

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Date and Time :-** Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 11.00 a.m.  
**Venue:-** Rotherham Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.  
**Membership:-** Councillors Clark (Chair), Barley (Vice-Chair), Baker-Rogers, Baum-Dixon, Browne, Burnett, A Carter, Cooksey, Elliott, Pitchley, Wyatt and Yasseen.

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 Governance Advisor 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. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 3 and 17 November 2021 (Pages 5 - 15)**

To consider the minutes of the previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 3 and 17 November 2021 and to approve them as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

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

#### **4. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press**

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

#### **5. 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:-**

#### **6. Annual Complaints Report (Pages 17 - 62)**

## **Items for Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

In accordance with the outcome of the Governance Review in 2016, the following items are submitted for pre-scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 20 December 2021. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are invited to comment and make recommendations on the proposals contained within the report.

### **7. HRA Business Plan 2022/23**

Cabinet Portfolio: - Housing

Strategic Directorate: - Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

*Report to follow*

### **8. Housing Rent and Service Charges 2022/23**

Cabinet Portfolio: - Housing

Strategic Directorate: - Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

*Report to follow*

### **9. Medium Term Financial Strategy**

Cabinet Portfolio: - Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance

Strategic Directorate: - Finance and Customer Services

*Report to follow*

### **10. New Council Plan 2022-2025**

Cabinet Portfolio: - Leader

Strategic Directorate: - Assistant Chief Executive

*Report to follow*

## **For Information/Monitoring:-**

### **11. Work Programme (Pages 63 - 81)**

To consider the Board's Work Programme.

### **12. Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 1 December 2021 - 28 February 2022 (Pages 83 - 90)**

To review and identify items for pre-decision scrutiny from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions covering the period 1 December 2021 - 28 February 2022.

**13. Urgent Business**

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

**14. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held on Wednesday 19 January at 11am at Rotherham Town Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SHARON KEMP,  
**Chief Executive.**

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**Wednesday 3 November 2021**

Present:- Councillor Clark (in the Chair); Councillors Barley, Baker-Rogers, Baum-Dixon, Browne, Burnett, A Carter, Cooksey and R. Elliott.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Pitchley and Wyatt.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

**49. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**Resolved:** - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 15 September 2021 be approved as a true record.

**50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**51. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

**52. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items that required the exclusion of members of the public or press.

**53. SAFER ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP - ANNUAL REPORT**

For this item the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board sat in its role as the Council's Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, as defined by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance and the Head of Community Safety attended the meeting to present the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) Annual Report 2020/21. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety advised that the report and the attached annual report of the SRP provided an opportunity for the Council to scrutinise the activity of the SRP during the period March 2020 and April 2021.

In introducing the report, the Cabinet Member advised that the picture of crime and disorder in the timeframe covered by the report had been significantly impacted by the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was

noted that during this period some crime issues had decreased significantly as a result of lockdowns and the forced closures of local businesses, in particular in the retail, hospitality and night-time economy sectors, but that conversely new and emerging risks and issues had become apparent during the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member advised that throughout 2020/21 the partnership had continued to address previously agreed key areas for joint working that impacted on Rotherham's communities, retaining its focus on protecting vulnerable children and adults and addressing community safety concerns in local neighbourhoods, including anti-social behaviour and hate crime, domestic abuse and sexual offences and serious organised crime. It was noted that the SRP's response to the challenges created by the pandemic had been focussed on those areas of criminality adversely affected by it, and that this had then been reflected in the subsequent allocation of resources and services across the SRP.

The Cabinet Member advised that for 2020/21 the SRP had utilised £118,000 of funding that had been allocated to it by the Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner. This funding had then been used to deliver eight key projects that supported the SRP's agreed priorities for action of Protecting Vulnerable Children, Protecting Vulnerable Adults, Building Confident and Cohesive Communities, Domestic Abuse and Serious and Organised Crime.

The Head of Community Safety noted that during 2020/21 that there had been here a particular emphasis by the partnership on activity focused on domestic abuse, tackling hate crime, safeguarding from extremism, modern slavery and mental health. The full Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report was attached as an appendix to the officer's report.

Members noted the reduction in the number of recorded incidents of knife crime and asked whether this reduction would be sustainable now that society had reopened after the end of pandemic related restrictions. The Head of Community Safety advised that that after a small recent rise in the number of knife crime incidents the number of incidents recorded had now stabilised. The Head of Community Safety advised that the new Violence Reduction Programme would seek to address the challenges around knife crime and would work to ensure that the continued reduction in the number of incidents was sustained.

Members noted their concern regarding the increase in referrals regarding Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation (CSE/CCE) and modern slavery and asked for further information on this issue. The Head of Community Safety noted that it was a key objective of the SRP to increase the number of high-quality intelligence reports received on these issues so that action could be taken in identifying potential crimes. Members asked how many intelligence reports were received regarding CSE/CCE each quarter. The Head of Community Safety advised that the number of intelligence reports received was relatively small and that the SRP

carefully tracked and monitored how these intelligence reports then led to offences being recorded.

Members noted that it would be beneficial for them to receive a briefing on the specific data in relation to the information regarding the CSE/CCE, modern slavery and other priority areas for the Safer Rotherham Partnership in order gain further assurance around the activities being carried across the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

Members asked for further information regarding the Encompass Project that alerted schools when a pupil had been involved in an incident of domestic abuse and asked whether there was an expected level of response from a child's school to the disclosure of an incident. The Head of Community Safety advised that each response would vary depending on the individual incident but advised that a training package had been rolled out to all Safeguarding leads in schools in order to ensure a consistent response was delivered.

Members asked for further information on the increase number of reports of Hate Crime that had been received and asked whether these were an indication of an increase in actual incidents or in the number of incidents that were being reported. The Head of Community Safety advised that the number of incidents of Hate Crime recorded would certainly be an underestimate of the number of incidents that had occurred as victims often did not contact the Police until they had suffered multiple instances of Hate Crime being carried out against them. The Head of Community Safety advised however that it was positive to note the increased levels of reporting as this showed that victims had the confidence to come forward and report incidents to the Police. The Head of Community Safety advised that unfortunately the number of positive outcomes related to incidents of Hate Crime remained low as due their nature, these crimes were very difficult to investigate and obtain evidence for.

Members asked whether so called "County Lines" crime was a major issue of concern in Rotherham and for the SRP. The Head of Community Safety advised that in direct relation to the accepted definition of "County Lines" that related to the use of dedicated phone lines to manage the distribution of illegal drugs, then this was not a major issue in Rotherham. The Head of Community Safety advised however that the more important issue was the related crimes of CSE/CSE and the supply of illegal drugs, all of which were high priority areas for the SRP.

Members asked how the SRP intended to respond to the increased focus that the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner would be placing on tackling rural and wildlife crime, both of which had links to serious organised crime given that this issue was not a current area for priority for the SRP. The Head of Community Safety noted that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the SRP had different statutory duties, and as such would have different priorities for their activities. The Head of Community Safety noted that the SRP was

currently reviewing its priority areas of activity by analysing crime data and then applying it against a risk assessment process in order to establish priority areas for future focus. The Head of Community Safety advised that whilst it was too early to say what the new priorities would be he assured members that they would be fully involved in the consultation of what the final agreed priorities for the SRP would be.

Members asked how the SRP was engaging with ward members regarding reports of CSE/CCE in order to utilise their local knowledge and connections in order to ensure that as much information of potential CSE/CCE was gathered by the Police and other partners. The Head of Community Safety noted that discussions held at local Community Action Partnership meetings fed directly up the SRP but acknowledged that the information shared at these meetings was not always what was required locally. The Head of Community Safety assured members that the that the Cabinet Member, as Chair of the SRP had made it a clear priority to improve the quality and focus of the data supplied at these meetings in order to maximise their usefulness. The Head of Community Safety advised that the SRP had recently created a coordinator post in order to facilitate the flow on information and intelligence between partners and to ensure that ward members received the local information and intelligence that they needed.

Members asked how the SRP was engaging with the evening economy sector and the wider business community in order to maximise the amount intelligence reports received regarding CSE/CCE as well as other types of crime. The Head of Community Safety advised that the activity to increase activity in this area that had been planned prior the pandemic was now being resumed and noted the many activities in this area such as the "Ask for Angela" initiative that were in place. The Head of Community Safety assured members that new ways of raising awareness were always being looked at and considered. Members noted that this type of activity needed to be delivered right across the Borough and that activity should not be solely focussed on Rotherham Town Centre. Members also requested that Police representation at local Community Action Partnership should be from a senior officer which was currently not always the case.

Members asked for further information on the activity being carried out across the partnership to address the problem of drug dealing and related crime. The Head of the Community Safety noted that under the SRP priority of serious and organised crime there was a comprehensive set of specific objectives around drug dealing and supply that were carefully monitored in order to deliver on the objectives of maximising convictions and disrupting chains of supply.

The Chair noted the comments that had been made during the discussion around the lack of specific data in the report and how this was in contrast the previous annual report that members had considered to have contained far too much data that had resulted in analysis of the work of



the SRP difficult to carry out. The Chair agreed with members that a briefing for members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for them to receive more specific data would be very beneficial.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance and the Head of Community Safety for attending the meeting to present the report and to answer members questions.

**Resolved: -**

1. That the Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report 2020/21 be received and noted.
2. That members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board receive a briefing on the specific data in relation to the information regarding the priority areas for the Safer Rotherham Partnership in order gain further assurance around the activities being carried across the Safer Rotherham Partnership.
3. That the issues of Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery be added to the Board's Work Programme.

**54. COVID BUSINESS GRANTS - UPDATE**

The Chair advised that due to unavoidable and unforeseen circumstances that the Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services and the Head of Corporate Finance were unable to attend the meeting to present the report.

The report (that had been requested by members at the June 2021 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (Minute No8)) set out the Councils administration of Covid-19 business support grants that it has been required to administer since 11 March 2020 Budget announcement that Government would provide financial support packages to businesses impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. The report set out the timeframes, criteria and performance against these schemes as well as setting out the Councils approach. The report clarifies the final position on each of the schemes as well as providing details of any funding returned to Government unspent.

The Chair advised that due to the thoroughness and comprehensive nature of the report, that in consultation with the Vice-Chair, it was proposed that the report should be noted and that if members had any outstanding questions then these should be emailed directly to the Head of Corporate Finance.

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**Resolved: -**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services, the Assistant Director - Financial Services, the Head of Corporate Finance and all staff who had been involved in the administration of business support grants, be thanked and commended for their work in supporting businesses across the Borough during the pandemic.

**55. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered its Work Programme.

**Resolved: -** That the Work Programme be approved.

**56. WORK IN PROGRESS - SELECT COMMISSIONS**

The Work Programmes for the three Select Commissions had been included in the agenda pack for information.

The Vice-Chair of the Improving Lives Select Commission provided a verbal update on the work of that Select Commission.

**57. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS - 1 OCTOBER - 31 DECEMBER 2021**

The Board considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions 1 November 2021 to 31 January 2022.

**Resolved: -** That the Forward Plan be noted.

**58. CALL-IN ISSUES**

There were no call-in issues.

**59. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items.

**60. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved: -** That the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held at 11am on Wednesday 17 November 2021 at Rotherham Town Hall.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**Wednesday 17 November 2021**

Present:- Councillor Clark (in the Chair); Councillors Barley, Baker-Rogers, Browne, Burnett, Cooksey, Elliott, Pitchley, Wyatt and Yasseen.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Baum-Dixon, A Carter and Hoddinott.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

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**61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**62. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

The Chair confirmed there were no questions from members of the public or press.

**63. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair confirmed there was no reason to exclude members of the press or public from observing any items of business on the agenda.

**64. SEPTEMBER 2021/22 FINANCIAL MONITORING**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services and the Head of Corporate Finance. The report set out the financial position as at the end of September 2021 based on actual costs and income for the first six months of 2021/22 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year. Financial performance is a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework and is essential to achievement of the objectives within the Council's Policy Agenda. To that end, this was the third financial monitoring report of a series of monitoring reports for the current financial year which was to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As at September 2021, the Council expected to deliver the overall outturn within budget for the financial year 2021/22. Whilst the Directorates had a forecast year-end overspend of £9.8m on the General Fund, this was mitigated by the government's provision of COVID-19 emergency support grant and Sales, Fees and Charges Income Compensation. However, it was noted that the longer term impacts of Covid-19, public health measures and the pace at which services can return to normal remains unknown.

In discussion, Members requested further information in respect of the

impact of using agency workers in Children and Young Peoples' Services (CYPS). The response from officers noted the general guideline for appropriate use of agency workers in this service. Where there has been a reduction in staff numbers corresponding to a reduction in caseloads, to manage temporary rises in caseloads, agency workers may be called upon.

Members expressed curiosity around how the agency worker numbers for Rotherham MBC compare to similar or neighbouring authorities. The response from officers noted this as a question for the service, with the note that these numbers have been higher than they were two years ago. The Chair noted an upcoming item on the scrutiny work programme regarding use of agency workers.

Members expressed concern that this year's underspend in Adult Care could result in higher expenditures next year. The response from officers noted the finance team supporting the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing, and Public Health (ACHPH) with regard to the packages and numbers relevant to the budget for this directorate who worked to ensure that problems are not masked with short term funding. Whilst this was a question for the directorate, it was noted that expense comes not primarily from care for the elderly population but from pressures associated with mental health care provision.

In respect of the unknowns around budget forecasting, Members requested a view from officers on when there might be greater clarity. The response from officers cited unknowns associated with the progressing pandemic, including possible future lockdown, which would alter the financial picture. It also was too early to know when or if clientele of places like Rother Valley Country Park would return to spending. Budgets would be responsive to changes of this kind. In terms of business rates, relief funds have meant that revenue has not been lost, but it was hoped that businesses would be able to sustain themselves moving forward.

Members requested clarification around the saving and use of reserves during times of hardship like the current period. The response from officers noted that the COVID grant reserves rolled over to this year because it was expected that the situation would be ongoing. Officers provided a summary of the Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) relief grant and business support details.

Further information was requested around the challenges associated with projected savings and overspend in Children and Young People's Services, as placement shortages were not a local but a national issue. The response from officers cited the history of spending in this service area and noted the more recent savings goals had been delayed by temporary factors that were unforeseeable. It was noted that some of the requested savings had been delivered by CYPS and by Regeneration and Environment (R&E). Some of the savings yet to be delivered may be delayed, but careful attention was given in making these savings to

ensure there would not be unintended consequences.

Members requested assurances around the appropriateness of savings in areas like CYPS and ACHPH, considering that some services that would benefit all children are available only to vulnerable children. The response from officers noted that this is a wider question for the budget that only Council can change if there were to be a considered view that the savings are not needed. It was noted that there are a small number of choices based on the limitations inherent in budgeting, because it is important not to cause harm.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.

**65. MID-YEAR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT UPDATE REPORT**

Consideration was given to a Mid-year Housing Development Update Report – 2021/22 presented by the Cabinet Member for Housing, the Acting Assistant Director of Housing and the Head of Strategic Housing and Development. The report set out the progress against the 2021/22 Housing Development Programme which listed a range of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) sites to be developed for housing, along with potential strategic acquisitions. The Covid 19 pandemic had presented unprecedented challenges in terms of the availability of construction materials and labour. Despite this, coupled with the additional challenge posed by the nature of the sites in the Council's housing growth programme (typically more difficult and expensive to develop), good progress had been made with all projects, excellent quality was being achieved, and the Council continued to make a significant contribution to Rotherham's overall affordable housing requirement.

