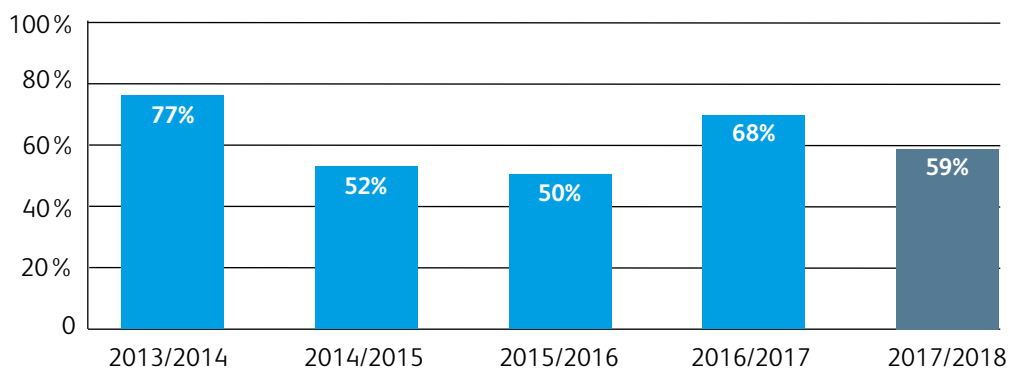
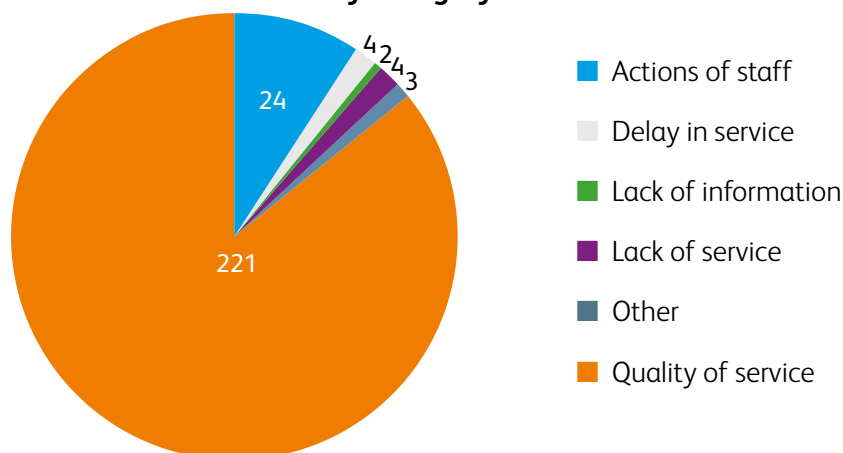


Figure 16: Complaints about Children and Young People's Services by category - 2017/18

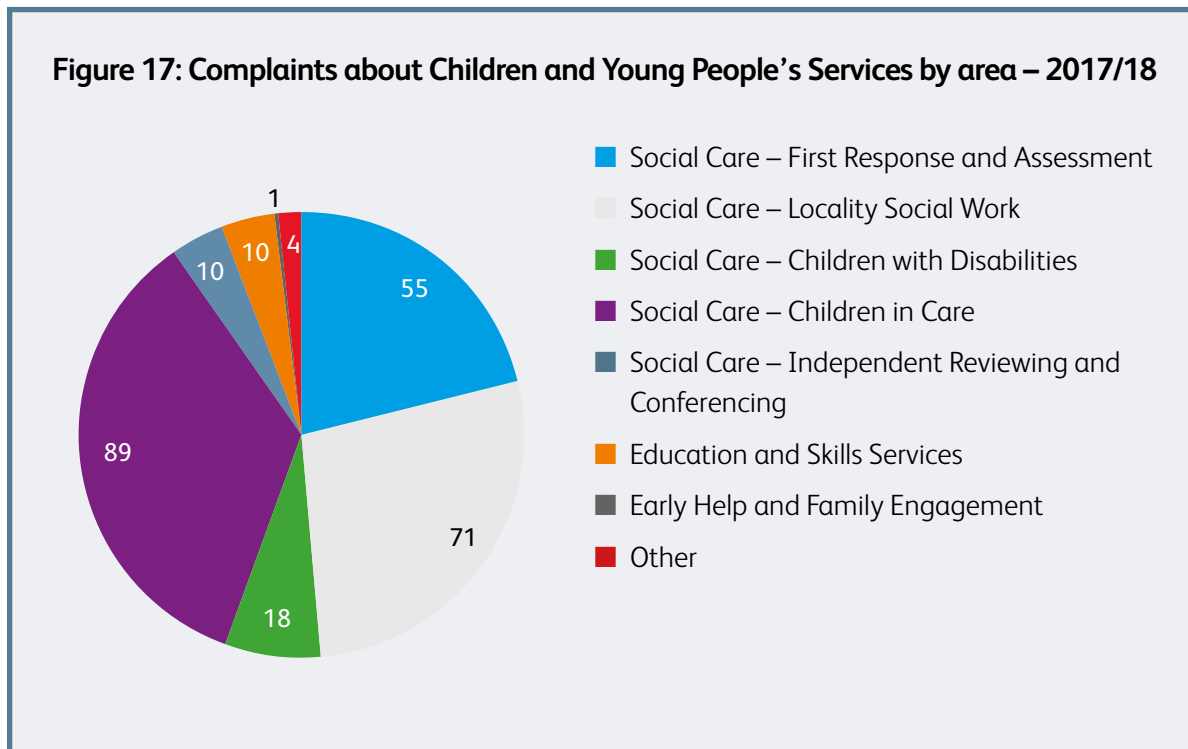


6.1 Key Headlines

- More complaints about Children and Young People's Services were received (258 in 2017/18 compared with 237 in 2016/17, which is an increase of approximately 8.86%).
- More compliments about Children and Young People's Services were received (89 compared in 2017/18 compared with 84 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 5.95%).
- Out of all of the complaints received, 33 were from children and young people and 29 of these 33 complaints were made with the assistance of an advocate from the Council's Children's Rights Service in 2017/18.
- 237 complaints were taken through the formal complaints procedure. Of these complaints, 214 reached Stage One, 19 reached Stage Two and 4 reached Stage Three.
- More complaints were upheld (33 in 2017/18 compared with 26 in 2016/17).
- Two complaints were investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2017/18. One was upheld and one was not upheld.
- 59% of complaints were resolved within statutory timescales (140 of 237 complaints).

6.2 Complaints

The following diagram breaks down the complaints received for Children and Young People's Services by area:



The three highest areas for volume of complaints received were First Response and Assessment, Locality Social Work and Children in Care. For all of these areas, quality of service was the highest category. These three areas were also the highest areas for 2016/17, which is reflective of the sensitivity of the work handled by these services. Comparatively, the remaining areas received a relatively small number of complaints.

Complaints for Children and Young People's Services increased by 8.86% in 2017/18, going from 237 in 2016/17 to 258. The most significant increase was for Children in Care services which received 23 more complaints than the previous year (64 complaints were received in 2016/17 and this rose to 87 in 2017/18). There were also moderate rises within other areas, but no significant increases.

Of the 237 complaints taken through the complaints procedure, 33 were upheld and 65 were partially upheld. This means that more complaints were upheld in comparison with the previous year, but fewer were partially upheld (in 2016/17 26 were upheld, whilst 73 were partially upheld). Examining the themes within upheld and partially upheld complaints is particularly important to determine how the service can be improved. Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Children and Young People's Services complaints were:

- Dissatisfaction around the sharing of information
- Lack of contact and communication
- Delays and lack of progress
- Dissatisfaction with decisions made

It is therefore recommended that these are key themes for Children and Young People's Services to monitor and address in 2018/19.

Supporting the voice of the child is a priority for the Council and a key element of this is ensuring that children and young people are able to tell us what they think and that the Council takes this into account when making decisions about services. The Ofsted report which was released in January 2018 found that children are well supported to make complaints.

Out of all of the complaints received, 33 were from children and young people (22 from Looked After Children, 7 from Care Leavers and 4 from other young people). This is an increase of 50 % from 2016/17 when 22 complaints were received from children and young people. Of the complaints received from children and young people 28 were around quality of service, 2 were around actions of staff and 1 was in relation to delays in service.

When expressing concerns either directly to the services and people who support them or to the Complaints Team, children are informed of their right to support from an advocate. The Council's Children's Rights Service provides support to young people to sort out problems when they request help and to make complaints where they have been unable to resolve concerns. 29 of the 33 complaints received from children and young people were made with the assistance of an advocate from the Council's Children's Rights Service, in 2017/18.

Furthermore, 59 % of complaints were responded to within the relevant timescales in 2017/18 which is significantly lower than the Council-wide average and the target within the Council Plan of 85 % . To a large extent, this is explained by the complexity of some of the complaints received within this area as well as the fact that the children's social care complaints regulations have additional requirements to the other complaints procedures. However, performance has worsened since last year, whereby 68 % of complaints were closed within timescales, which indicates that more work should be done to ensure timely resolutions of complaints.