In discussion, Members requested an update on the uptake of new housing developments in the Town Centre. A summary of the recent work was provided and detail around reservations was offered outside the meeting.

Members requested assurances that current stock is being updated to ensure all the homes are of decent standard. Assurances were provided that the Council also invests in existing stock to maintain decent standards, which an upcoming report to Cabinet will illustrate in detail.

Members requested an update on the progress of the strategy for becoming a market leader in green housing. The response from officers noted the goal of EPC rating C or above and cited the use of funding from government to promote thermal efficiency. The response further noted the desire to invest further to lead on this agenda.

Members requested further clarification around finances: differences in unit costs between new builds built by partnerships versus those directly

from builders, a proportional breakdown of grant sources, and details around projected increase in costs. The response from officers noted the upcoming reports to Cabinet and in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan which will include financial information in detail. Many of the homes the Council delivers directly are more expensive, because of high standards for space and energy efficiency. These homes are also built in places that can be more difficult for building. The Council does not have sight of the full cost breakdown of homes delivered in partnership, although this information can be requested. The response emphasised the continued need to avail a mixture of partnership and direct approaches because some private developers are not building in the areas where the Council needs to increase housing stock. Most homes are delivered through the HRA fund with a smaller contribution from supplementary grant funds, such as those which help achieve the Council's energy efficiency targets. Higher level detail was offered outside the meeting.

Members requested further information around how new developments could be better integrated aesthetically into the surrounding community. The response from the Cabinet Member for Housing noted the national and local design guides and noted the opportunity for Members to take part in these discussions, as these design guides need to be consistently refreshed.

Further details were also requested around attendance of the virtual housing developer summit. A description was provided of the recent housing developer summits and the attendees. It was noted the summits have been well attended and achieved clear outcomes, including the most recent one which was held virtually. In response, Members requested the hope that new and emerging developers and investors in the housing market would be proactively invited to the housing developer summits.

**Resolved: -**

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That members be consulted and invited to feed into the new local design guide with a view to ensuring new developments are better integrated aesthetically into the surrounding community.
3. That new and emerging developers and investors in the housing market be proactively invited to the housing developer summits.

**66. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The Chair deferred this item to 15 December 2021.

**67. WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the updated work programme.

**Resolved: -**

1. That the work programme be approved.

**68. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items.

**69. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held at 11am on Wednesday, 15 December 2021 at Rotherham Town Hall.

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Public Report  
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 15 December 2021

**Report Title**

Annual Compliments and Complaints Report 2020-21

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

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

**Report Author(s)**

Stuart Purcell, Corporate Complaint Manager, Assistant Chief Executive Directorate,  
01709 822661 or [stuart.purcell@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.purcell@rotherham.gov.uk)

Simon Dennis, Acting Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement, Assistant  
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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received in 2020/21 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 2020/21.
- 2. Provide comments on areas that require further improvement regarding complaints handling and reporting.

**List of Appendices Included**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | Annual Compliments and Complaints Report, 2020/21 |
| Appendix 2 | Ombudsman Annual Review letter 2020/21            |

**Background Papers**

Corporate Complaint Policy

[Rotherham Council Rotherham Council - Complaints Policy](#)

**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 2020-21**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 All councils need to provide complaint procedures to respond to customer concerns in an open and transparent way within defined timescales and in accordance with legislation. The purpose of the annual complaint report is to outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received in the period 1 April 2020 31 March 2021, highlighting key themes and longer-term trends.
- 1.2 The report also explains how the Council has performed against the required standards and includes case studies demonstrating how services have learnt from complaints received.

### **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 The performance headlines outlined within the report include:
  - The overall number of complaints received by the Council decreased by 32%, going from 1,372 in 2019/20 to 931. This decrease was driven by the reduction of complaints in the first quarter of 2020. 349 complaints were received in the first quarter of 2019/20 compared to 135 complaints received in the first quarter of 2020/21(61% decrease).
  - All Council departments saw a decrease in complaints from the previous year. It is fully expected that the number of complaints received in the current financial year, 2021-22 will be back to near average levels continuing the trends over the last five years. (Currently 261 complaint received in the first three months of 21-22 compared to 135 in the same period 20-21)
  - The largest percentage decrease was in Finance and Customer services from 182 to 76, 58%, followed by Children and Young People's Services from 147 to 86, 41%. Then in line with the overall Council average decrease (32%), Housing Services decreased from 551 to 367, 33%. Adult Social Care reduced from 72 to 48, 33% and Public Health decreased from 4 to 3, 33%. The smallest percentage decrease was Regeneration and Environment Services which decreased from 411 to 346, 16% Finally, Assistant Chief Executives remained the same at 5 received.
  - Overall, 86% of complaints were responded to within timescales, compared with 89% in 2019/20. This means that this is better than the five-year all council average of 84%. The response rate significantly increased in Adult Social Care (85% 2020/21 from 73% 2019/20). The response rate remained the same in Childrens and Young Peoples services (83% 2020/21 and 83% 2019/20). Response rates in other areas decreased slightly but remained over target.
  - The number of compliments received decreased to 695 received in 2020/21, in comparison to 794 in 2019/20.

- The most frequent category of complaints received by the Council was again 'quality of service', accounting for 35% of all complaints (325 of 931.)
  - Fewer complaints escalated to Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure, at 25 (in contrast with 31 in 2019/20.) Of the 931 complaints that were taken through the Council's formal complaints procedures, less were upheld in 2020/21 at 235 or 26%, in contrast with 365 or 27% in 2019/20.
- 2.2 The Annual Review letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) was received on 21st July 2021, setting out their records of referred complaint investigations. In total 37 complaints and enquiries were directed to the LGSCO, of which 6 were subject to full investigation. Out of the 6, 3 were upheld and 3 were not upheld (50% upheld rate). This compares to 72 enquiries, 7 investigations with 4 upheld and 3 not upheld in 2019/20 (57% upheld rate). This review letter is attached as an appendix to the report (please see appendix two.)
- 2.3 Overall, the Annual Review letter in the main presents a positive picture of the Council's handling of formal complaints in 2020/21 despite a very challenging year. The number investigations were small and the uphold rate is below average. All requested remedies were completed and learning, and service improvement was completed. On two occasions the remedy was provided late, and the Annual Review letter is critical of this. The reason for the delays has been considered (these were specific issues relating to each case) and feedback has been provided to those Directorates and the managers who were responsible for the delays.
- 2.4 Based on a statistical comparator group of 16 other Local Authorities (see appendix one of the Annual Complaint Report), Rotherham had the joint third lowest number of complaint investigations, compared to its statistical neighbours. In addition, its upheld rate at 50%, based on the total investigated was below the average of 72% for similar Local Authorities.
- 2.5 The Council received four decisions by the Housing Ombudsman, two were part upheld and two were not upheld. This compares to two decisions, one upheld and one part upheld in 2019/20.
- 2.6 A number of service improvements have been made over the year, based on the feedback from customers and learning from complaints. Key themes of service improvements have included the reviews of policies and processes; information and advice provided; dealing with delays and improving communication. Examples of the improvements made are included within the Annual Complaints report.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 Building on the key developments in 2020/21, the Council will again apply particular focus to the following issues:

- Continue to improve the way in which the Council learns from complaints, ensuring that all learning reported is considered and the impact of service improvement is understood and recorded. This will also include a revised protocol around learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Work to ensure that complaint investigations are more outcome-focussed. Resolving the complaint and finding solutions should be at the centre of all investigations.
- Work to improve performance to complaint procedure timescales.
- Ensure remedy requests by the Ombudsman are completed within required timescales.
- Increase the number of compliments recorded; the Complaints Team to continue to work with managers to ensure that the process for recording and reporting compliments is improved.

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 The complaint information contained in this report has been previously reported to each Directorate Leadership Team to enable key areas for improvement to be identified.
- 4.2 There has been no further consultation on this report beyond the requirements of internal processes, alongside consultation with the Cabinet member.

#### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 A simple timetable to show the stages and deadlines for implementing the proposed improvements outlined in section 3 are to be implemented in 2021/22. Progress against these actions will be reported on as part of the annual report for 2021/22.
- 5.2 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.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The provision of the compliments and complaints service is factored into the Council's budget. If a complaint about an error in a charge for a Council service is upheld, then an appropriate refund will be made in accordance with the Council's Finance and Procurement Procedure Rules.
- 6.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

**7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

7.1 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)

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 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.

**9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 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.

**10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

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

10.2 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. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 There are no direct implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change arising from this report.

11.2 However, it is possible for complaints to be made relating the Council's approach to CO2 Emissions and Climate Change and these matters can be formally considered through the Complaint Procedures.

**12. Implications for Partners**

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 faces pressures on services due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, as well as a continued ambition to transform services to deliver financial savings and improve customer experiences. It is vital that customer expectations around what is sustainable for the Council to deliver are properly managed.
- 13.2 To mitigate this, the Council is continuing to engage with the public as appropriate through regular communication, as well as where services are being proposed to be amended.

### 14. Accountable Officer(s)

Simon Dennis, Acting Head of Policy Improvement and Performance  
Stuart Purcell, Corporate Complaint Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	N/A	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	05/11/21
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	05/11/21
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)	N/A	Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	N/A	Click here to enter a date.

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# ANNUAL REPORT COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2020 - 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021



[www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints)

# CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Key Headlines</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Overview</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Performance</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>5. Adult Services</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6. Children and Young People's Services</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>7. Housing Services</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>8. Regeneration and Environment Services</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>9. Finance and Customer Services</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>10. Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>11. Public Health</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>12. Next Steps, 2021/22</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Appendix One: Local Government Ombudsman Decisions 2020/21</b>	<b>33</b>

# I. INTRODUCTION

Rotherham Council is committed to being open and accountable, listening to the views of residents and communities and placing them at the heart of its services. Customer feedback through formal complaints and the way that the Council responds to complaints are vital indicators of the overall performance of the organisation. When we cannot resolve a problem straight away our residents have the safety net of a formal complaint procedure through which they can find a resolution.

The way that the Council provided its services during 2020-21 was fundamentally impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic will continue to be felt across the borough for a long time, affecting the economy, the community and daily life. In terms of formal complaints, it has had the effect of reducing the numbers received; at the start of the pandemic in 2020, during the first lockdown, some Council services were reduced and residents themselves made less complaints. Numbers received returned to average levels later in 2020 and into 2021 but the information provided in this report should be understood in the wider context of an unprecedented global event impacting on both Council services and the lives of our residents.

It should be noted that the Council's complaint service was not suspended, despite the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman temporarily declining new complaints and some Council services being placed on hold.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, the Council continued to maintain a high level of performance and improved the quality of service offered to residents. There is a continued commitment to providing high quality, timely responses to formal complaints, and we continue to learn and improve based on the feedback received. Performance was again above the five-year average (84 %) with 86 % of complaints being resolved in time.

The purpose of this report is to outline the complaints and compliments that the Council received during 1st April 2020-31st March 2021, highlighting key themes and trends. The report also explains how the Council has performed against the required standards and includes case studies demonstrating how services have learnt from complaints received. This is arguably the most important aspect of the complaints process.

Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board continues to be considered as part of these reports, and in respect of the Council's handling of complaints throughout the year. The questions and queries raised are noted and subject to consideration.

Although 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 and key developments that occurred within 2020/21.

**Furthermore, building on the key developments in 2020/21, priority areas of focus for next year will include:**

- Continuing to improve the way in which the Council learns from complaints. That all learning reported is considered and the impact of service improvement is understood and recorded. This will also include a revised protocol around learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Working to ensure that complaint investigations are more outcome focussed. Resolving the complaint and finding solutions should be at the centre of all investigations.
- Working to improve performance to complaint procedure timescales.
- Ensuring remedy requests by the Ombudsman are completed within required timescales.
- Increasing the number of compliments recorded, with the Complaints Team continuing to work with managers to ensure that the process for recording and reporting compliments is improved.

## 2. KEY HEADLINES – 2020/21

**931**  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints were received.**  
(931 in 2020/21 compared with 1,372 in 2019/20, which is a decrease of 32 %).

**Fewer compliments were received.**  
(695 in 2020/21 compared with 794 in 2019/20, which is a decrease of 12 %).



**Fewer complaints were upheld; at 235 or 26%.**  
(365 or 27 % upheld 2019/20).

**Fewer complaints were responded to within timescales.**  
(86 % in 2020/21 compared with 89 % in 2019/20).



**Six complaints were investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.**  
(Seven in 2019/20 in comparison).

**Fewer complaints around quality of service.**  
(325 compared to 632 in 2019/20, a decrease of 49 %).



**Fewer complaints regarding actions of staff.**  
(134 compared to 199 in 2019/20, a decrease of 33 %).

**More complaints were responded to in time in Adult Social Care.**  
(85 % in 2020/21 compared to 73 % in 2019/20) **and CYPS maintained performance at 83%.**



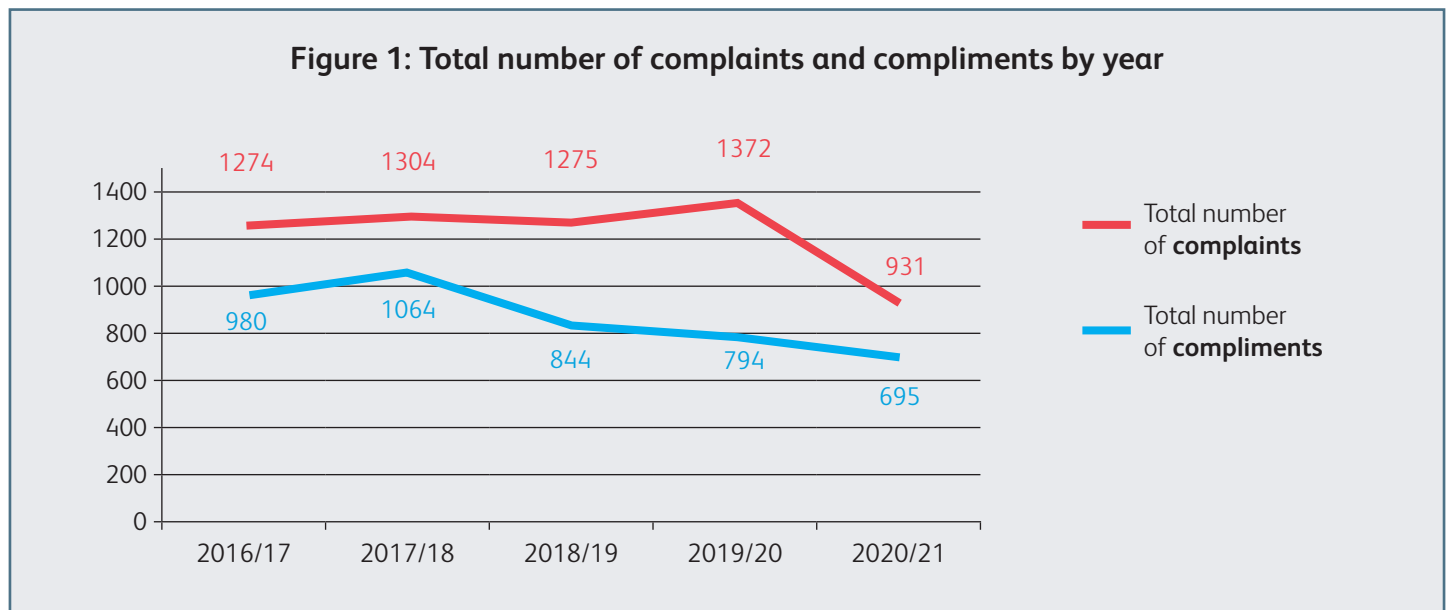
**Fewer complaints were responded to in time in Housing Services (88 % from 92 %), Regeneration & Environment (84 % from 88 %) and Finance and Customer Services (89 % from 94 %).**

**Fewer escalations through the complaint procedure.**  
(25 or 3 % compared to 35 or 3 % in 2019/20).



## 3. OVERVIEW

### 3.1 Summary



In 2020/21, the overall number of complaints received by the Council decreased by 32 %, going from 1,372 in 2019/20 to 931. As advised in the introduction of this report, this decrease is due to the reduction of complaints in the first quarter of 2020. 349 complaints were received in the first quarter (April – June) of 2019/20 compared to 135 complaints received in the first quarter of 2020-21 (61 % decrease). Complaints then began to increase to average levels throughout the rest of the year. This is the lowest number of complaints in five years; a decrease of 441 complaints following an increase the previous year.

The Council provides a wide variety of services to over 264,984 residents. In this context, 931 complaints are only a fraction of the number of customer interactions occurring each year (for example, the Council received 1,146,218 unique web visitors in 2020/21).

The number of compliments recorded by the Council also decreased, from 794 in 2019/20 to 695 (a decrease of 12 %). It is not considered that the decrease in numbers received is indicative of a reduction in customer satisfaction in Council services, rather it is evidence of a lack of engagement of staff in the process of recording the compliments they received. It may be that, although compliments continue to be received, they are not being passed on to be recorded. In response, staff will be reminded of the process to make sure that as many compliments are recorded as possible.

It is recognised that both compliments and complaints procedures need to be easy and accessible for customers to allow them to provide valuable feedback.

As explained, all Council departments saw a decrease in complaints from the previous year. It is fully expected that the number of complaints received in the current financial year, 2021/22, will be back to near average levels continuing the trends over the last five years. (Currently 261 complaints were received in the first three months of 2021/22 compared to 135 in the same period 2020/21).

**A breakdown on the numbers received and how much they decreased, by department is as follow:**

- The largest percentage decrease was in Finance and Customer services from 182 to 76, a reduction of 58 %.
- Children and Young People's Services reduced from 147 to 86, a decrease of 41 %.

- In line with the Council average decrease (32 %), Housing Services decreased from 551 to 367, a decrease of 33 %.
- Adult Social Care reduced from 72 to 48 and Public Health decreased from 4 to 3, both seeing a 33 % reduction in complaints.
- The smallest percentage decrease was Regeneration and Environment Services decreased from 411 to 346, a decrease of 16 %.
- Finally, Assistant Chief Executives remained the same at five received.

The following diagrams show the breakdown of complaints and compliments by Directorate in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

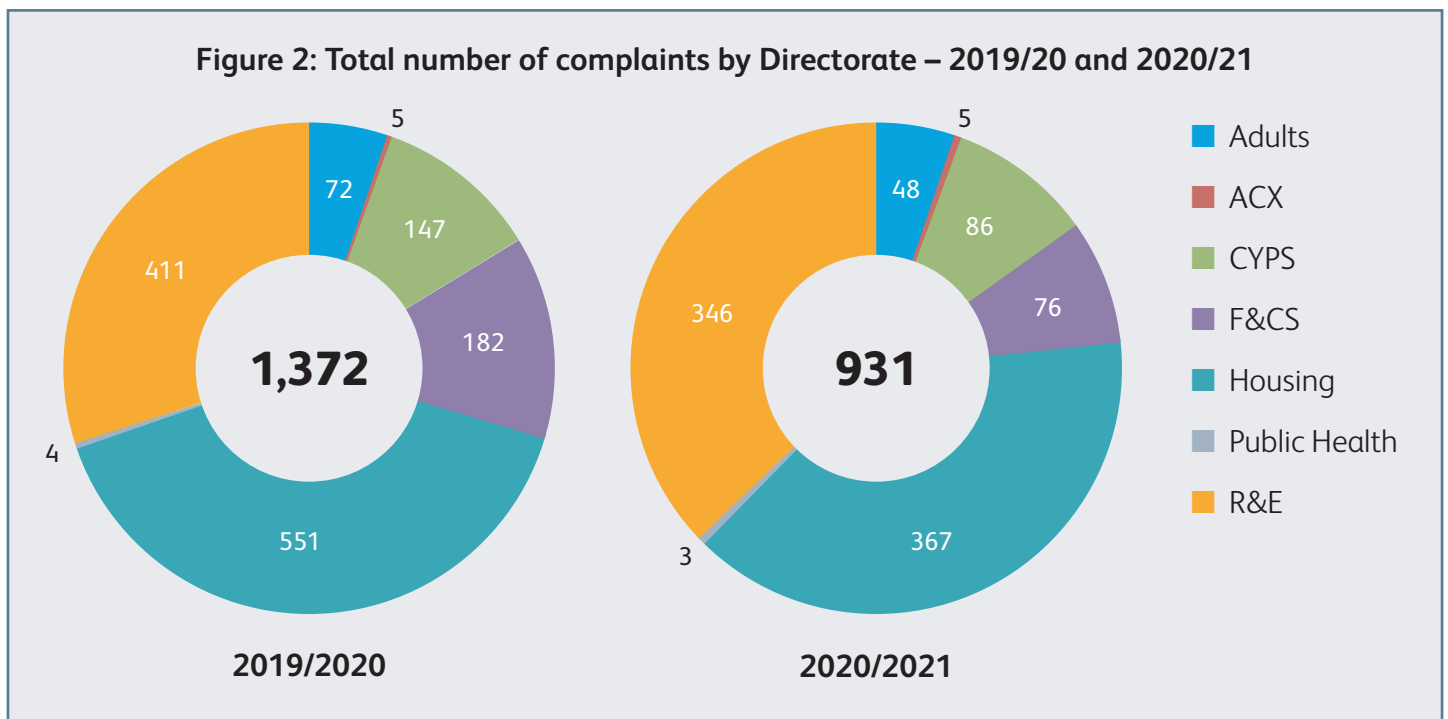
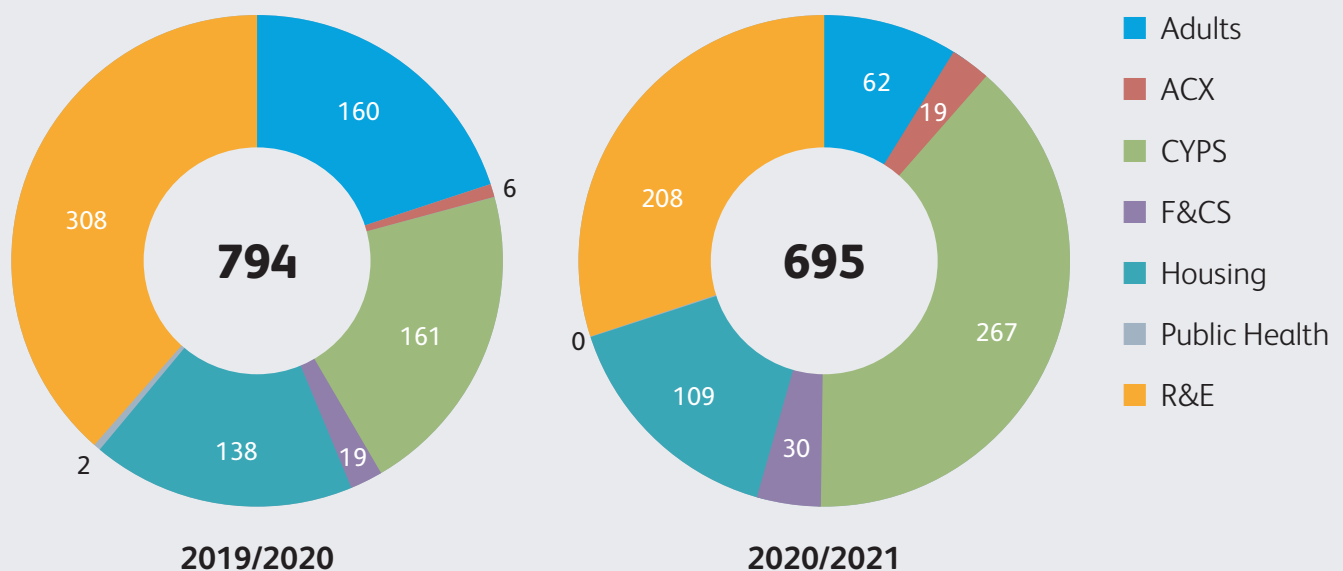


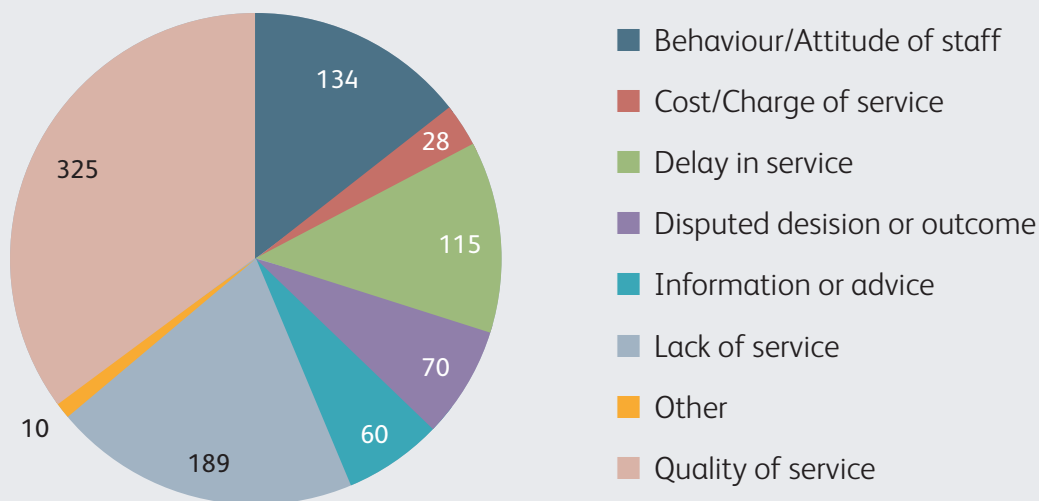
Figure 2 shows that the two highest areas for complaints were Housing and Regeneration and Environment Services. This is consistent with previous years' figures, as these areas typically receive the highest volume of complaints. They deal with the largest number of customers and are responsible for a high number of service transactions over the year.

The number of complaints received tends to correlate 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 explained, the number of compliments has decreased by 12 %, however, the number received in Childrens and Young Peoples Services and Assistant Chief Executives increased. In Childrens and Young Peoples Services this is due to a better engagement in the compliment process by staff, making sure that all positive feedback is captured including feedback from satisfaction surveys. Compliments increased in Assistant Chief Executive because of the Councils Community Hub Service which was set up in response to the global pandemic and provided direct services to residents.

**Figure 3: Total number of compliments by Directorate – 2019/20 and 2020/21**

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 2020/21:

**Figure 4: Total number of complaints by category – 2020/21**

325 (35 %) of all complaints were categorised as quality of service. Complaints within this category have decreased from 632 (46 %) in 2019/20 (a decrease of 11 %).

Lack of service accounted for the second highest category of complaints, with 189 complaints (or 20 %) falling into this category. It should also be noted that in 2019/20 the second highest category of complaints was delay in service, but in 2020/21 this category was the third highest at 134 (14 %) received.

Although the numbers of complaints in the categories of quality of service and lack of service were significant across all directorates, the majority of the complaints categorised as lack of service were within Regeneration and Environment Services, with 143 (106 in the Street Scene department and of these 81 were in Waste and Recycling) of the 189 complaints in this category (see section 7).

In addition to reporting against general subject areas there is a need to report complaints in more detail to directorate and service management teams. To assist with this level of reporting additional complaint classifications were developed, reviewed at year end, and updated. These are service specific and more accurately reflect the types of complaints received.

**Examples of the most common complaint types recorded by this classification are as follows:**

- Quality of Service Provided
- Standard of Work
- Behaviour/Attitude of Staff
- No service provided /Action Taken
- Delay in Service Being Provided
- Missed Appointment/Service
- Lack of Information/Advice
- Disputed Decision or Outcome
- Appeal/Inappropriate Enforcement Action
- Cost/Charge for Service
- Incorrect/Inaccurate written or verbal advice
- Application/Assessment Outcome or Decision
- Damage to Property

For further detail around directorate complaint trends please see sections 5 to 11 of the report.

It should also be noted that slightly less complaints were upheld in terms of the percentage of all formal complaints responded to. This is where we have investigated and found a problem with the service we have provided with 235 or 26 % upheld (365 or 27 % upheld 2019/20 and 305 or 25 % upheld 2018/19) of all complaints. Again, please see sections 5 to 11 for more detail of upheld complaints by directorate and how we have learnt from upheld complaints.

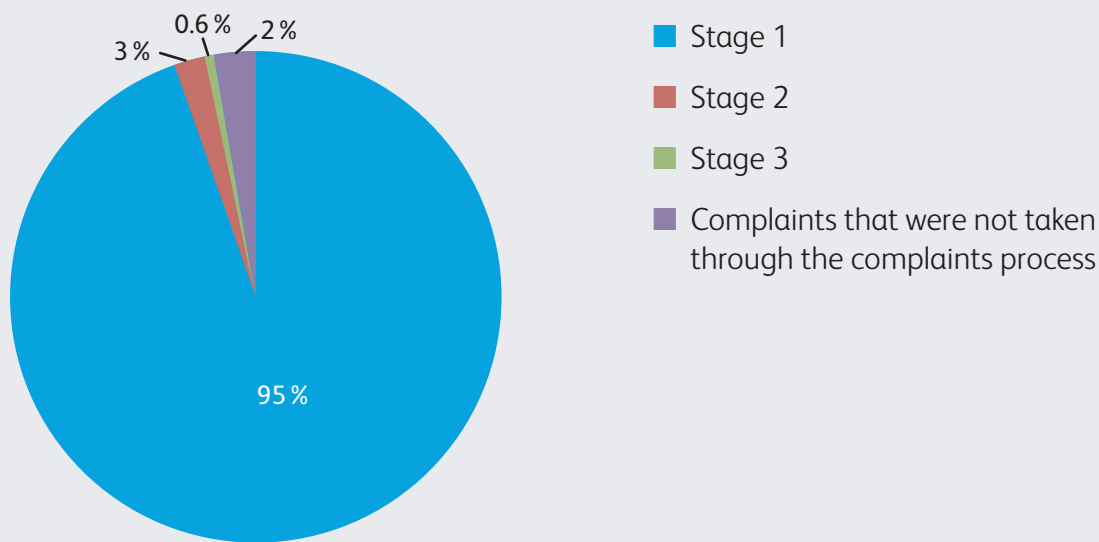


### 3.2 Dealing with Complaints

The Council follows three different complaints procedures: children's social care, adult social care and the corporate complaints procedure. The social care complaints procedures are legislative and have individual statutory requirements about how complaints are dealt with.