6.3 Lessons Learned

Following an inspection of Children and Young People's Services in 2017, Ofsted found that lessons from complaints are used by managers to improve the quality of the service. Examples of the service improvements made by Children and Young People's Services are outlined below:

Complaint	Lessons Learned
The Child's Multi-Agency Assessment completed by Children's Social Care did not include exploration into alleged domestic violence by a child's mother towards the father.	The Council reviewed its working practices and identification of male victims of domestic abuse. This included a renewed strategy in relation to Domestic Abuse which will now be incorporated into all future training for social workers.
Following a complaint investigation it was found that social workers when completing a multi-agency assessment on a child had used incorrect terminology in reference to online child abuse offences.	<p>The Council has made plans to undertake training in relation to the use of correct terminology and understanding of IT specifically in relation to offences against children and young people on the internet.</p> <p>The training will take place to all staff at a service event, which is focused on the area of assessing persons who pose a risk to children. The training will cover indecent images of children, and the technicalities around this. This is scheduled for the November 2018 and will be delivered to all social care staff.</p>
While acknowledging the challenge and complexity of investigating complaints, a Stage 3 Review Panel noted that the way in which a Stage 2 Complaint Statement had been written by an Independent Investigating Officer had resulted in findings and conclusions not being reached.	<p>It was recommended that the Council consider support, guidance and training of Stage Two Investigating Officers in order that they are able to scope complainants' concerns effectively so that they are straightforward to evidence and conclude with clarity.</p> <p>The Council is currently developing a toolkit for investigating officers and has scheduled training for all independent investigating officers to be delivered by December 2018. This will have a specific focus on planning complaint investigation and compiling complaint statements which should result in better quality investigations and consistent approaches.</p>

Case Study: Improved record-keeping

Following a complaint investigation it was found that the Council's approach to record-keeping contributed to a misunderstanding whereby a parent believed that the Council had agreed to pay their children's nursery fees. The Council apologised to the parent for the confusion caused.

The Council has in place a quality assurance framework and a revised version of the framework has been published following the complaint. The framework includes regular auditing of case records by managers and practice audit consultants which are undertaken

on both random samples of children's social care cases and basic information and record-keeping forms part of all audits.

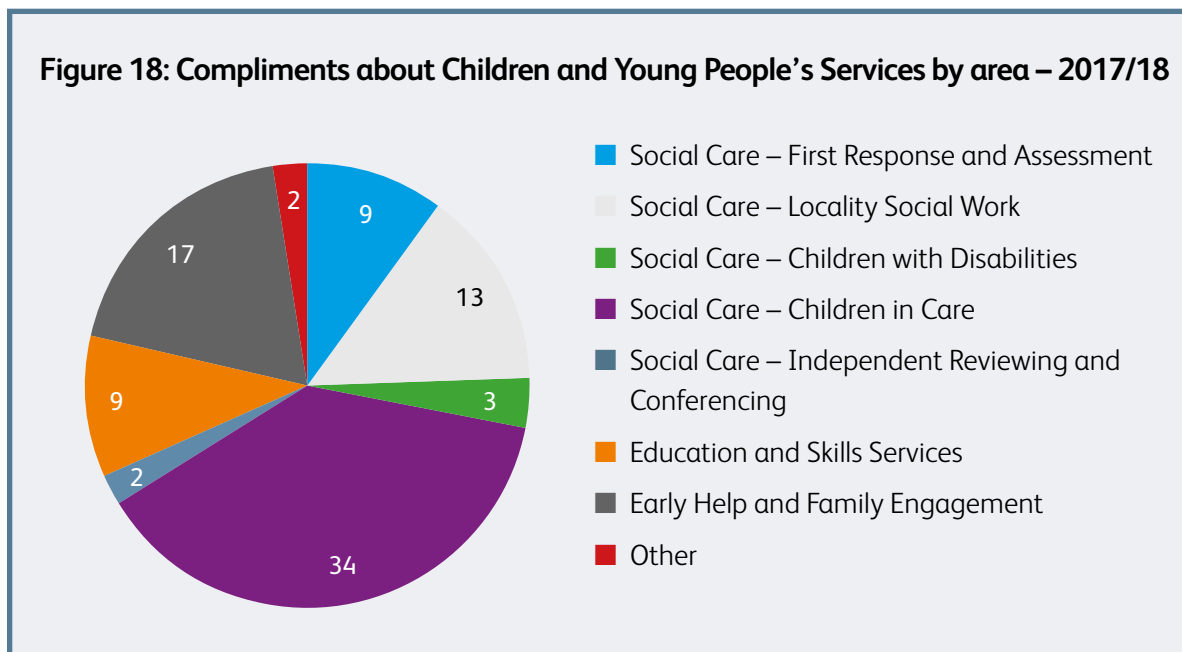
As part of the quality assurance framework, practice audit consultants work with social work professionals to address thematic issues and practice learning days are led by senior managers to address these issues.

The Council has scheduled training with social work professionals focussed on social work basics which includes record-keeping.

It is anticipated that the improvements made will reduce the possibility of similar problems occurring in the future.

6.4 Compliments

The following diagram breaks down the compliments relating to Children and Young People's Services by area:



Compliments were relatively widespread across Children and Young People's Services. The area receiving the highest volume of compliments was Children in Care services, followed by the Early Help Services and Locality Social Work Services.

Examples of compliments received include:

Social Care – First Response and Assessment:

- “You were there for me when it felt like no-one else was – I’m going to miss you lots”

Social Care – Locality Social Work:

- “Sara is active and determined - she made us see light at the end of the tunnel”
- “Thank you to Sara for making it such a positive experience. She displayed empathy and excellent communication in dealing with us”
- “Forever grateful for the help and support you have given myself and my children in order for me to become a stronger person and parent”

Social Care – Children in Care:

- “Thank you to the whole team for the support we have received which has been amazing. The service is invaluable”
- “Thank you as always for your quality input for the children we work with - we couldn't do it without you”
- “The care and attention that has gone into this book was fabulous to see and is an absolutely beautiful example of a meaningful memory book. All the little bits of art work in it shows just how much she cares about the children she looks after and I hope when this little one grows up, she will be able to recognise this in what has been put together for her. The little touches say a lot.”

Social Care – Children’s Disability Service:

- “Massive thank you for all the love, care and support you have given. It has really helped me keep strong and positive”

Early Help:

- “Beth has helped and supported me in ways that have made a huge difference in my life and for that I am very grateful”
- “Thank you for working closely with my daughter providing excellent support and guidance”

7 HOUSING SERVICES

Figure 19: Total number of complaints and compliments relating to Housing Services

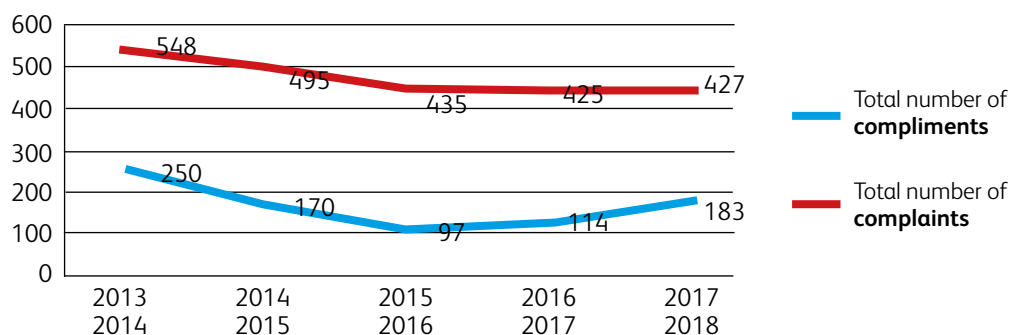


Figure 20: Percentage of complaints responded to within timescales

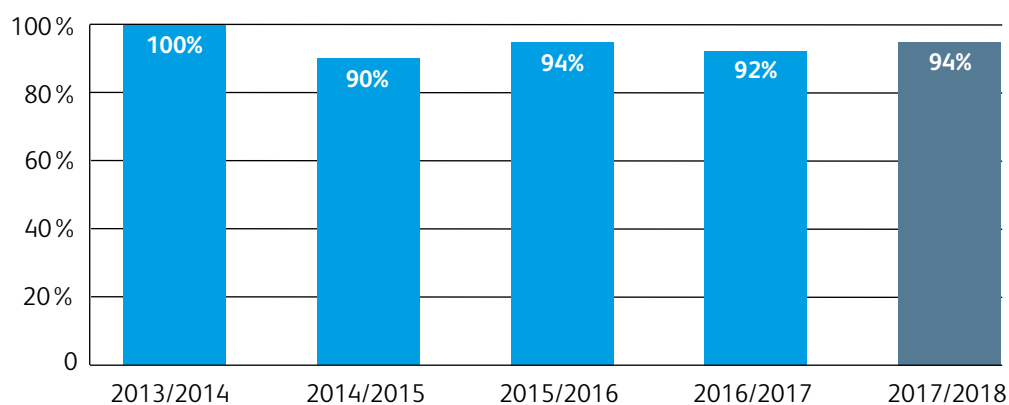
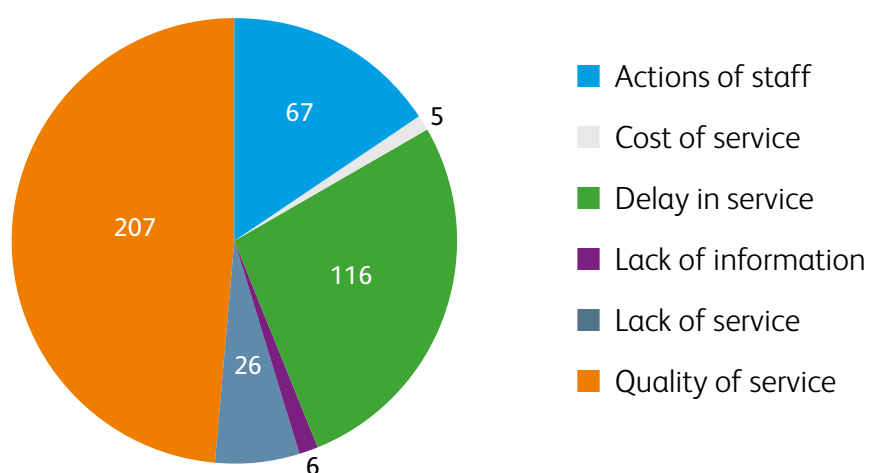


Figure 21: Complaints for Housing Services by category - 2017/18

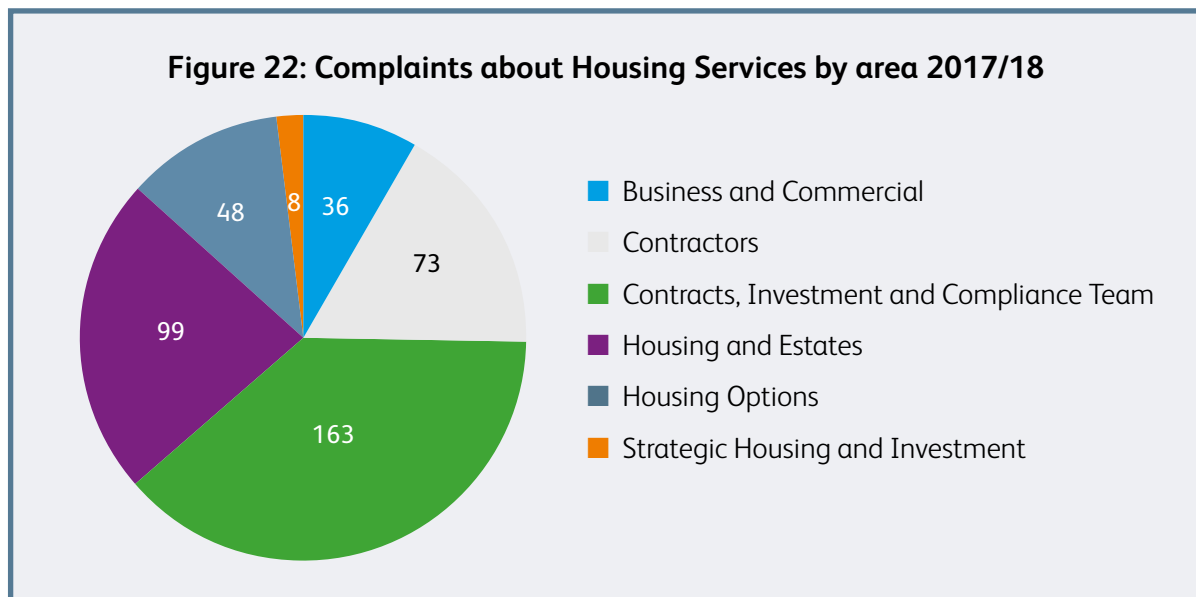


7.1 Key Headlines

- Approximately the same number of complaints about Housing Services were received (427 in 2017/18 compared with 425 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 0.47 %).
- More compliments about Housing Services were received (183 in 2017/18 compared with 114 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 60.53 %).
- 395 complaints were taken through the formal complaints procedure. Of these, 383 reached Stage One, 11 reached Stage Two and 1 reached Stage Three.
- More complaints were upheld (120 in 2017/18 compared with 108 in 2016/17).
- One decision was received by the Housing Ombudsman. The complaint was not upheld.
- Quality of service accounted for almost half of complaints (207 of 425) with delays in service also accounting for a substantial portion (116 of 425).
- 94 % of complaints were responded to within statutory timescales (371 of the 395 complaints taken through the complaints procedure).

7.2 Complaints

A total of 427 complaints about Housing Services were received in 2017/18. The following diagram breaks these down by service area:



The highest category for complaints within Housing Services for 2017/18 was quality of service, followed by delay in service and actions of staff. In comparison with other Council service areas, delay in service was a much more prevalent theme within complaints relating to Housing Services.

The three areas receiving the highest volume of complaints accounted for over three quarters of all complaints received for Housing Services. These areas were the Contracts, Investment and Compliance Team, the Housing and Estates Team and Contractors Services. The other areas received a relatively small portion of the overall complaints.

Overall, complaints for Housing Services increased over the year; however this was a minimal decrease of 2 complaints or 0.47 % so is likely to be an insignificant fluctuation.

Of the 395 complaints taken through the formal complaints procedures, 120 were upheld and 61 were partially upheld. In comparison, in 2016/17, 103 complaints were upheld and 63 were partially upheld, meaning there has been a slight increase on the combined upheld and partially upheld figures for Housing Services complaints in 2017/18.

Examining the themes within upheld and partially upheld complaints is particularly important to determine how the service can be improved. Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Housing Services complaints were:

- Issues relating to repairs or the need for repairs
- Delays in service
- Lack of communication

It is therefore recommended that these are key themes for Housing Services to monitor and address in 2018/19.

94 % of complaints for Housing Services were responded to within relevant timescales. This significantly exceeds the Council Plan target of 85 % and the Council-wide average of 79 %. In the context that Housing Services received the highest volume of complaints across the authority in 2017/18, this indicates that these services make responding to customer feedback quickly a key priority.

7.3 Lessons Learned

Housing Services has made several service improvements in 2017/18 following the feedback from customers. Examples of these are outlined below:

Complaint	Lessons Learned
An applicant for disabled adaptations was advised that under occupation meant the adaptations could not progress and suitable alternative occupation would have to be sought. However, the policy states that this advice is only appropriate where there is a reasonable chance of being rehoused within six months, and in this case the probability was very low.	As a direct impact and influence of this and other similar complaints, the process is now agreed that all requests that may have been refused on under occupancy will be reviewed to ensure the timeline of 6 months is achievable for re-housing, if not the adaptations will be processed. All OTs have been briefed on this.
Avoidable delay around the termination of a tenancy whereby the tenant became too unwell to sign the termination form, which caused distress for the next of kin.	The termination process has subsequently been rewritten and subject to approval, will allow the service to respond more compassionately and effectively to this type of situation. This should mean that this type of complaint will be avoided in the future.
Rushed property viewing.	The viewing time has now been extended by 5 minutes to 20 minutes.
Unhappy with paying the full leasehold charge for the year when they had only purchased the property in late March.	The calculation was correct in line with the terms of the lease and the policy, meaning that the complaint came from a misunderstanding around these terms. To address this issue pre-sale correspondence for both Right to Buy and Leasehold-to-Leasehold sales has been updated to better explain how the calculation of service charges works for new leaseholders.

Case Study: Repairs during the Big Freeze

During March 2018, there were a number of complaints received relating to broken down boilers, including around the length of time taken to attend to the repairs. Delays were caused by the high demand and the extremely challenging conditions.

In response to these complaints, the service:

- Cancelled all gas servicing/non-emergency jobs so that all qualified operatives were placed on emergencies only.
- Brought in an additional sub-contractor.
- Had qualified CIC staff working full time until the emergency was over.

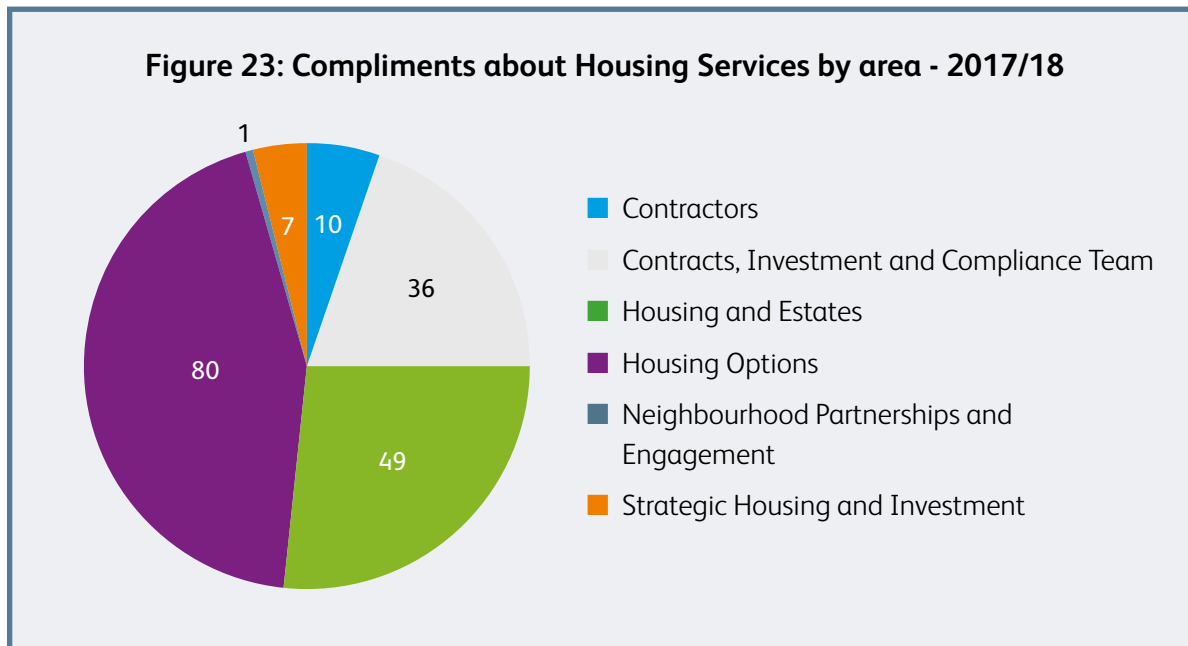
- Provided advice and updated the website on how to prevent condensate pipes freezing.
- Prioritised vulnerable customers.

The impact of these actions was significant to ensure that the repairs were dealt with as quickly as they possibly could be.

Additionally, the lessons learned from complaints in previous years also had an impact on the way that the service dealt with the adverse weather conditions. During the last big freeze in 2011, 3,500 boilers froze and the learning from that time resulted in work to improve the condensate pipes on boilers. This work along with the advice given to prevent freezing condensate pipes clearly had an effect because the number of boilers freezing was less than 20% of those that froze in 2011.

7.4 Compliments

The following chart outlines the compliments about Housing Services by area:



Housing Options received the highest volume of compliments, and this is particularly positive considering that this area received relatively few complaints in comparison with other Housing Services.

Furthermore, two of the top three highest areas for complaints (the Contracts, Investment and Compliance Team and the Housing and Estates Team) were also within the top three highest areas for volume of compliments received, which indicates that a high level of feedback overall is received for these services. In contrast, Contractors received relatively few compliments.