A relatively small proportion of complaints are not taken through the formal complaints procedure (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 (written) response. This report includes these complaints in the overall total figures. In 2020/21, this amounted to only 20 (2 %) out of a total of 931 complaints (in 2019/20 it was 40 (3 %) out of a total of 1,372 complaints).

**Figure 5: Percentage of complaints escalating through the complaints procedures**



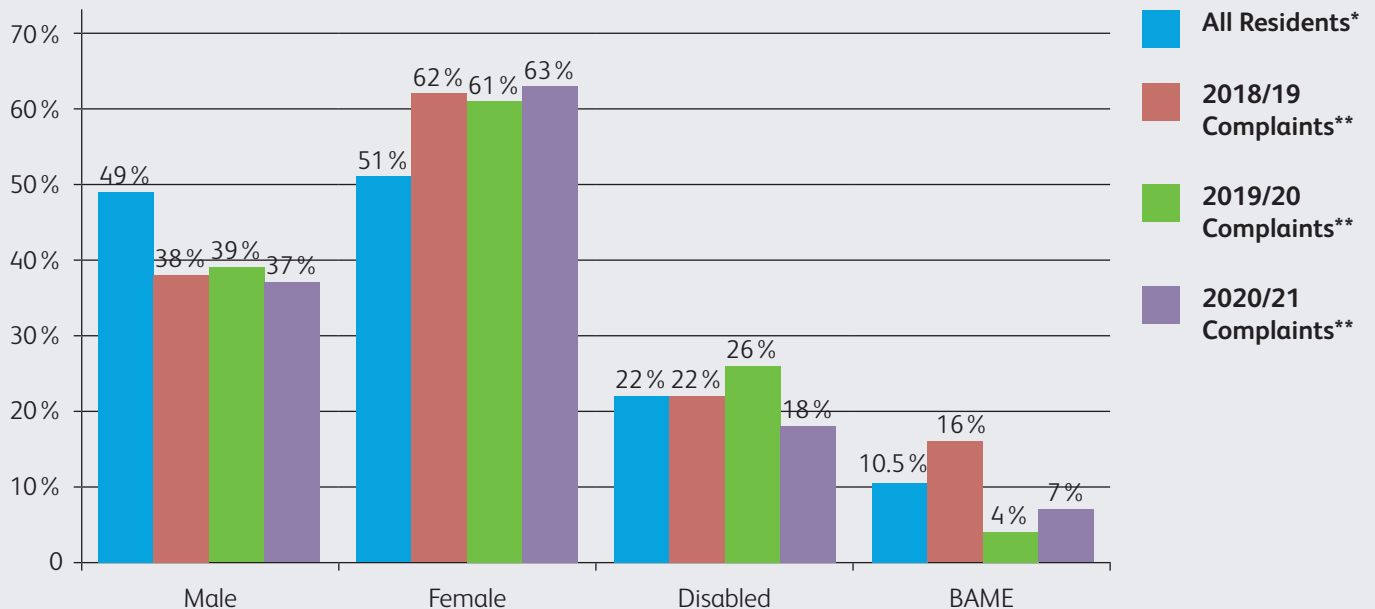
The diagram above outlines the number of complaints that reached the various stages of the complaint's procedures.

The extent to which complaints escalate through the complaint's procedure is an important measure, as it is preferable to find resolutions for customers at the earliest possible stage. As shown in figure 5, the majority of complaints (95 %) were resolved at stage 1 (only 25, 3 % of all complaints, were escalated to stage 2, compared with 31, 2 %, in 2019/20).

### 3.3 Equalities Monitoring

Following the Council's Equalities and Diversity Peer Review in October 2017, it was agreed to start recording the demographics of customers making formal complaints. This information will be used to ensure that the complaints process is fair and accessible for all customers.

**Figure 6: Equalities Monitoring**



\*All resident data based on 2011 census, 2016/17 and 2019 estimates.

\*\*Complaints information was captured on the online complaints forms in 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

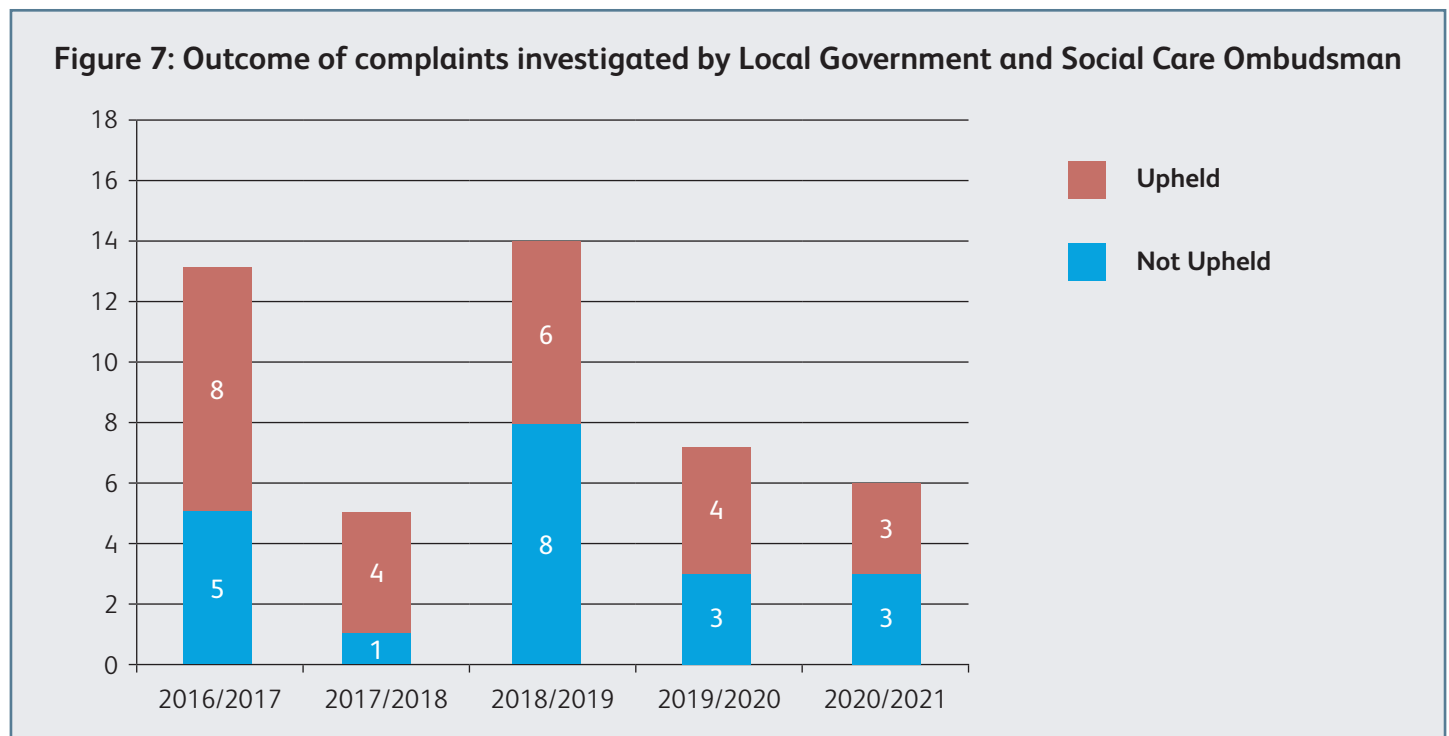
The information received indicates that significantly more female customers complained about Council services in 2020/21 and this is a consistent trend over the last three years. All directorates apart from Children and Young Peoples Services recorded a higher number of female complainants. For example, in Housing Services the percentage of female complainants was 65 % and Regeneration and Environment Services it was 58 %.

It is also noted that numbers have decreased for those customers who are disabled, and it is now below the average for all residents. In addition, the number of BAME customers who have made a complaint has increased but it is still lower than the average all residents figure (Please note the actual numbers recorded for BAME complainants are low, only 11 in total, one complainant recorded for Children and Young Peoples Services and five each for Regeneration and Environment Services and Housing Services).

### 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 escalate their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). 37 complaints enquiries were directed to the LGSCO in 2020/21 (72 received in 2019/20), and of these, the LGSCO investigated six (seven investigated in 2019/20). It should be noted that the LGSCO completely suspended their services during the first part of the year 2020/21 in response to the global pandemic. This has had the effect of reducing the number of enquiries overall but the number of investigations were not similarly affected, serious cases, those that the LGSCO considered they needed to investigate, were still actioned.

Figure 7 (see below) provides some context; on average, approximately 11 complaints were investigated by the LGSCO per year between the financial years of 2016/17 and 2020/21.



In 2020/21 less complaints were investigated and less complaints were upheld by the LGSCO than in the previous year. As explained, the global pandemic did suppress the number of contacts but the number of investigations was not reduced by the same rate. So bearing in mind the context, the number investigated is less than the five-year average of 11 and is the lowest since 2017/18. It is positive that the number investigated and upheld has reduced, as this would still indicate a successful complaint resolution by the Council overall and that the majority of complaints are responded to through the complaint stages.

Appendix One outlines the LGSCO decisions for the Council for 2020/21 and how these compare with 16 statistical neighbour councils. In 2020/21, the Council had the joint third lowest number of complaint investigations compared to its statistical neighbours, 16 other local authorities. In addition, its upheld rate at 50%, based on the total investigated, was below the average of 72% for similar local authorities.

Furthermore, it shows that the majority of complaints that were brought to the LGSCO (36 decided) were deemed invalid or incomplete, referred back for local resolution or closed after initial enquiries. This along with the relatively low number of investigations reflects positively that the Council's complaints procedures are working effectively to find fair and appropriate local resolutions.

Of the three complaints that were investigated and upheld by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, two were in Children and Young People's Services, and one was in Adult Social Care.

### 3.5 Housing Ombudsman

From April 2013, the Housing Ombudsman has dealt with all complaints from tenants regarding social housing. There were four decisions made by the Housing Ombudsman in 2020/21, two were not upheld and two were upheld in part (two decisions in 2019/20, one upheld and one part upheld).

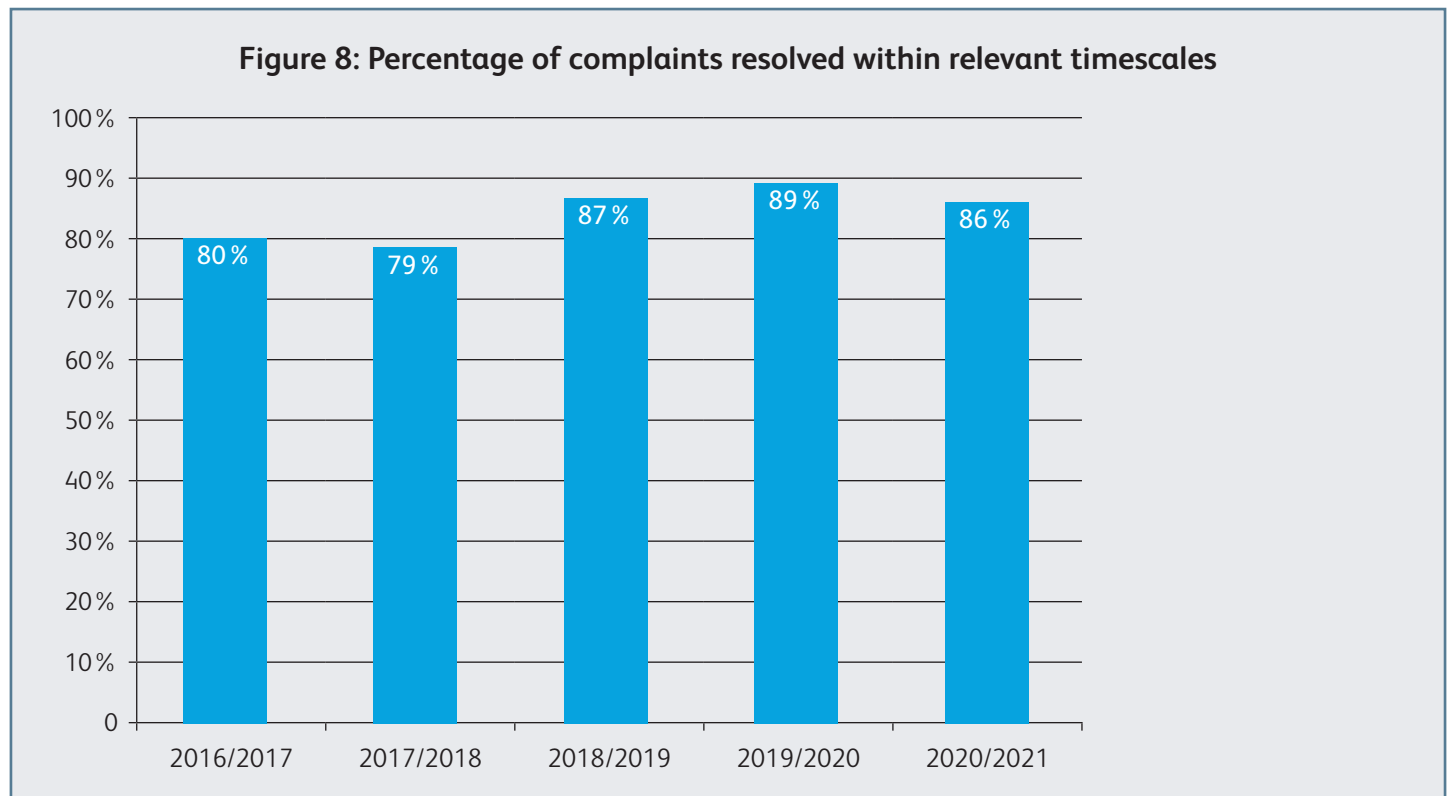
The partially upheld complaints were regarding the timeliness of repairs to a council property, the Council was asked to apologise and pay £200 in compensation and delays in responding to reports of ASB and damage to a property, the Council was asked to apologise and also pay £200 in compensation.

## 4. PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 Performance Overview

Performance against the time allowed by the formal complaint procedure is monitored through regular (weekly, monthly, and quarterly) performance reports presented to Council Directorate Leadership Team meetings and Service Management Team meetings.

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



Performance has decreased slightly at 86 % of complaint responses within target timescale. Although a reduction on the previous year's performance, it is still above the Council's five year average of 84 % and maintains the higher than average performance seen over the last three years. There has been a continued effort made across all council services to improve performance to timescales, and the improvements in children's safeguarding and waste management have been maintained. For the first time in five years Adult Social Care have achieved higher than the Council average at 85 %.