Examples of compliments received in 2017/18 are outlined below:

Contractors:

- “Andy was very professional and respected our home - he was very obliging and did an excellent job, any questions we asked he answered.”

Contracts, Investment and Compliance Team:

- “Would like to express our gratitude to you and your team. The standard of work is of the highest order carried out by a very professional and friendly group of guys”
- “Well done to Rotherham Council Housing repairs- reported emergency repair and within 2 hrs all sorted”

Housing and Estates:

- “Big thank you - you have both been fantastic helping me”
- “Angela has done so much to make me and my daughter feel safe - she is kind, understanding, reassuring, helpful and considerate”

Housing Options:

- “Helen was patient and listened carefully and checked to make sure she understood. She made a difficult situation a positive experience”
- “A true 5* experience!”
- For a Homelessness Officer from a customer who was assisted to find supported accommodation - “you have changed my life”

Neighbourhood Partnerships and Engagement:

- “I have to tell you that I think Jill is an absolutely marvellous ambassador for the Council – she comes across as a really genuine, caring person and the work involved in running the annual competition is staggering.”

Strategic Housing and Investment:

- “Thank you for your kindness and compassion - we couldn’t have got through this difficult time without your help”

8 REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

Figure 24: Total number of compliments and complaints about Regeneration and Environment services

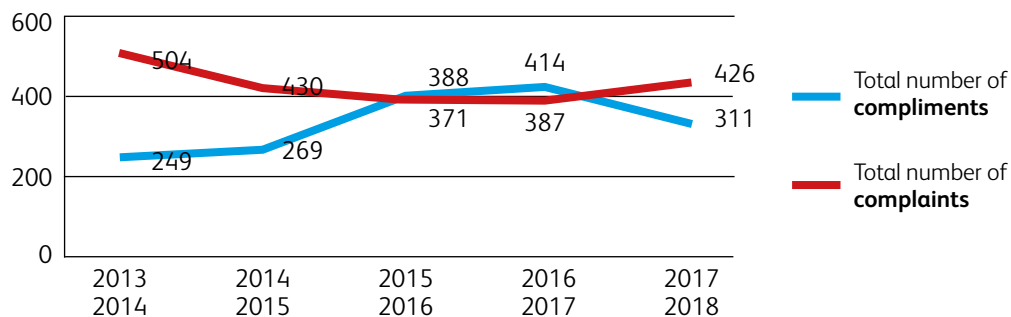


Figure 25: Percentage of complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services responded to within timescales - 2017/18

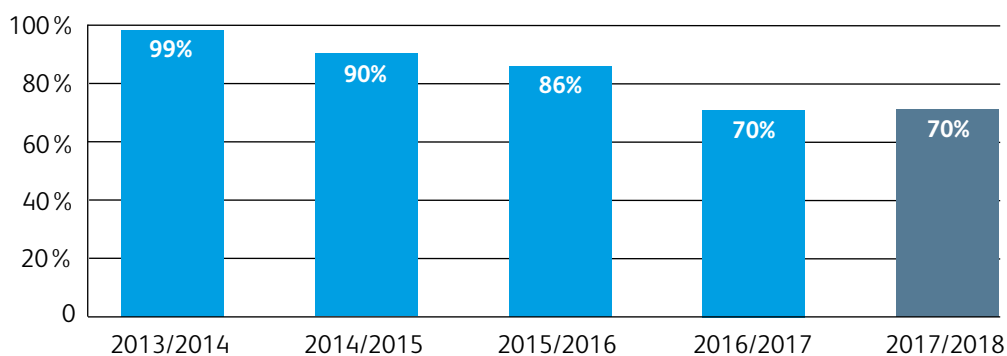
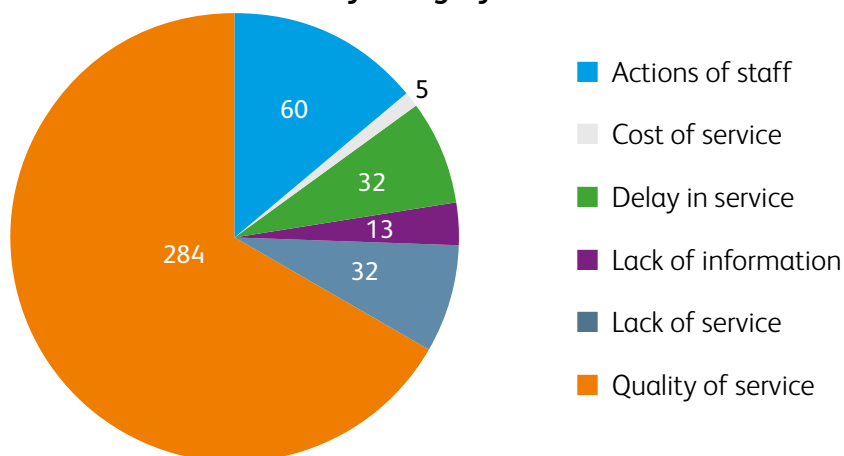


Figure 26: Complaints for Regeneration and Environment Services by category - 2017/18

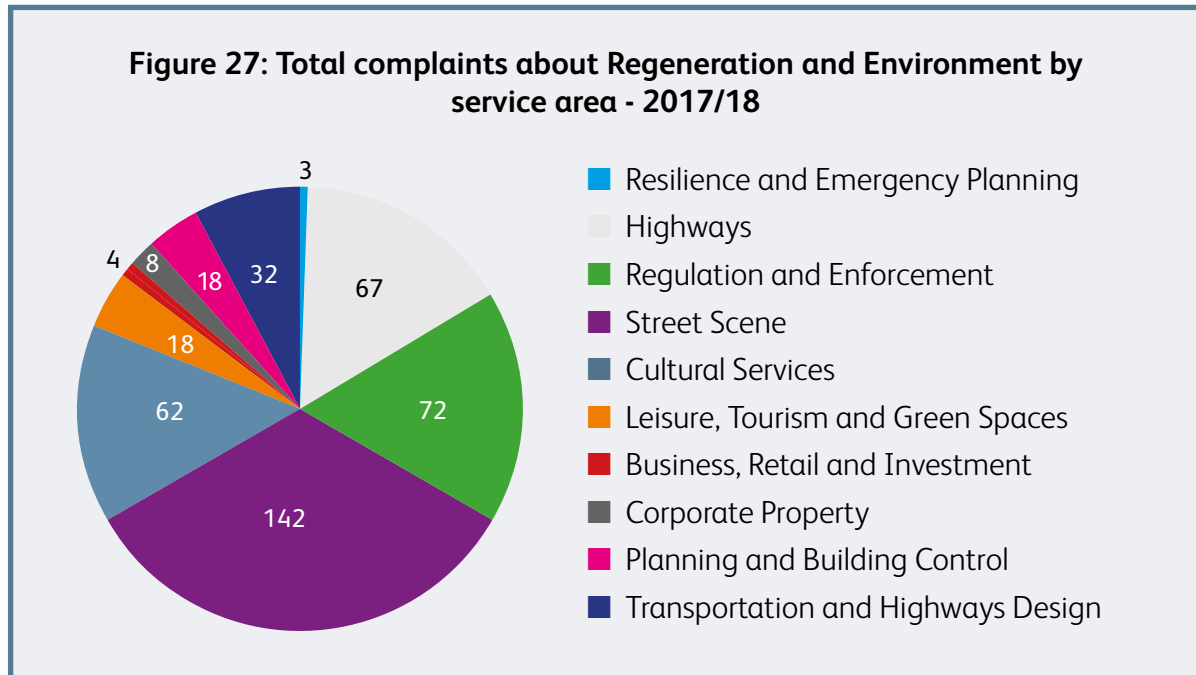


8.1 Key Headlines

- More complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services were received (426 in 2017/18 compared with 387 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 10.08 %).
- Fewer compliments about Regeneration and Environment Services were received (311 in 2017/18 compared with 414 in 2016/17, which is a decrease of 24.88 %).
- 288 complaints were taken through the formal complaints procedure. Of these, 272 reached Stage One, 13 reached Stage Two and 3 reached Stage Three.
- More complaints were upheld (75 in 2017/18 compared with 31 in 2016/17).
- No complaints were investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- Over half of complaints were regarding quality of service (284 of 426 complaints).
- 70% of complaints were responded to within statutory timescales (203 of the 288 complaints taken through the formal complaints procedures).

8.2 Complaints

The following diagram outlines the complaints received for Regeneration and Environment in 2017/18 by service area:



The highest volume of complaints was received by Street Scene, which is consistent with previous years and reflective of the high volume of customers being served by this area. Furthermore, it should be noted that fewer complaints were received for Street Scene in 2017/18 in comparison with the previous year (142 compared with 147 in 2016/17).

After Street Scene, Regulation and Enforcement, Highways and Cultural Services received the highest volume of complaints. The remaining areas all received relatively minimal numbers of complaints in comparison.

The overall increase in complaints from 2016/17 came from increases in several areas, in particular:

- Regulation and Enforcement which received 72 complaints in 2017/18 (increasing from 39 in 2016/17)
- Cultural Services which received 62 complaints in 2017/18 (increasing from 31 in 2016/17)
- Transportation and Highways Design which received 32 complaints in 2017/18 (increasing from 16 in 2016/17)

Of the 288 complaints that were taken through the formal complaints procedures, 75 were upheld and 23 were partially upheld. In comparison, in 2016/17 42 were upheld and 39 were partially upheld. This means that the combined total of upheld and partially upheld complaints for Regeneration and Environment Services increased in 2017/18.

Examining the themes within upheld and partially upheld complaints is particularly important to determine how the service can be improved. Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Regeneration and Environment Services complaints were:

- Lack of service particularly with regards to refuse collection and to address environmental issues
- Delays in service
- Actions of staff

It is therefore recommended that these are key themes for Regeneration and Environment Services to monitor and address in 2018/19.

Furthermore, 70 % of complaints were responded to within timescales. This is below the Council average of 79 % and falls short of the Council Plan target of 85 %. Improving performance against this target should be another key priority for 2018/19.

8.3 Lessons Learned

Regeneration and Environment has made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2017/18. Examples of these improvements are outlined in the table and within the case studies below:

Complaint	Lessons Learned
Poor customer service when seeking to renew Rothercard.	After investigating further, it became clear that there were out of date instructions at some libraries and customer service sites. Correct information was sent out to these sites to ensure that poor service can be avoided in the future.
Loss of bug samples, which led to delays in the tackling of a bug infestation.	Adjustments have been made to the way that the Council deals with such samples, including more secure storage facilities.
Non-collection of recycling.	A new leaflet was produced to leave for customers who put the wrong items in the containers or do not separate their recycling.
Pattern of non-collection of bins on a specific street.	A site visit found that parked cars were causing access issues to the street. A letter was then sent out to all residents of the street asking for their cooperation on collection day and for residents to be mindful when parking to allow space for refuse/recycling vehicles through. Residents supported this initiative and collections have been undertaken regularly since.
The complainant drove to Rother Valley Country Park to find it closed when nothing on the website said this.	Following this complaint, the website details were amended.
DVDs missing from the reservation shelf in the library.	The reservation shelf was relocated to be in view of the Reception Desk. Any reserved DVDs will now be placed in a secure location behind the counter until the customer collects them.
Delay in provision of copy of birth certificate.	A senior officer from the Contact Centre investigated and identified a procedural error. A memo was provided to all Contact Centre staff around the correct procedure and a separate memo was provided to Registration staff on how to spot errors should they occur.

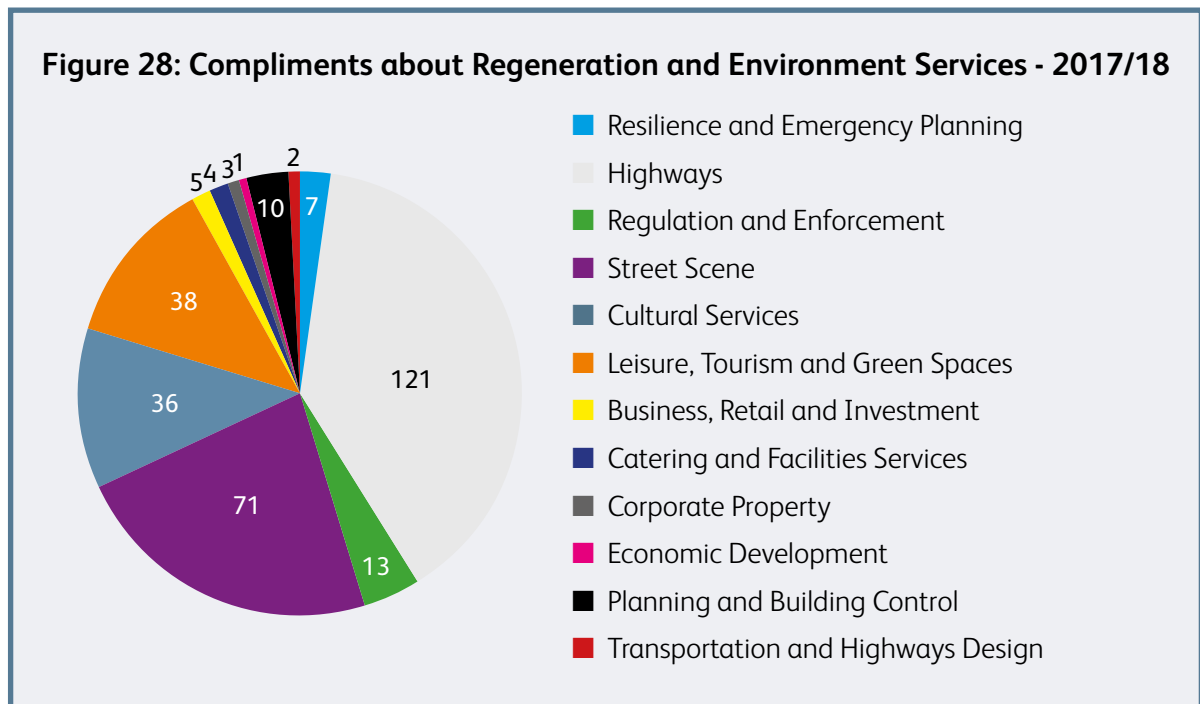
Case Study: Reducing Queue Times

A complaint had been received around excessive queue times to collect taxi plates. In order to reduce waiting times, a new process was piloted where taxi plates are pre-printed and prepared as soon as the driver books their compliance (MOT test). Upon arrival at Riverside House, provided the driver produces their pass certificate and the relevant paperwork, the plate will have already been printed days in advance and it is waiting in the Contact Centre for immediate issue.

This pilot was a success as this new process has ensured that plates are ready instantly, provided all documentation is in order. It has also reduced the impact on licensing staff having to break off from work they are doing when a driver calls in for a plate. Ultimately, this has meant that the Contact Centre has been able to provide a much quicker and more efficient service for customers in Rotherham.

8.4 Compliments

A total of 311 compliments were received for Regeneration and Environment Services in 2017/18. The following diagram breaks these compliments down by area:



The two highest areas in terms of volume of compliments were Highways and Street Scene – both of which featured in the top three highest areas for complaints. This shows that these services receive a high volume of customer feedback in general, meaning that the volume of complaints may not necessarily indicate poor performance overall.

Other areas that received high volumes of compliments were the Leisure, Tourism and Green Spaces Services and Cultural Services.

Examples of some of the compliments received are outlined below:

Highways:

- “I would like to congratulate all the people who worked on the Bulls Head Brampton roundabout and to say what a superb job they have done”
- “I just wanted to thank you for the fantastic work that has been carried out on Quarry Lane. The new posts look brilliant! As for the work itself, even that was carried out with the minimum of disruption, with the Streetpride team being very considerate about residents and where they parked the lorry.”
- “HUGE BIG THANK YOU to everyone that has kept the roads clear and gritted around the borough of Rotherham! Please pass on my sincere thanks to everyone for their efforts to keep us safe and moving. Well done all.

Street Scene:

- “Wants to say ‘thank you’ to you for arranging her Sanpro Bin delivery. She also wanted to say that the person who delivered it also brought it right up to her house and she is very grateful for this.”
- “Thank you for attending to this enquiry so promptly, I drove home last night and all the road markings had been painted and it is a 100 % better and could not believe how much easier it was to drive on the road so thank you again, I would just like to say I am very impressed with the service I have received from Rotherham Council”
- “Praise for the Streetpride Operative clearing rubbish and weeds in the town centre - fantastic job - so meticulous”

Cultural Services:

- “Brilliant to see the council promoting the arts and investing in the town centre. Have noticed a huge change in the town centre”
- “We look going to activities led by Kate at Thurcroft Library - brilliantly organised and appropriately caters for all ages. Tonight’s Christmas one was lovely - 5*”

Leisure, Tourism and Green Spaces:

- “Vintage Hop - best even I have ever attended, amazing planning and turnout - I didn’t want it to end”.
- “Mega Active Sports Camp, Todwick was a fantastic camp. My son was originally only booked in for 2 days but he loved it that much he asked to go back on the 3rd day and has asked to go to another camp. The staff were amazing. Would highly recommend.”.

Community Safety, Regulation and Enforcement:

- “I would like to thank you and your department in dealing with this problem so swiftly, and I hope the peace and quiet continues”

Planning and Building Control:

- “Thank you also for your help on this application. You have reinforced my conclusion that Rotherham remain one of the most professional and approachable Councils to work with”.

9 FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

The comparison for both Finance and Customer Services and Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate is based on the previous financial year only, due to the fact that they formerly sat within one Directorate. Due to this restructure and the way that complaints were previously recorded, it is not possible to accurately extrapolate complaints relating to the services covered by these two Directorates before 2016/17.

Figure 29: Total number compliments and complaints about Finance and Customer Services

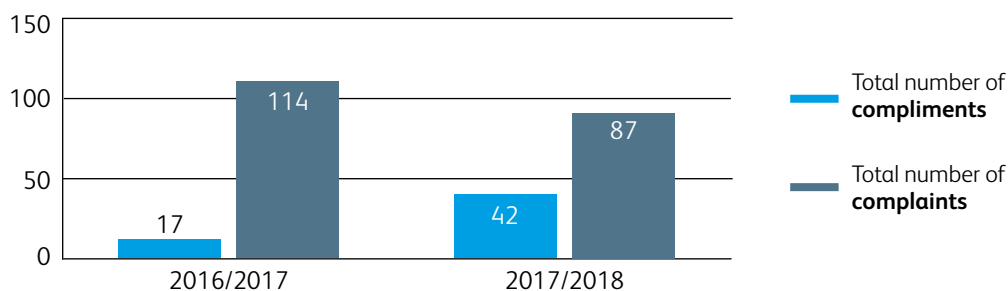


Figure 30: Percentage of complaints about Finance and Customer Services responded to within timescales