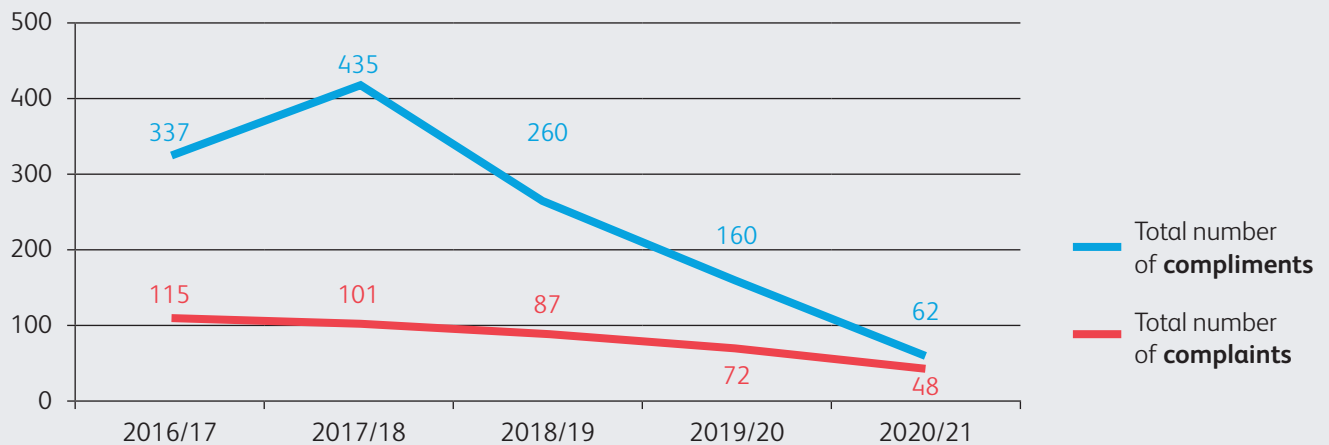
### 4.2 How we are improving

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.

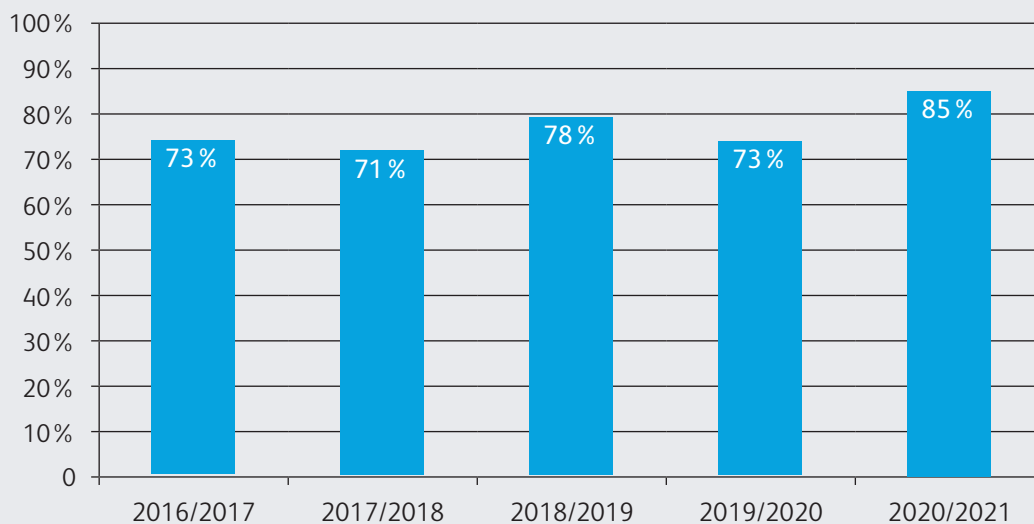
A number of service improvements have been made over the year based on feedback from our customers. Key themes of service improvements have included the training and performance management of staff; reviews of processes and policies; and the revision of communication materials. Examples of case studies where service improvements have been made based on complaints are outlined within each Directorate section.

## 5. ADULT SERVICES

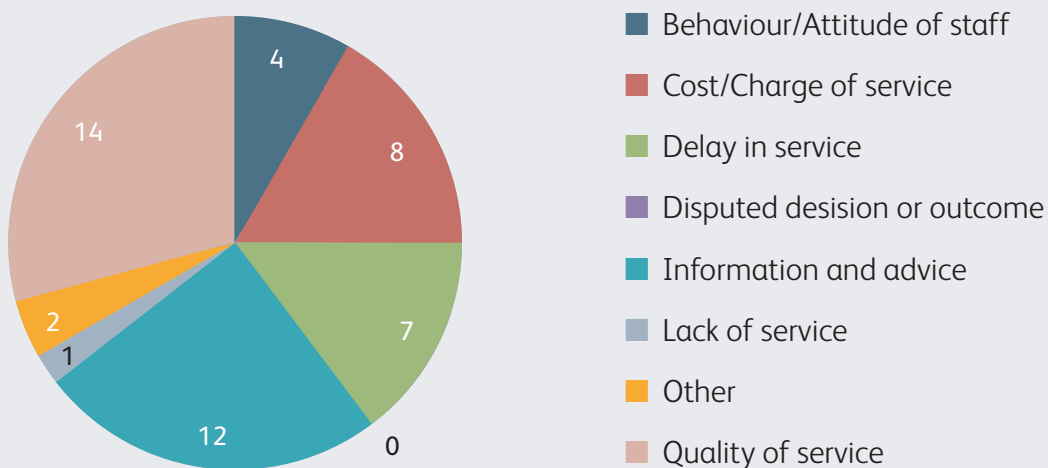
**Figure 9: Total number of complaints and compliments relating to Adult Social Care**



**Figure 10: Percentage of complaints about Adult Care Services closed in timescales**



**Figure 11: Complaints about Adult Services by category – 2020/21**



## 5.1 Key Headlines

# 33%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints  
about Adult Services  
were received.**

(48 in 2020/21  
compared with  
72 in 2019/20).

**Fewer compliments  
were received about  
Adult Services.**

(62 in 2020/21  
compared with  
160 in 2019/20).

# 61%

fewer  
compliments  
received



**Less complaints  
were upheld.**

(14 in 2020/21  
compared with  
15 in 2019/20.)

**85% of complaints were  
responded to within  
timescales.**

This is above the  
Council's five year  
average of 84 % and  
more than 2019/20,  
73 %.



**One Ombudsman  
complaint decision  
was received.**

It was upheld.

**14 of 48 complaints  
were regarding quality  
of service and 12 were  
regarding information  
and advice.**



### **Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Adult Services complaints were:**

- Cost or charges for care
- Delays in assessments / reviews / request for contact
- Assessment Outcome or Decision
- Lack of information or advice / communication

In addition, the significant reduction in formal complaints is in line with the Council average reduction of 32 %. The largest reduction was in the Locality Social Work Teams, they reduced from 37 to 21. However, in other service areas the reductions were not as large, and some areas did not decrease. For example, in the council's Access service the number of complaints remained the same, at 10 complaints, this was because the number of complaints for the Integrated Discharge Team (Hospital Social Work Team) which is part of this service area increased, from 4 to 7.

**Examples of some of the compliments received for adult services in 2020/21:**

“Many thanks for providing the (Enabling) service to me, it has been really helpful, and I am very appreciative of everyone’s help and support to get me back to being independent again.”

“I’d like to say a big thank you to ..... who has helped us navigate the process to acquire respite, they have been a brilliant help & we are very grateful. It’s been a lifeline even in a time of lockdown.”

“I have found her to be absolutely fantastic, so helpful, pleasant and kind whilst being professional and extremely competent at her job.”

## 5.2 Lessons Learned

**Adult Services made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2020/21. An example of these improvements is outlined in the case study below:**

### The Complaint

A customer’s complaint was considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, who considered that the Council was at fault in how it had dealt with its requirement to complete a financial assessment and then process a refund of care charges.

### What did we do?

The Council worked with the customer and Local Government and Social care Ombudsman, fully accepting their decision and have agreed to the following improvements to service.

- Completed a review of our policies and procedures relating to charging for care.
- We will now follow up any refund payment made via a care home within a month to ensure it has been paid on time, taking action as necessary if it has not.
- We will not make any residential care placement that is in a person’s best interest subject to a third-party top-up fee.
- We have arranged training for relevant staff to ensure correct practice is embedded.

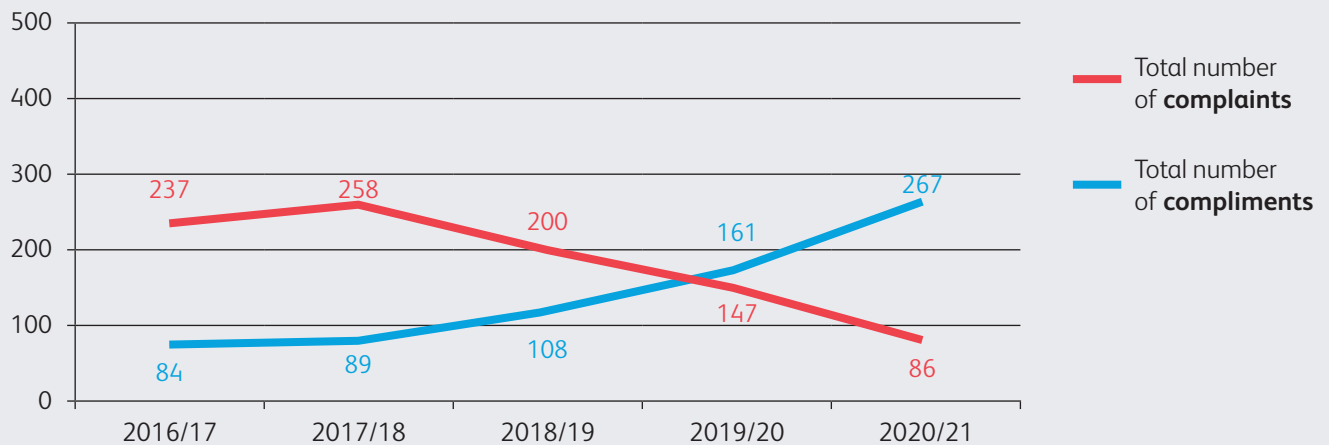
### Who is better off?

Improvements to the Council’s Financial Assessment policies and procedures relating to the charges of care will benefit all current and future users of adult social services in Rotherham. Through better, timely and more customer focussed financial assessments and the procedures in respect of care charges, the Council will ensure that problems experienced in this complaint will not reoccur and that services have been improved for all residents.

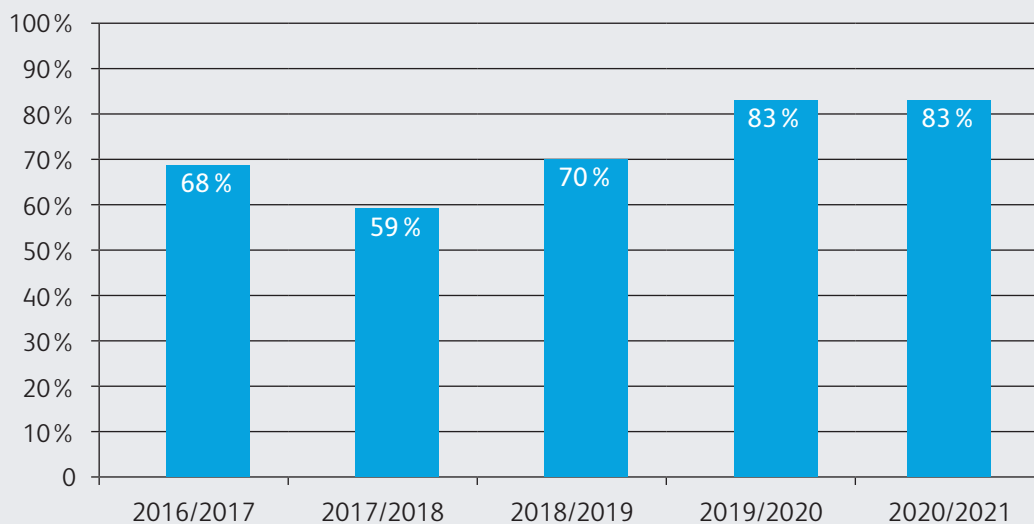


## 6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

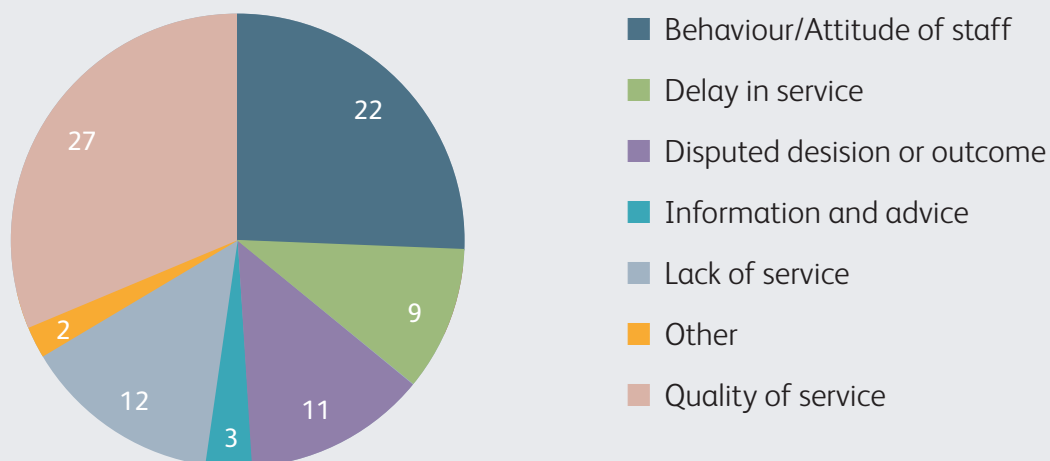
**Figure 12: Total number of complaints and compliments about Children and Young People's Services**



**Figure 13: Percentage of complaints about Children and Young People's Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 14: Complaints about Children and Young People's Services by category – 2020/21**



## 6.1 Key Headlines

# 49%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Children and Young People's services were received.**  
(86 in 2020/21 compared with 147 in 2019/20)

**More compliments were received about Children's and Young People's services (267 in 2020/21 compared with 161 in 2019/20)**

# 39%

more  
compliments  
received



**More complaints were upheld.**  
(45 in 2020/21 compared with 25 in 2019/20)

**83% of complaints were responded to within timescales.**

This is the same as 2019/20 and maintains best ever performance.



Four Ombudsman complaint decisions were received. **Two were upheld and two were not upheld.**

**Most complaints were regarding quality of service, 27 of 86.**  
Followed by actions of staff, 22 of 86.



### Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Children and Young People's Services complaints were:

- Disagreements with decisions made and the outcome of assessment
- Delays in preparing reports or assessments
- Delays/difficulties with communication

In addition, the reduction in complaints can be attributed to the way in which managers have been encouraged and supported to address concerns at the earliest opportunity, so that any problems can be resolved before they enter into the formal complaint procedure. This is the second year where we have had a large decrease in the number of formal complaints.

### Some key messages that have been shared with colleagues as a result of complaints this year:

- Using clear non-jargon explanations of processes and next steps
- Thinking carefully about sharing personal information even if between a couple and recording discussions and rationale carefully where information is shared
- Working more closely with settings around collecting and transporting children's belongings between placements
- Ensuring young people have bank accounts, ID and passports in a timely manner

**Examples of some of the compliments received for Children & Young People's Services in 2020/21:**

"She is a massive help, she's a 'godsend'. She's bubbly but relaxing, she tells me how it is in a friendly way, I trust her, she's like a rock, like a family member. It's good to talk to someone who isn't family, she deserves a medal."

"Communication has been good throughout. I like to see her, and she speaks to me and my child. I'm not afraid to tell her anything which is worrying me, and I feel she listens to me."

"The Social Worker listens and takes my views into account in a non-judgmental way which means I can open up to her. She is the best social worker we have had."

## 6.2 Lessons Learned

**Children and Young People's Services made several service improvements in 2020/21 following the feedback from customers. An example of this is outlined in the case study below:**

### The Complaint

A complaint was made by an adopter about the quality and timeliness of life story work for their child.