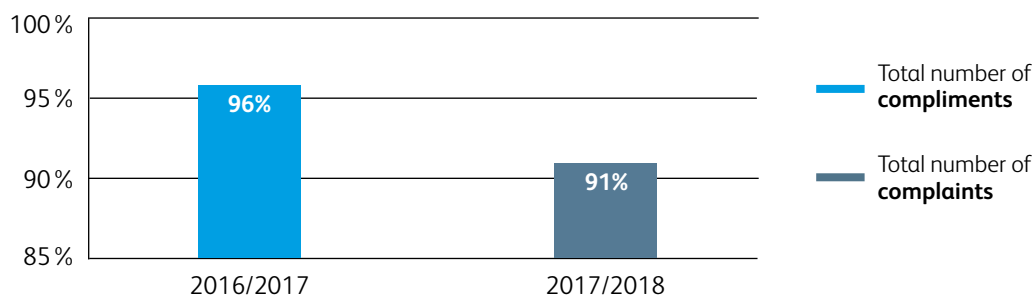
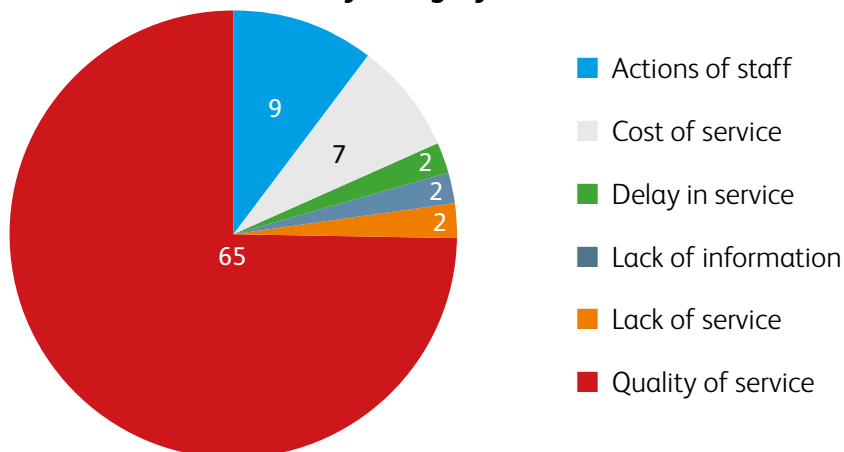


Figure 31: Complaints for Finance and Customer Services by category – 2017/18

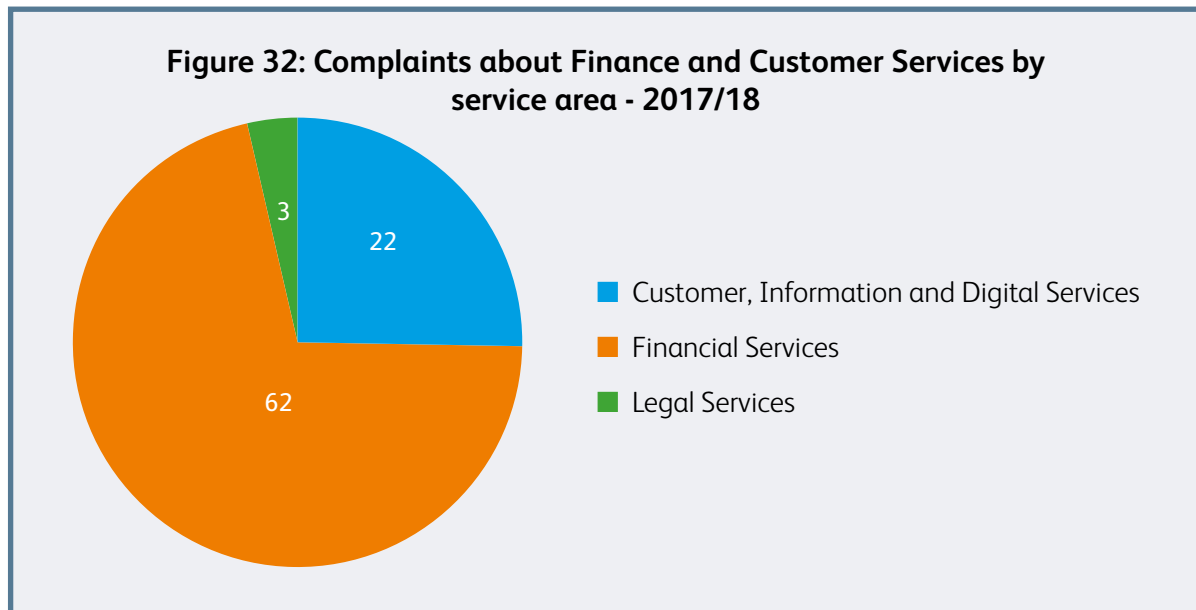


9.1 Key Headlines

- Fewer complaints about Finance and Customer Services were received (87 in 2017/18 compared with 114 received in 2016/17, which is a decrease of approximately 23.68 %).
- More compliments about Finance and Customer Services were received (42 in 2017/18 compared with 17 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 147.06 %).
- 74 complaints were taken through the formal complaints procedure. Of these complaints, 73 reached Stage One and 1 reached Stage Two.
- Fewer complaints were upheld (7 in 2017/18 compared with 23 in 2016/17).
- One complaint was investigated and upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 91 % of complaints were responded to timescales (67 of 74 complaints taken through the formal complaints procedures).

9.2 Complaints

The following diagram breaks down the complaints for Finance and Customer Services by area for 2017/18:



Over 71 % of complaints about Finance and Customer Services were in relation to Financial Services, with the majority of these specifically relating to Revenue and Benefits (59 of the 62 complaints received). It should be noted however, that this area typically receives a high volume of customer contacts due to the nature of the services provided.

Furthermore, complaints for Revenue and Benefits have significantly decreased over the year – whilst 84 complaints were received in 2016/17, only 59 were received in 2017/18, amounting to a decrease of 29.76 %. This substantial decrease for complaints within Revenue and Benefits has contributed to an overall decrease in complaints for the Directorate of 23.68 %.

Complaints for legal services also decreased over the year, going from 6 in 2016/17 to 3 in 2017/18. Customer, Information and Digital Services remained approximately stable, receiving only one more complaint in 2017/18.

Of the 74 complaints taken through the formal complaints procedure, 7 were upheld and 10 were partially upheld. This means that fewer complaints were upheld or partially upheld in 2017/18 in comparison with the previous year; in 2016/17, 12 were upheld and 8 were partially upheld.

Examining the themes within upheld and partially upheld complaints is particularly important to determine how the service can be improved. Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Finance and Customer Services complaints were:

- Issues around payments or charges
- Lack of service and communication

It is therefore recommended that these are key themes for Finance and Customer Services to monitor and address in 2018/19.

91 % of complaints for Finance and Customer Services were dealt with in the relevant timescales in 2017/18. Whilst this is a decrease on the performance from 2016/17 whereby 96 % were responded to within timescales, 91 % is still strong performance in comparison with the Council Plan target of 85 % and the Council average of 79 %. Maintaining this high performance will be another key priority for 2018/19.

9.3 Lessons Learned

Finance and Customer Services has made several service improvements in 2017/18 following the feedback from customers. Examples of these are outlined below:

Complaint	Lessons Learned
Customer complained that they had informed the Council of a change of address on several occasions but their Council Tax account had not been amended.	It was found that the customer had written to Benefits and Account Management with this information and that this was not shared with Local Taxation. A reminder was provided in team meetings that if a letter includes important information, this needs to be passed on to the relevant team.
Customer complained about the customer service provided by the Benefits Service which had not been what they would have expected.	An investigation confirmed that the officer was polite and helpful throughout the call. However, it was agreed that the officer taking the call should have given a warning before they terminated the call. The Team Leaders for Benefits Assessment reminded staff about the protocols around terminating phone calls.
Receiving no contact after requesting a copy invoice and receiving contact from collection agents.	Investigating this complaint found that it was unfortunately processed against another reference number, and due to this mistake a decision was made to refer the outstanding balances to collection agents as it appeared that no contact had been received following this particular account number. To address this, staff were reminded to check details are correct when processing payments.

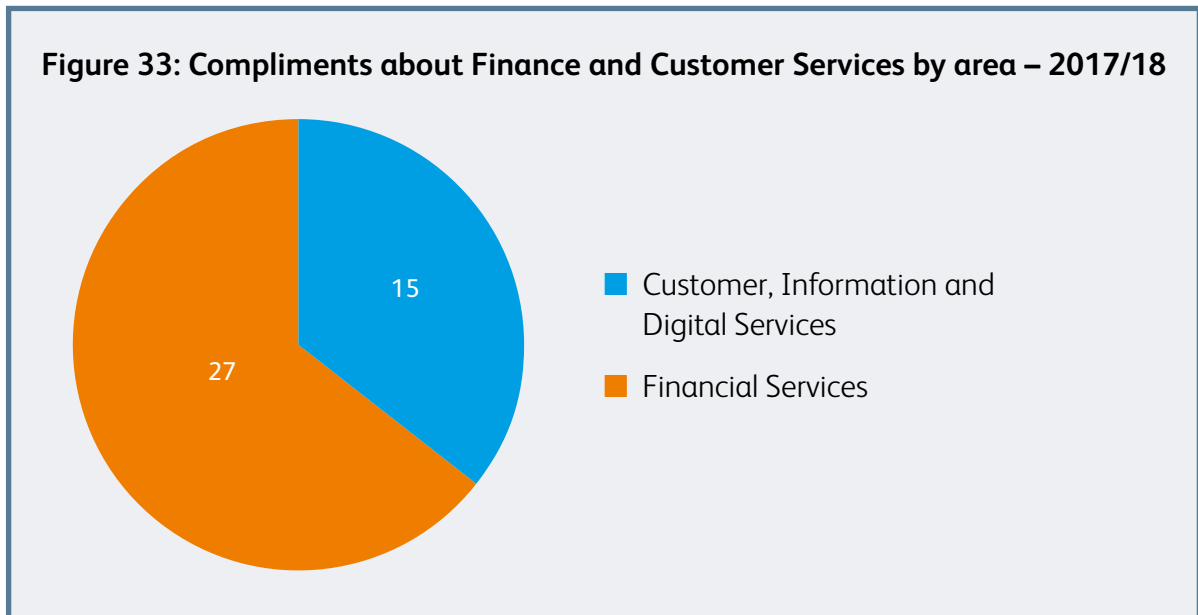
Case Study: Keeping complainants informed

A customer complained that they were not kept informed as to the progress of their complaints following a meeting with an officer from Legal Services. The customer also complained that the officer provided unnecessary information to the Parish Council which informed their actions against them. The complainant was also unhappy about the time it took for their complaints to be dealt with.

A new procedure for handling standards complaints was approved by Full Council on 18 October 2017. The revised procedure imposes further time limits for the various stages of the process. In future, where there is delay in responses from subject members, without appropriate justification, the process will simply proceed without those responses. The new procedure agreed by Council provides more focus on the timely resolution of complaints.

9.4 Compliments

The following diagram breaks down the compliments relating to Finance and Customer Services by area.



The area that received the highest volume of compliments was Financial Services at 27, followed by Customer, Information and Digital Services. The majority of these compliments were regarding the helpfulness of staff and the quality of service.

Some examples of compliments are:

Financial Services:

- “Once again thank you to both advisors you have both relieved a lot of stress and worry of me and my family”
- “Having someone like you at the end of the phone makes the world of difference - I wish there were a hell of a lot more people like you - thank you for being so understanding”
- “She was brilliant, very professional and put me at ease”

Customer, Information and Digital Services:

- “Please can I say that when I called you to book an appointment to remove a rat from my house, the gentleman who answered the phone was really helpful and polite and a pleasure to deal with”.
- “Thank you for listening and fixing the website”
- “The lady on the repair help line today was really helpful. We had no heating and have two disabled people in our house. She talked me through doing the water pressure. Which I was really glad as it was Sunday morning and really cold.”

10 ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE

The comparison for both Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate and Finance and Customer Services is based on the previous financial year only, due to the fact that they formerly sat within one Directorate. Due to this restructure and the way that complaints were previously recorded, it is not possible to accurately extrapolate complaints relating to the services covered by these two Directorates before 2016/17.

Figure 34: Total number of complaints and compliments about Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate

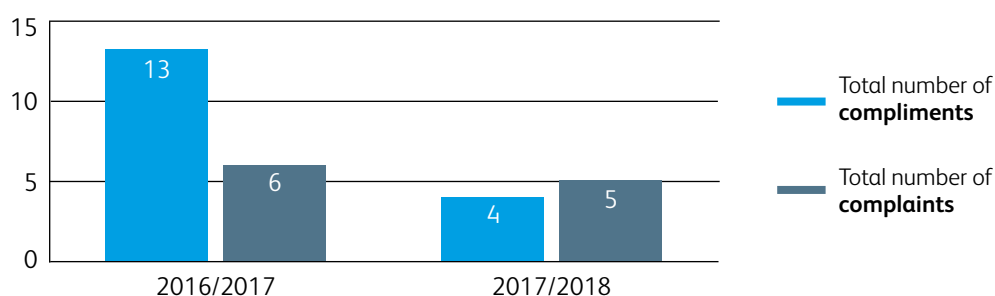


Figure 35: Percentage of complaints about Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate responded to within timescales

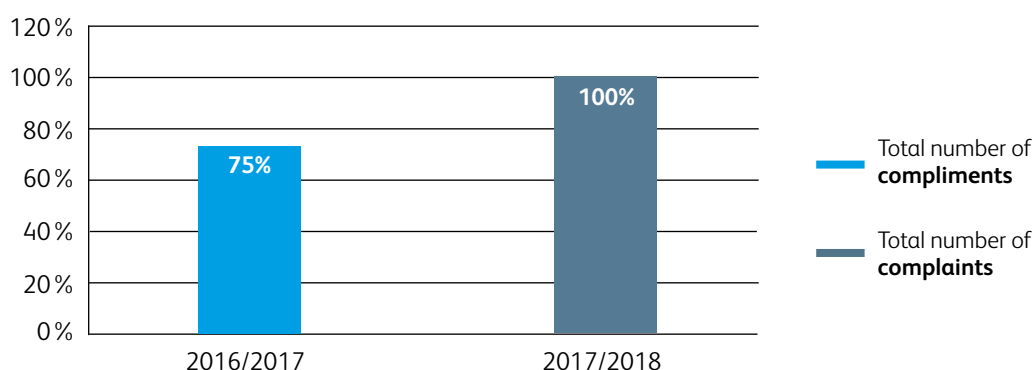
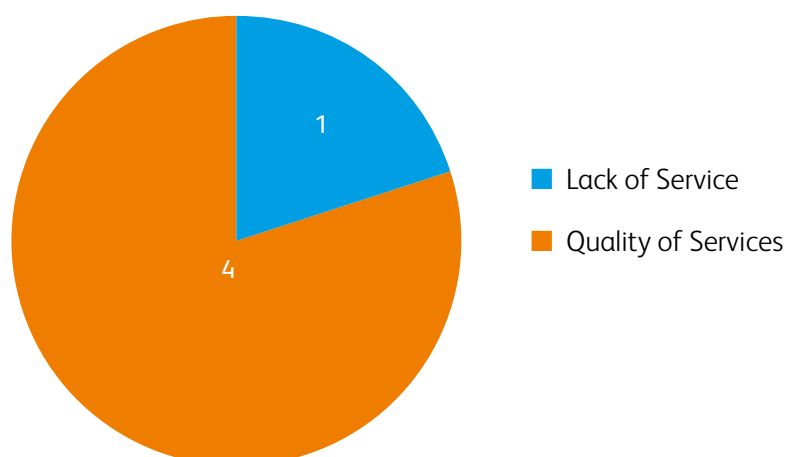


Figure 36: Complaints about ACX by category

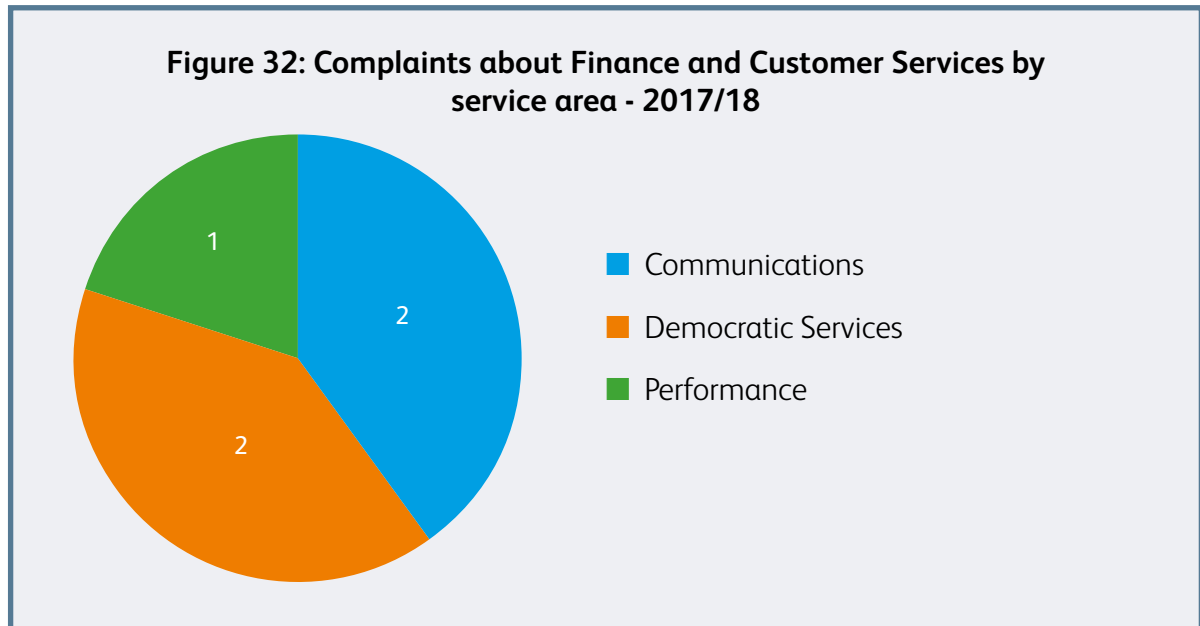


10.1 Key Headlines

- Approximately the same number of complaints about Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate were received (5 in 2017/18 compared with 6 in 2016/17, which is a decrease of 16.67 %).
- Fewer compliments about Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate were received (4 in contrast with 13 in 2016/17, which is a decrease of 69.23 %).
- 2 complaints were taken through the formal complaints procedure and both of these were Stage One complaints.
- More complaints were upheld (2 in 2017/18 compared with 1 in 2016/17).
- One complaint was investigated and upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 100 % of complaints were responded to within statutory timescales (both of the 2 complaints taken through the formal complaints procedures).

10.2 Complaints

The following diagram outlines the complaints made about the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate by service area:



A total of 5 complaints were made about the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate in 2017/18, 4 of which were in relation to quality of service and 1 which was around lack of service. Of these complaints, two were regarding Democratic Services, two were regarding the Communications and Marketing Team, and one was about the Performance, Intelligence and Improvement function.

The subject matter of each of these complaints is listed below:

- Recruitment practices (Communications and Marketing)
- The Council spending money on printed materials (Communications and Marketing)
- Approach taken in a public meeting and the treatment of objectors (Democratic Services)
- Failure to respond (Democratic Services)
- Receipt of survey when not appropriate (Performance, Intelligence and Improvement)

9.3 Lessons Learned

The Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate provides cross-cutting support to the organisation and this includes the Complaints Team. This team leads on the handling and reporting on customer feedback for all services across the authority, including identifying lessons learned and driving key service improvements from customer feedback. Ultimately therefore, the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate plays an integral role in ensuring that the Council is responsive to customers to understand and relate to their needs.

The Complaints Team have made several improvements over the year in terms of the way that complaints are dealt with. In 2017/18, a review of the Complaints service was conducted by the Commissioners' Office which found that the corporate complaints procedure and complaints policy are both fit for purpose.