### What did we do?

Alongside the formal complaint response, the Service Manager and Complaints Officer met with the parent to listen to their concerns and view the document they had received.

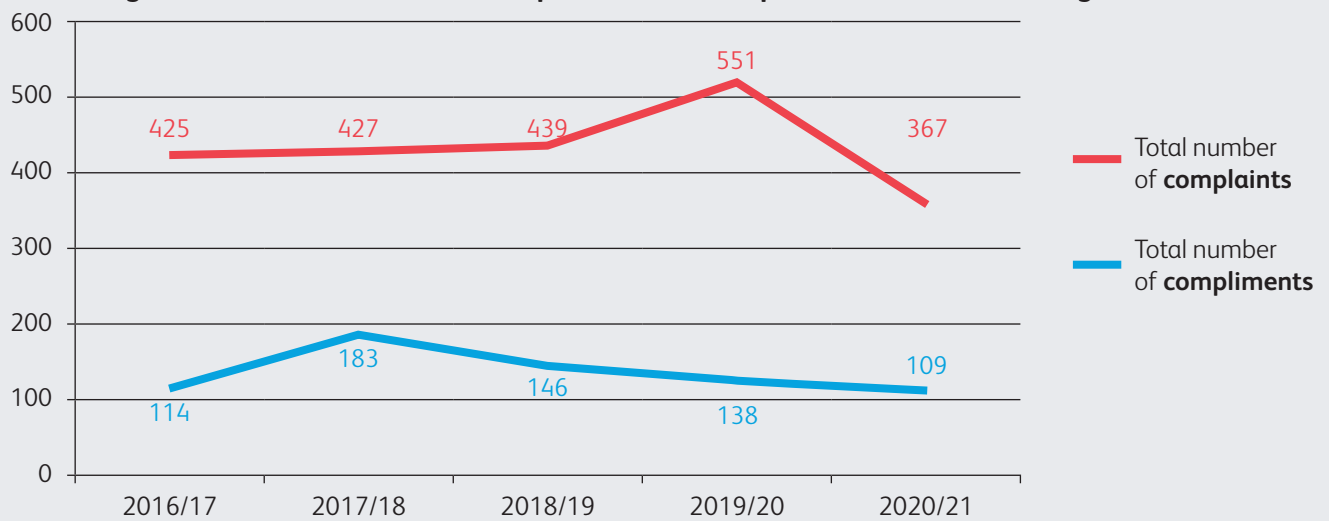
It was acknowledged that there had been delays in completing the piece of work due to capacity. As well as providing a corrected life story, there were focussed discussions at Team Manager Forums to discuss the learning from this complaint and to ensure that all staff were aware of the impact of inaccurate information being recorded.

### Who is better off?

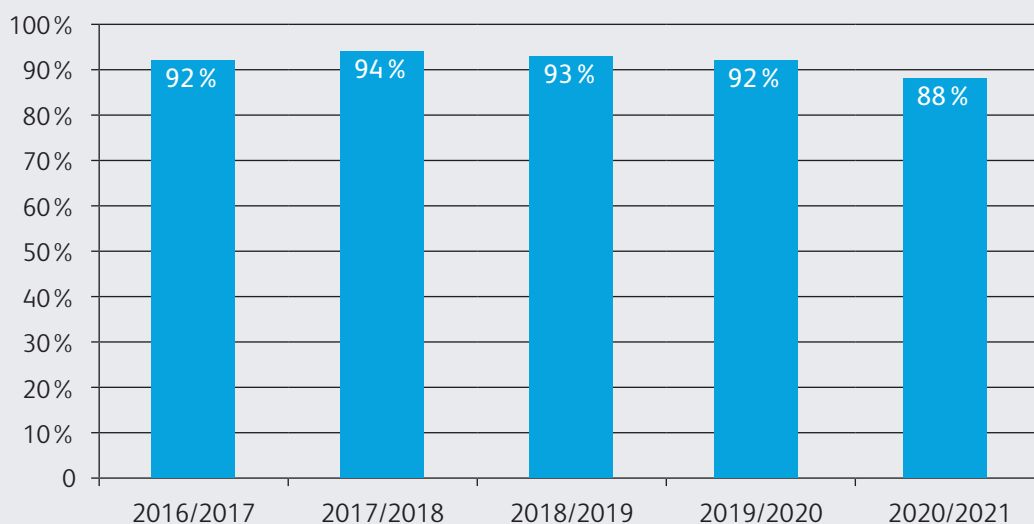
Both children and carers will benefit from better quality life story work. For every child who enters our care, or moves to live with an extended family member, words and pictures will be completed, explaining decision making in a way the children can understand. Also, a later in life letter from the social worker who carried out that piece of work will be completed. The letter may be brief but will capture decision making as well as some of the anecdotal information, that for some of our children can be lost along the way. This can then be stored and will form part of a series of later in life letters which in time will ensure our young people have a sound understanding of decisions made that influenced their lives.

## 7. HOUSING SERVICES

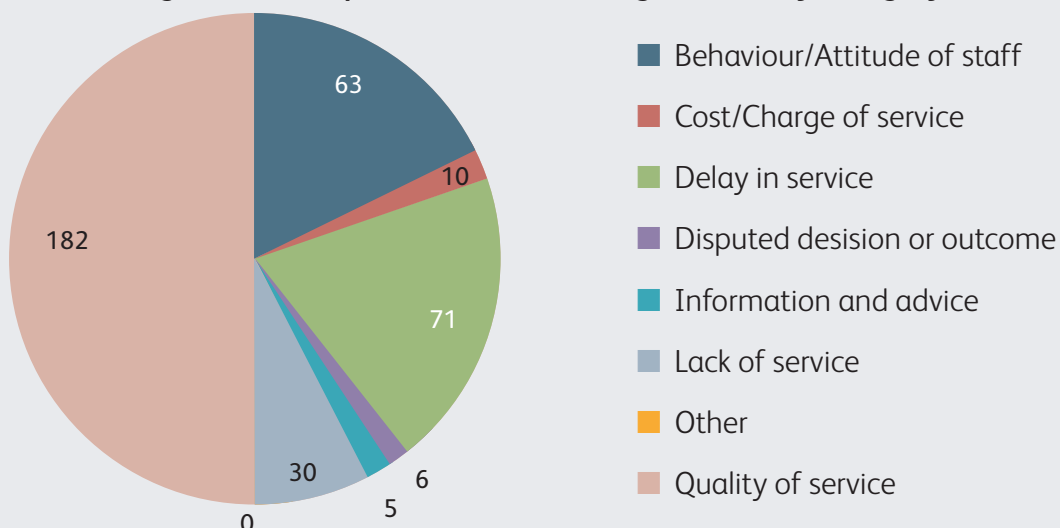
**Figure 15: Total number of complaints and compliments about Housing Services**



**Figure 16: Percentage of complaints about Housing Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 17: Complaints about Housing Services by category – 2020/21**



## 7.1 Key Headlines

# 33%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Housing Services were received.**  
(367 in 2020/21 compared with 551 in 2019/20)

**Fewer compliments were received about Housing Services.**  
(109 in 2020/21 compared with 138 in 2019/20)

# 21%

fewer  
compliments  
received



**Less complaints were upheld.**  
(84, 23 %, in 2020/21 compared with 169, 31 %, in 2019/20)

**88% of complaints were responded to within timescales.**

This is above the five year council average of 84 % but is lower than 2019/20, 92 %.



Four Ombudsman complaint decisions were received.  
**Two were not upheld and two were partially upheld.**

**Half of complaints were regarding quality of service.**

182 of 367 complaints. 71 complaints were regarding delay in service.



### Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for housing services complaints were:

- The Covid-19 Lockdown at the beginning of the year had a significant impact on reducing complaints as services were tailored to the pandemic, home visits, in all but emergencies, ceased during the first months of the pandemic. This particularly affected the repair services with non-emergency repairs being put on hold. Complaint levels were managed by contacting all those who had registered repairs and by an effective communication strategy advising customers of the change. The Income Recovery Team, a primarily telephone-based service experienced the lowest reduction of complaints.
- Communication remains the main cause of complaints particularly in relation to individual repair issues where customer expectation could be managed better.
- Delays in service, most specifically concerning repair delays and missed appointments.

**Examples of some of the compliments received for housing services in 2020/21:**

"I can't explain how amazing it's going to be to finally get my own place with the kids. It's going to do wonders for my mental health and fitness, and for the kids. Thank you so much."

"At a point in my life when I needed to be safe and secure RMBC and especially... ..were there and gave me the confidence to stay in my home. I cannot praise you all enough. Thank you so very much."

"Thank you once again for helping me with this stairlift .It's fitted and we are well chuffed I wouldn't have got this far without your help. The guys from prism company were excellent so if you can pass this on to them very friendly and explained everything. Thank you once again on behalf of my family too."

## 7.2 Lessons Learned

### **Housing Services made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2020/21.**

**An example of these improvements is outlined in the case study below:**

#### **The Complaint**

When fencing was erected around a bungalow complex a complaint was received advising that complainant's disability made it difficult to open the gate to their footpath. The protective fencing had been erected following a bid for Ward Housing Hub funding to create a protective space around the bungalows.

#### **What did we do?**

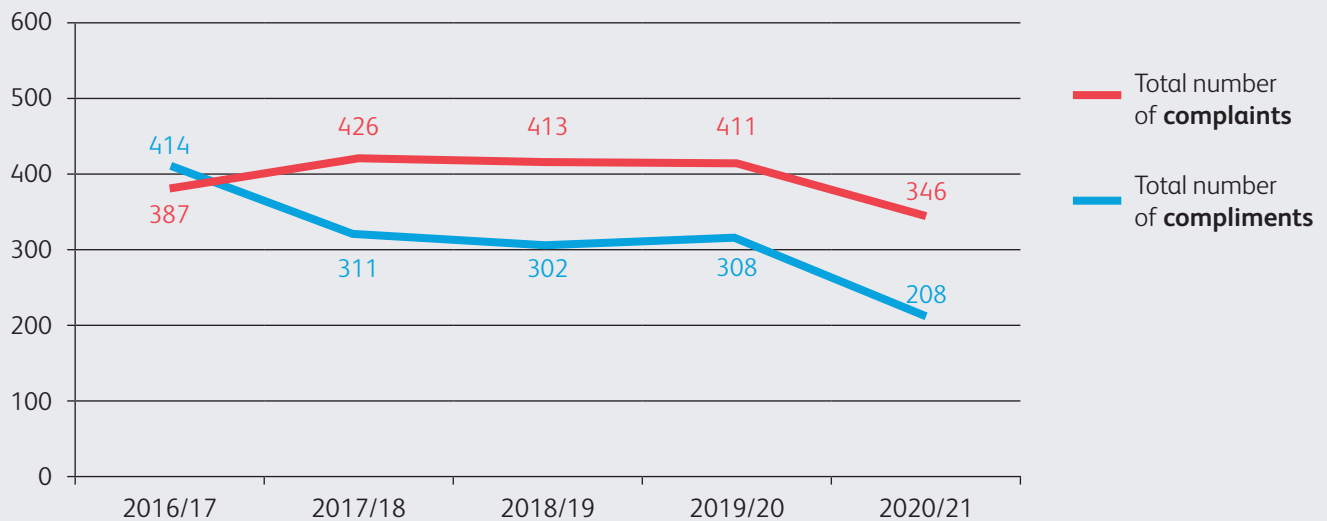
An apology was given, and the contractor returned to change the gate mechanism to a type that was suitable to the resident's disability. The consultation process reviewed, and the Ward Housing Hub application was changed to include two mandatory questions to prevent this happening again, including the question; Will this project have a positive or negative impact on someone with a disability? We have also improved the communication process around projects of this nature, so we will be able address any concerns much earlier.

#### **Who is better off?**

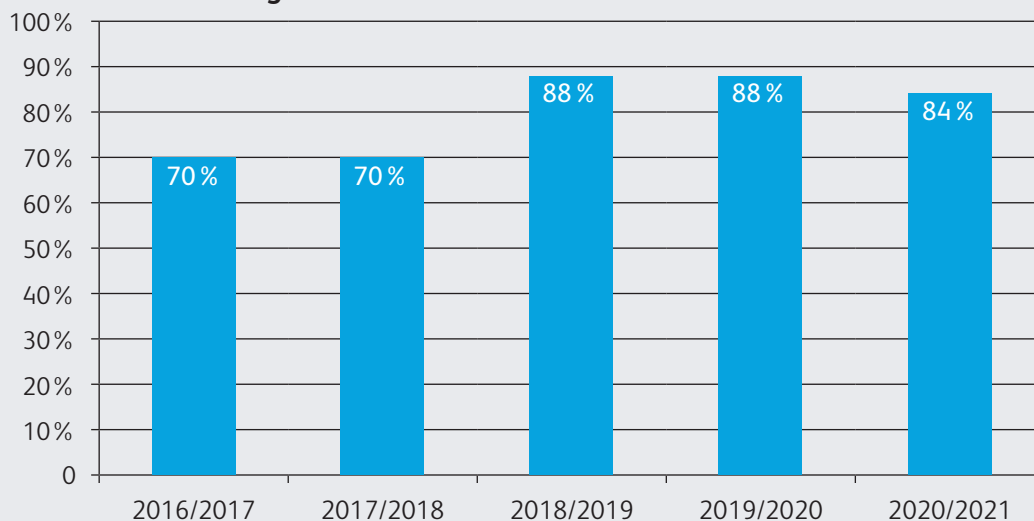
Similar future ward hub and security works will be beneficial to all, taking into account residents individual needs and requirements.

# 8. REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

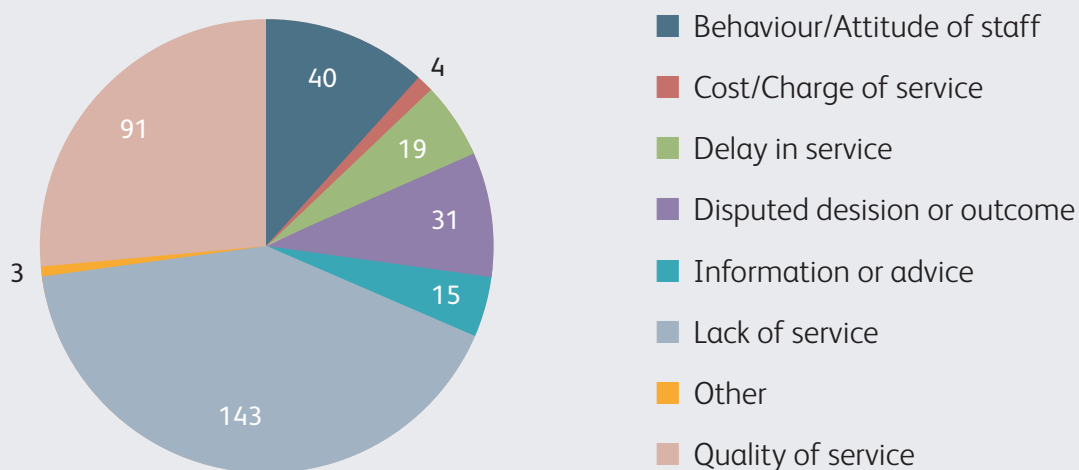
**Figure 18: Total number of compliments and complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services**



**Figure 19: Percentage of complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 20: Complaints about Regeneration and Environment Services by category – 2020/21**



## 8.1 Key Headlines

# 16%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints  
about Regeneration  
and Environment  
Services were received.**

(346 in 2020/21  
compared with  
411 in 2019/20).