There were several recommendations made as part of this review to improve the approach to dealing with complaints. Several of these recommendations reflected the feedback received from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the 2016/17 Annual Report. Progress has been made to action these recommendations, including that:

- Equality and diversity data is now gathered by the Complaints Team for customer feedback received for all Directorates. This data will be reported on as part of Directorate Leadership Team Meetings as well as within the next Annual Report for 2018/19.
- A briefing note has been produced to ensure that the wider workforce has a robust understanding of dealing with complaints.
- The annual report has been redesigned for 2017/18 including graphs that demonstrate trends over longer periods.
- There is no longer a distinction made between 'informal' and 'formal' complaints.

The Complaints Team will continue to lead on the improvements being made to dealing with complaints in 2018/19, as outlined in section 11.

As well as supporting other Directorate to make service improvements, the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate has also made improvements in 2017/18 following the feedback from customers. Examples of this are outlined below:

Complaint	Lessons Learned
A survey was sent to a severely disabled resident.	<p>The resident was added to a locally-held list to ensure that they don't receive surveys from the team in the future.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the service is not able to remove customers based on their disability as it is a national statutory return and this could lead to survey bias but the comments were directed to the Department of Health so they can be considered in future survey guidance.</p>
The Council spending money on printed materials.	<p>Communications and Marketing forwarded the complaint, as this was specifically regarding the Housing newsletter 'Home Matters.'</p> <p>The service has reviewed the content to ensure it is more engaging for residents. The Annual Tenants Satisfaction Survey found that the majority of tenants are satisfied with the magazine. Furthermore, just over a quarter of tenants said they would be willing to receive their newsletter via email whilst just under a half (49%) said they would not be happy to. The service is working to use these findings to continually meet the necessary improvements and also to ensure that tenants can access the newsletter through email and online to reduce costs.</p>

Case Study: Planning Board Meeting

The Planning Board meetings take place every three weeks on a Thursday. The Planning Board is responsible for determining planning applications which do not fall within the agreed scheme of delegation.

In October 2017 a complaint was received in respect to the way that a planning board meeting was conducted, including the conduct of the public within the meeting and the treatment of objectors. A number of areas of learning were identified from this complaint and action has since been taken to improve the approach, including:

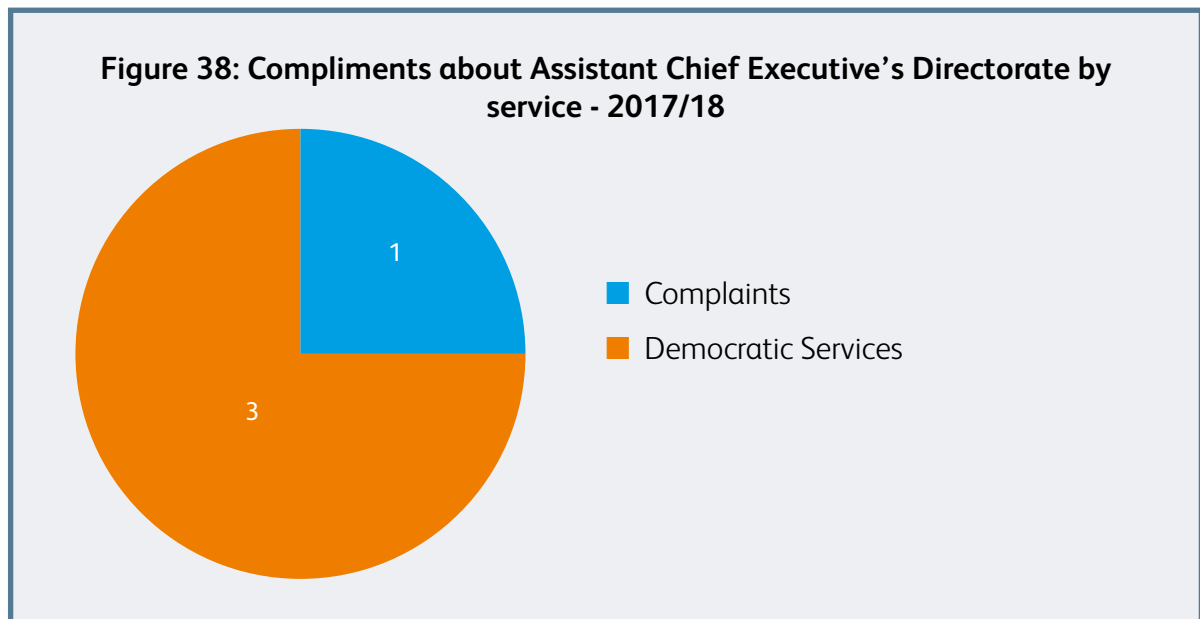
- A copy of the Planning Regulatory Board 'Public Right To Speak' leaflet is now sent out with the invitation letter to attendees and a copy included within the information pack

- Information regarding the public right to speak is displayed on the Council's website
- All Planning Board Members receive training, at the start and throughout the year, to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and are aware of the procedure for speaking
- At the start of every meeting the Chair reminds attendees of the importance to remain calm, courteous and respectful
- To assist in dealing with disorder during meetings a legal representative now sits with the Chair to advise the Chair on any legal matters.

The improvements have had a positive impact and attendees are now made aware of the regulations in place. Since the changes were implemented, there have been no further issues with regards to how the meetings are conducted.

10.4 Compliments

The following diagram outlines the compliments received by Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate by service area:



All of the compliments received for the Directorate are listed below:

Complaints Team:

- Following acknowledgement of a complaint, "Many thanks for the swift response"

Democratic Services:

- "Big thanks to Madam Mayor and Dean for hosting ourselves and our international visitors last Wednesday at the town hall. They found the visit incredibly valuable; learning about the role of our mayor and the charities that she supports. We always receive such a warm welcome and learning about the history is fascinating. They were particularly thrilled to leave with a plaque from Rotherham, a lovely gift."
- "Just wanted to put on record our thanks for the 2 visits that we embarked on to the Town Hall to meet up with the Mayor (& Tony!). All of our guys were thrilled to have experienced a morning with the Mayor and the 'grand tour' that we had of the building. Nothing was too much trouble for anybody that we met / spoke to on the day and the knowledge and history that was talked about was quite inspiring."

"Thank you and to the many others who have helped and had patience during this time"

11 NEXT STEPS 2018/19

During 2017/18 the overall number of complaints increased for the first time in several years. This is not surprising due to the changes being made to how services are delivered. The Council will continue to face further challenges during 2018/19 due to the delivery of the budget savings and this is likely to have a negative impact on the public perceptions of the Council. It is therefore important that customer expectations are managed and complaints responded to in a timely manner.

Further steps will be taken in 2018/19 to ensure that the approach the Council takes to dealing with complaints and responding to customer feedback continues to improve. Key actions will include:

- Exploring how the new e-case management system can be utilised to keep Elected Members routinely appraised of progress regarding complaints.
- Developing the training offer for officers who sit outside of the Complaints Team.
- Focussing more on the lessons learned from upheld complaints and how these can be addressed effectively.
- Continuing to report the key themes emerging from customer feedback into Directorate Leadership Teams.
- Working to improve performance within statutory timescales.
- Reporting on improved intelligence around complainants, particularly with regards to equality and diversity information.
- Developing further the way that complaints are categorised and tracked, to better reflect the complexity and diversity of the feedback received.
- Using the new neighbourhood working model to work with residents on the issues that matter most to them, including any opportunities to learn from feedback and complaints.

Appendix One: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decisions 2017/18, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and statistical neighbours

Table One: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decisions (Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and statistical neighbours)

Authority Name	Invalid or Incomplete	Advice Given	Referred Back for Local Resolution	Closed after Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Total	Uphold Rate (%)	Total	Complaints Remedied by LGO	Complaints Remedied by Authority
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	11	2	26	14	1	4	5	80	58	3	0
Halton Borough Council	1	0	16	12	3	3	6	50	35	1	0
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	3	1	27	12	3	3	6	50	49	3	0
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	1	0	18	3	2	5	7	71	29	3	1
Telford & Wrekin Council	3	1	25	10	8	0	8	0	47	0	1
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council	5	1	38	18	3	6	9	67	71	3	3
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council	1	0	21	16	2	8	10	80	48	4	2
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	3	4	48	10	4	6	10	60	75	6	0
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council	2	4	21	13	4	7	11	64	51	4	2
Wakefield City Council	1	3	18	19	13	1	14	7	55	1	0
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council	2	1	35	14	6	8	14	57	66	6	1
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council	3	2	15	10	7	8	15	53	45	7	0
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	4	3	24	21	12	3	15	20	67	3	0
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council	4	2	34	20	5	10	15	67	75	4	5
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	1	0	30	21	11	12	23	52	75	8	1
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	1	2	31	24	12	13	25	52	83	11	2

Appendix Two: Customer contacts 2017/18

Below is a summary of the customer contacts received during 2017/18 via some of the Council's key customer services (within Riverside House and localities). It should be noted that this document does not provide a comprehensive overview and those listed are only a proportion of the customer contacts which the Council received.

Face to face	
Appointment New Claim/COA	1696
Benefit Queries	10922
Blue Car Badges	4294
Casual Caller	54193
Concessionary Travel	762
Council Tax	5485
Forms & Evidence	737
Housing	12542
Licensing	8556
Non Domestic Rates	81
Parking Services	331
Planning and Building	105
Rothercard	152
Total	99856

Cashiers	18,966
Property shop	8,542
Total	127,364

Telephony	
Contact Centre Calls	643,701
Adult Services	267,465
Children's Services	374,392
Council Tax	96,614
Recovery	45,302
Benefits	67,052
Property Shop	1,268
Housing Advice	34,200
Planning	13,653
Building Control	14,057
Licensing	14,098
Total	1,571,802

Self-serve	
Email accounts	37,870
Automated Payments	65,505
E forms	116,370
Kiosk	77,335
PayPoint	232,840
Internet Payments (Incl Paypal)	98,114
Unique Web Visitors	937,063
Total	1,565,097

Overall total	3,264,263
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