**Fewer compliments  
were received about  
Regeneration and  
Environment Services.**

(208 in 2020/21  
compared with  
308 in 2019/20).

# 32%

fewer  
compliments  
received



**Fewer complaints  
were upheld.**

(113 in 2020/21  
compared with  
122 in 2019/20).

**Fewer complaints  
responded to within  
timescales.**

(84 % in 2020/21  
compared with  
88 % in 2019/20).



Two Ombudsman  
complaint decisions  
were received.

**Both were closed  
after initial enquiries  
with no further action.**

**41% of complaints  
were regarding lack  
of service** (143 of 346  
complaints).  
91 complaints were  
regarding the quality  
of service.



### **Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Regeneration and Environment Services were:**

- Missed bin collections and complaints about bins not being returned to the correct location.
- Delay in delivery of new and replacement bins.
- Restrictions, opening times and traffic management at Household Waste Recycling Centres as a result of Covid-19 pandemic.
- Planning decisions, planning process and lack of planning enforcement action.

In addition, the number of complaints decreased from previous years. The largest number of complaints were regarding domestic waste and recycling collections in the Waste Management service, with 142 received. In context, the next highest numbers of complaints received were in Household Waste Recycling Centres with 35 and Planning Development Control with 21.



### **Examples of some of the compliments received for Regeneration and Environment Services in 2020/21:**

“Stayed with Nan, got her inside, got her warm and phoned for an ambulance for her. They stayed with her too until the paramedics arrived. Me and my family want them to know how grateful we are for what they have done, especially in the current circumstances.”

“Please pass on our thanks to the team of workers who have almost completed the work. Working in the current environment is difficult but is appreciated by our residents.”

“Please pass on our thanks and gratitude to the RMBC Highways team for the work recently completed. The roads are now much better, and the work was completed speedily and with the minimum disruption.”

“I thought I would take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for the service and dedication shown by yourself and Team through the period of lockdown. I have always thought highly of Rotherham School Catering services generally but have seen the best of humanity recently by all members of the team.”

## **8.2 Lessons Learned**

**Regeneration and Environment Services made several service improvements based on customer feedback in 2020/21. An example of these improvements is outlined in the case study below:**

### **The Complaint**

Complaints were received regarding the delays in accessing Household Waste Recycling Centres and centres closing earlier than advertised.

### **What did we do?**

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in an increased demand for use of Household Waste Recycling Centres and restrictions in respect of the number of vehicles able to access the site at a time.

The Council introduced traffic management measures in response to vehicles queueing to access Household Waste Recycling Centres to ensure that this was done safely and provided staff to advise customers when queueing of the likely waiting times. The Council encouraged customers via communications to visit the Household Waste Recycling Centres at off-peak times.

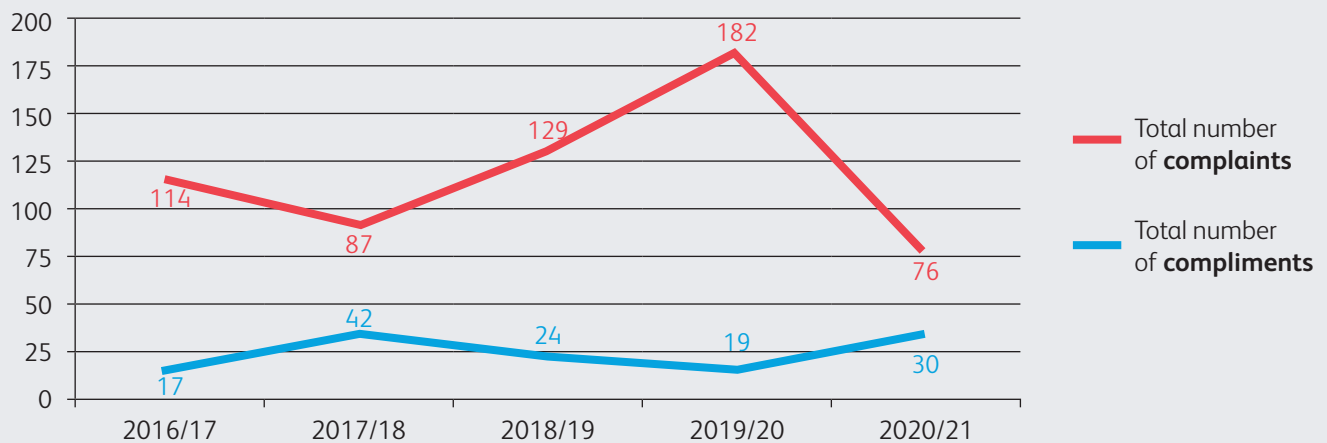
The Council improved its published information regarding opening times to advise of the early closure of sites prior to the advertised closing time to enable the site to be prepared for closure. Queueing customers were also advised of closure times when queueing to access the sites.

### **Who is better off?**

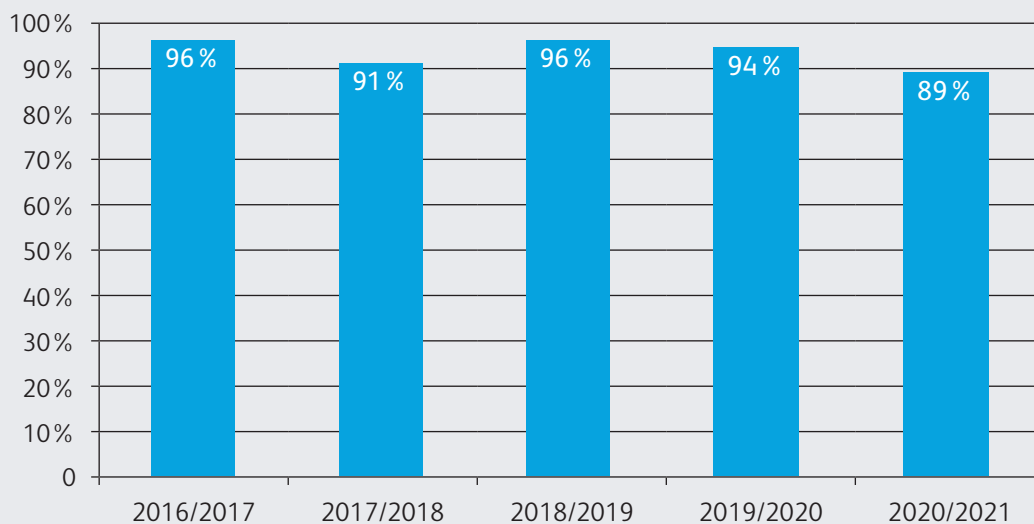
Customers were able to safely access Household Waste Recycling Centres and were informed about waiting and closure times, which resulted in fewer complaints regarding these matters.

## 9. FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

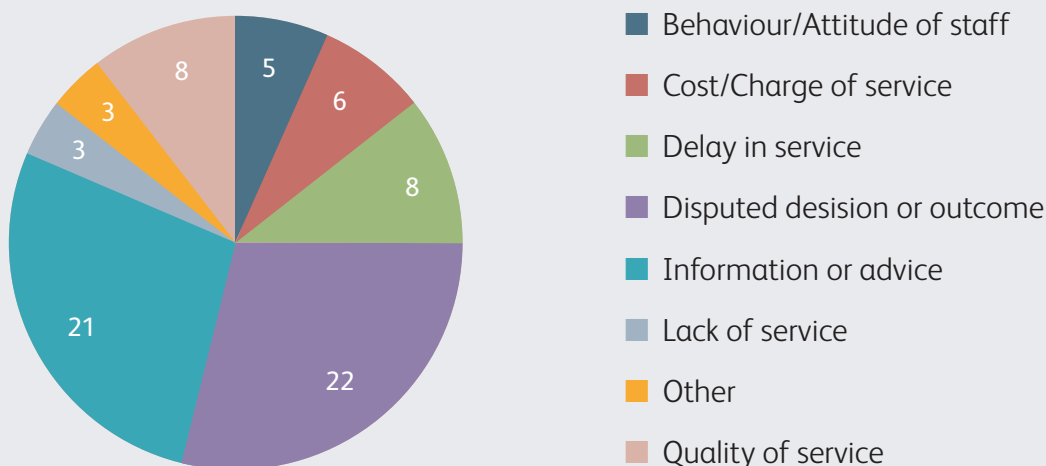
**Figure 21: Total number of complaints and compliments about Finance and Customer Services**



**Figure 22: Percentage of complaints about Finance and Customer Services closed within timescales**



**Figure 23: Complaints about Finance and Customer Services by category – 2020/21**



## 9.1 Key Headlines

# 58%

fewer  
complaints  
received

**Fewer complaints about Finance and Customer Services were received.**

(76 in 2020/21 compared with 182 in 2019/20).

**More compliments were received about Finance and Customer Services.**

(30 in 2020/21 compared with 19 in 2019/20).

# 36%

more  
compliments  
received



**Fewer complaints were upheld.**

(10 in 2020/21 compared with 33 in 2019/20).

**90% of complaints were responded to within timescales.**

This is above the five year council average of 84 % but is slightly lower than 2019/20, 94 %.



**No Ombudsman complaint decisions were received.**

**29% of complaints were regarding a disputed decision or outcome** (22 out of 76) and 28 % were **regarding information and advice** (21 of 76) complaints).



### **Prevalent themes which emerged specifically within upheld and partially upheld complaints for Finance and Customer Services were:**

- Complaint about reported delays in applications for Disabled Persons Parking Permits including delays.
- Complaints about provision of advice and information in relation to Council Tax

The overall decrease in complaints for the directorate can be primarily attributed to a significant reduction of 71 % in complaints received for Customer Services. Where in previous years call waiting times and delays in the blue badge application process had been prevalent themes; these two issues have both substantially reduced. This has been driven by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which saw a reduction in call volumes and also by an increase in both staff numbers and the number of services available online.

In addition, complaints in relation to Council Tax have also reduced by 30 % from the previous year reflecting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the additional financial support to some customers in receipt of Council Tax Support, the deferral scheme offered to customers whose income had been reduced; and delay in the collection of overdue Council Tax which in previous years has been a feature of complaints received.

**Examples of some of the compliments received for Finance and Customer Services in 2020/21:**

“Just want to say a massive thank you, we received our grant today you don’t know how much this will help keep our business afloat whilst we are closed, it’s a massive weight lifted, I might be able to get a full night’s sleep tonight knowing we can now pay our staff and our rent. Thank you to all the staff at Rotherham Council who are still working processing all the grant applications, payments, and enquiries to help all our local businesses it means so much to us all. Thank you.”

“All of you need a medal and recognition for all that we have done for customers during the covid 19 and working through the difficult times and how we have kept everyone going with everything whilst the pandemic has been happening, can’t thank you enough.”

“The call was answered immediately and the woman who dealt with my enquiry was excellent and very helpful. Everything was well explained and straight forward. I felt very assured that the bill was being sorted and I was given options to pay in particular ways.”

## 9.2 Lessons Learned

**Finance and Customer Services made several service improvements in 2020/21 following the feedback from customers. An example of these is outlined in the case study below:**

### **The Complaint**

A customer complained about the usability of the online application form for blue badges and the lack of accessibility, clarity and transparency in the application and assessment process:

### **What did we do?**

The Council now uses the online form provided by the Department for Transport so that applicants can now complete an application under each relevant criteria and guidance for the applicant is provided alongside each question. The form also provides the facility for supporting evidence to be uploaded.

### **Who is better off?**

The application process is now easier for customers who are able to apply against all relevant criteria and upload evidence at the time of application. This has led to a significant reduction in complaints received in 2020/21.

## 10. ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE

The directorate is mainly comprised of services internally supporting the Council, the largest service area being Human Resources. The majority of services within the directorate only have limited contact with external customers and due to the nature of services they provide they will not generate a lot of complaints or compliments.

**As such, information on what was received in 2020/21 is provided in summary below.**

### 10.1 Key Headlines

- Five complaints were received. (Five in 2019/20 )
- 19 compliments were recorded. (Six in 2019/20)
- All five were stage 1 complaints. No Stage 2 complaints.
- One complaint was upheld. (None upheld in 2019/20)
- One Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decision. (closed after initial enquiries)
- 100 % of complaints were resolved within statutory timescales. (100 %, in 2019/20)

### 10.2 Complaints

The subject matter of each complaint received is listed below:

#### Communications

- Concerns about the accuracy of the information on a recent briefing in respect of the Covid-19 crisis. Regarding the clinically vulnerable residents.

#### Human Resources

- Unhappy with how we have dealt with the enquiries regarding a request for a deferred SYPA pension to be put into payment.

#### Democratic Services

- The Planning Board meeting on 5th November 2020 is being held without it being open to the public.
- Unhappy with the scheduling of the appeal, feels it should be as soon as possible due to their child's circumstances.
- Was not able to access the Planning Board meeting.

## 10.3 Compliments

Examples include:

### Six received

#### Complaints Team

- “phoned today to say thank you she’s not sure what you have done but the graffiti has finally gone.”

#### Community Hub

- “Thank you for the information about how to access supermarket delivery slots.”
- “Thank you so much for this information. I have been able to register them with Sainsburys and they are allowing one priority delivery per week — which is marvellous.”
- “RMBC seems to have stepped up to the mark admirably during this Covid-19 crisis. I know this is the general feeling here in Firbeck and I would just like to ensure that thanks go to those responsible.”
- “the Council have performed above and beyond... It’s not just the front line it’s the people in the back office as well.”
- “Many thanks for the information and for arranging for our medication to be collected, we are very grateful for the excellent service.”
- “What a nice polite gentleman delivering my prescription- thank you.”

## II. PUBLIC HEALTH

It is a statutory requirement to report annually on the complaints received for Public Health services. Please note that the Public Health department predominately commission services and it is the commissioned service providers who will respond to any formal complaints via their own complaint procedures. The information below relates to compliments and to complaints responded to by the Public Health services directly under the council's complaint procedure.

### 11.1 Key Headlines

- Three complaints were received. (Four in 2019/20)
- No compliments were recorded. (One in 2019/20)
- Two complaints were upheld. (Two upheld in 2019/20)
- No complaints were investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
- 100% of complaints were resolved within statutory timescales. (100%, Four out of four in 2019/20)

### 11.2 Complaints

The subject matter of each complaint received is listed below:

#### Health Care Public Health/Public Health Intelligence

- Concerns around testing in schools and the scheduling of testing. Information and advice provided.
- Concerns around the accuracy of information in the "This is What a Community Champion Looks Like" booklet
- Concerns around the accuracy of information in the "This is What a Community Champion Looks Like" booklet.

### 11.3 Compliments

None received. Two received in 2019/20

## 12. NEXT STEPS, 2021/22

During 2020/21 the numbers of complaints decreased significantly due to the global pandemic. However, despite the decrease in numbers of complaints the challenges that the Council has faced over the last few years remain.

The need to manage budget savings continues to change the way services are delivered and this can have a negative impact on residents on how they view the services being provided to them. Therefore, it is vital that complaints are responded to in a timely manner and the complaints procedures work effectively for both customers and staff.

The following were the planned actions in 2021/22 to ensure that the way the Council deals with complaints and responds to customer feedback continues to improve.

### Key actions include:

- Continuing review of all customer complaint literature, including website information, easy read guidance and information for children and young people.
- Ongoing complaints training for staff. Continue to seek ways to deliver training to front line staff to allow them to understand the role and purpose of the complaint procedures.
- Work with management meetings in all departments to create a learning from complaints programme. That all learning reported is considered and the impact of service improvement is understood and recorded. This will also include a revised protocol around learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Ensure remedy requests by the Ombudsman are completed within required timescales.
- Work to improve performance to complaint procedure timescales.
- Working to ensure that complaint investigations are more outcome focussed. Resolving the complaint and finding solutions should be at the centre of all investigations.
- Increase the number of compliments recorded, Complaints Team to continue to work with managers to ensure that the process for recording and reporting compliments is improved.



# APPENDIX ONE

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decisions 2020/21, Rotherham Council and statistical neighbours

Authority Name	Invalid or Incomplete	Advice Given	Referred Back for Local Resolution	Closed after Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Total Investigated	Total	Uphold Rate (%)	Average uphold rate (%) of similar authorities
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council	3	3	15	13	1	3	4	38	75%	72%
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council	3	0	9	5	1	4	5	22	80%	72%
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	2	0	9	4	1	5	6	21	83%	72%
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council	2	2	7	14	0	6	6	31	100%	72%
<b>Rotherham Council</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>72%</b>
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	6	1	13	24	5	3	8	52	38%	72%
Halton Borough Council	0	1	4	5	2	6	8	18	75%	63%
Wakefield City Council	0	3	13	14	2	6	8	38	75%	72%
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	2	1	10	6	5	4	9	28	44%	63%
Telford & Wrekin Council	0	0	6	17	1	8	9	32	89%	63%
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	2	6	16	19	2	8	10	53	80%	63%
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council	5	1	12	7	6	7	13	38	54%	72%
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council	4	0	14	12	5	9	14	44	64%	72%
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council	2	5	12	9	10	6	16	44	38%	72%
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	0	3	7	17	7	9	16	43	56%	72%
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	1	4	19	15	7	17	24	63	71%	72%



# Local Government & Social Care OMBUDSMAN

21 July 2021

*By email*

Ms Kemp  
Chief Executive  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Ms Kemp

## **Annual Review letter 2021**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

## **Complaint statistics**

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

**Complaints upheld** - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

**Compliance with recommendations** - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

**Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority** - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

Last year, I raised concerns about your Council's late responses to our enquiries and it is disappointing to note there has been little improvement this year. In one case, we had to threaten to use a witness summons to elicit the information we needed. I will usually only consider a witness summons where a council has not provided a response after a considerable time and despite our continued efforts. In that same case, the Council was late in providing the agreed remedy to the complainant. Indeed, two of the three cases where we recorded our satisfaction with your Council's compliance with our recommendations, the remedies were not completed within the agreed timescales.

While I acknowledge the pressures councils are under, such delays add to the injustice already suffered by complainants. Additionally, the actions you agree to take, and your performance in implementing them, are reported publicly on our website, so are likely to generate increased public and media scrutiny in future. I invite the Council to consider how it might make improvements to ensure it responds to our enquiries in a timely manner and to reduce delays in the remedy process.

### **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

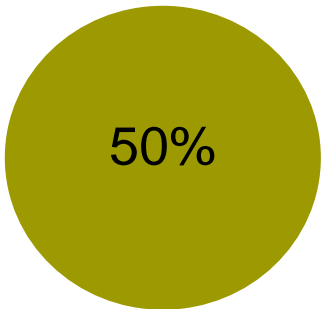
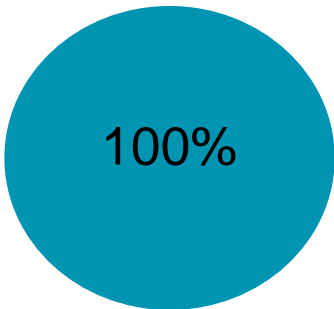
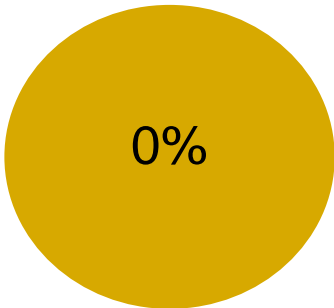
An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our

face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld		
	<p><b>50%</b> of complaints we investigated were upheld.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>72%</b> in similar authorities.</p>	<p><b>3</b> upheld decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 6 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations		
	<p>In <b>100%</b> of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>100%</b> in similar authorities.</p>	<p>Statistics are based on a total of 3 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An authority with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.</li> </ul>		
Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority		
	<p>In <b>0%</b> of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>11%</b> in similar authorities.</p>	<p><b>0</b> satisfactory remedy decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 6 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>

**NOTE:** To allow authorities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we did not accept new complaints and stopped investigating existing cases between March and June 2020. This reduced the number of complaints we received and decided in the 20-21 year. Please consider this when comparing data from previous years.

**Work programme – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board UPDATED: 1 December 2021**

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
<b>16 June</b>	Year Ahead Plan	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members are consulted and involved in the development of both the format and the contents of the new medium-term Council Plan.</li> <li>3. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members receive regular updates, at a frequency and in a format to be determined, on performance against the objectives contained in the new medium-term Council Plan.</li> </ol>
	Equality Annual Report	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members are provided with the training and information to enable them to provide effective scrutiny and oversight of the equalities agenda at the Council in order to ensure the best equalities outcomes are obtained for both residents and Council employees.</li> </ol>
	Finance Update	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That a further report be brought to the October 2021 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board regarding the allocation of Covid related business support grants.</li> </ol>

	Town Centre Master plan Implementation	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 21 June.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members are further consulted on the number, location and design of the public seating areas contained in the Town Centre Masterplan.</li> <li>3. That in addition to protecting established trees and replacing any unhealthy or dying trees, that consideration be given to increasing the overall number of trees in the Town Centre.</li> </ol>
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Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
14 July	Financial Outturn 2020/21	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 19 July.	1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
	May 2021/22 Financial Monitoring	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 19 July.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That a report be presented at a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that details how the changes that have been made to how the Council operates and provides services as a result of the pandemic have informed budget management procedures, and whether these changes to how the Council operates have highlighted any new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made.</li> <li>3. That further information on the budget processes and on the assumptions used to determine staffing budgets across all directorates be circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.</li> </ol>
	Local Plan: Adoption of Heritage at Risk Strategy and Register	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 19 July.	1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
28 July	Grange Landfill	Resolved on 18 March that a further report on the latest situation surrounding the Grange Landfill be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in three months' time.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted.</li> <li>2. That a further report on the current situation regarding the Grange Landfill site be brought to the January 2022 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, or sooner if there are any significant changes regarding the issues relating to the sites operation.</li> <li>3. That the Assistant Director, Community Safety and Streetscene liaises with the Leader of the Council, the Opposition Group Leaders and the Chief Executive on the potential to write a further letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government requesting that they use their discretionary powers to either revoke the planning permission granted in 1958 for the Grange Landfill Site or to make a discontinuance order.</li> </ol>
	Adult Care - restructure and pathway development	Resolved December 2020 to request an update in 6 months.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted.</li> <li>2. That the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board liaise with the Strategic Director – Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Assistant Director - Adult Social Care and Integration on the focus of a future report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on how the Adult Social Care service goes over and above statutory levels of service provision.</li> </ol>

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
15 September	Year Ahead Plan – Progress Report	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 20 September.	That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
	July Financial Monitoring 2021/22	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 20 September.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That a report be circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in order to provide members with information and assurance on the specific activities that are being carried out with, and by directorates in order to ensure the timely delivery of previously agreed budgetary savings.</li> </ol>
	Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Protocol	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 20 September.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That further consideration be given to how all elected members can be consulted and engaged with regarding the allocation and prioritisation of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funds.</li> <li>3. That an all-member seminar be delivered in order to provide members with information on the Community Infrastructure Levy, Section 106 agreements and on the new processes and protocols for the spending of both Strategic and Local Community Infrastructure Levy funds in their wards.</li> </ol>

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
13 October	TBC	MEETING CANCELLED	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
<b>3 November 2021</b>	Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report.	Annual item for the Board to receive the Safer Rotherham Annual Report in its role as the Council's Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, as defined by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report 2020/21 be received and noted.</li> <li>2. That members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board receive a briefing on the specific data in relation to the information regarding the priority areas for the Safer Rotherham Partnership in order gain further assurance around the activities being carried across the Safer Rotherham Partnership.</li> <li>3. That the issues of Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery be added to the Board's Work Programme.</li> </ol>
	Covid Business Support Grants	Resolved 16 June that a further report be brought to the October 2021 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board regarding the allocation of Covid related business support grants.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the report be noted.</li> <li>2. That the Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services, the Assistant Director - Financial Services, the Head of Corporate Finance and all staff who have been involved in the administration of business support grants be thanked and commended for their work in supporting businesses across the Borough during the pandemic.</li> </ol>

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
17 November	November 2021/22 Financial Monitoring	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 22 November.	1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
	Mid-year Housing Development Update Report	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting on 22 November.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.</li> <li>2. That members be consulted and invited to feed into the new local design guide with a view to ensuring new developments are better integrated aesthetically into the surrounding community.</li> <li>3. That newcomers to the housing market be proactively invited to the housing developer summits.</li> </ol>

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
15 December	TBC	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 20 December.	
	Annual Complaints Report	Annual item	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
19 January	TBC	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 24 January	
	Health Select Commission Report - -Findings from Spotlight Review on Rotherham Community Hub	To consider the report and recommendations	
	Health Select Commission Report -Findings from Spotlight Review on Young Carers	To consider the report and recommendations	
	Improving Places Select Commission -Findings from Spotlight Review on External Funding Sources	To consider the report and recommendations	



Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
27 January	Grange Landfill	<b>Resolved on 28 July:</b> That a further report on the current situation regarding the Grange Landfill site be brought to the January 2022 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, or sooner if there are any significant changes regarding the issues relating to the sites operation.	
	Adult Care Service Provision	Resolved 28 July: That the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board liaise with the Strategic Director – Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Assistant Director - Adult Social Care and Integration on the focus of a future report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on how the Adult Social Care service goes over and above statutory levels of service provision.	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
9 February	Budget Consultation	Annual item.	
	TBC	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 14 February.	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
23 February	Digital Strategy	Resolved February 2020 to bring an update in 12 months.	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
23 March	TBC	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 28 March.	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
6 April	TBC	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 25 April.	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Purpose/ Outcomes	Recommendations
11 May	TBC	Pre-decision scrutiny in advance of Cabinet meeting 16 May.	

## Items pending schedule or removal

Item	Details	Status	Officer
Hate Crime Strategy	Further update on steps taken to address hate crime and agreed to be involved in any pre-scrutiny work on the Hate Crime Strategy and its development.	Timescale TBC as work paused due to Covid-19.	Assistant Director, Community Safety and Street Scene/ Head of Community Safety, Resilience and Emergency Planning
New HR and Payroll System	Report on the new HR and Payroll System once implemented in phases from June 2019 which will rationalise information on the staffing establishment as at present data is held in HR and Finance.	To be subject to a one-off sub-group review. Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development contacted re request.	Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Forge Island	To monitor exception reporting.	To be scheduled.	Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment
CYPS - High Needs Block Update and Recovery Plan	Scrutiny acknowledged that it was early days in the recovery plan process with steps outlined to reduce the deficit. Overall position.  OSMB had other updates on this particular issue and other services within CYPS, but Chair confirmed continuation at work planning meeting on 27 May 2020.	June 2021 – Strategic Director Children's and Young Peoples Services/Assistant Director – Education/Chair and Vice-Chair to meet to discuss focus of the report.	Strategic Director Children's and Young Peoples Services
Response to Covid-19 pandemic and plans for post-pandemic recovery	Ongoing monitoring and reporting.	Overarching item	Chief Executive and Strategic Directors
Rothercard		To be scheduled	

Finance/Budget Setting	Resolved at the 14 July meeting:  That a report be presented at a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that details how the changes that have been made to how the Council operates and provides services as a result of the pandemic have informed budget management procedures, and whether these changes to how the Council operates have highlighted any new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made.	To be scheduled	
Domestic Abuse	Resolved at the 3 November meeting to add to Work Programme.	To be scheduled	
Modern Slavery	Resolved at the 3 November meeting to add to Work Programme.	To be scheduled	

#### Standing items to be scheduled

Item	Details	Status	Officer
Council Plan Performance Indicators	Regular monitoring	To be scheduled quarterly as agreed at 16 December 2020 meeting.	Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement
Equalities Report	Standing bi-monthly item	To be scheduled bi-monthly as required	Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement

#### Items to be scheduled during 2021/22

Item	Details	Status	Officer
Children's Commissioner Take Over	Annual Item	Topic to be determined and meeting	Governance Advisor



Challenge		scheduled for 2021.	
REACH Action Plan/Provider Services	Request received from Strategic Director Adult Care for consideration from OSMB	To be considered for scheduling	Strategic Director Adult Care

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**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**  
**1 December 2021 – 31 March 2022**

This is formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 of Key Decisions due to be taken by the Authority and of those parts of the Cabinet meeting identified in this Forward Plan will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain confidential or exempt information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972.

Contact Information:-

Democratic Services  
Riverside House  
Main Street  
Rotherham  
S60 1AE

Email: [governance@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:governance@rotherham.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01709 822477

### What is the Forward Plan?

The Forward Plan contains all the key decisions the Council expects to take over the next three months. It will be refreshed monthly and will give at least 28 days' notice of any Key Decisions and, if applicable, the Cabinet's intention to discuss an item in private. This gives you the opportunity to submit relevant documents to the decision maker concerning any individual Key Decisions and draws to your attention any relevant constitution process.

### What is a Key Decision?

A Key Decision is one which is likely to:-

- relate to the capital or revenue budget framework that is reserved to the Council, or
- result in income, expenditure or savings of £400,000 or greater, or
- have a significant effect on two or more wards

A Key Decision can be made by the Cabinet. The Forward Plan also includes some matters which are not Key Decisions under the heading "Decisions which are not Key Decisions".

### What does the Forward Plan tell me?

The plan gives information about:

- what key decisions are to be made in the next three months.
- the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made.
- who will make the key decisions.
- when those key decisions are likely to be made.
- what documents will be considered.
- who you can contact for further information.

### Who takes Key Decisions?

Under the Authority's Constitution, Key Decisions are taken by the Cabinet. Key Decisions are taken at public meetings of the Cabinet. The Cabinet meets once a month on a Monday at 10.00am at Rotherham Town Hall. Meeting dates for 2021/22 are:

21 June 2021	20 September 2021	22 November 2021	24 January 2022	28 March 2022	16 May 2022
19 July 2021	18 October 2021	20 December 2021	14 February 2022	25 April 2022	

### Further information and Representations about items proposed to be heard in Private

Names of contact officers are included in the Plan.

If you wish to make representations that a decision which is proposed to be heard in private should instead be dealt with in public, you should contact Democratic Services by no later than five clear working days before the meeting. At the end of this document are extracts from the Local Government Act 1972 setting out the descriptions of information which may be classed as "exempt", and the definition of confidential information.

### The members of the Cabinet and their areas of responsibility are: -

Councillor Chris Read	Leader of the Council
Councillor Sarah Allen	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working
Councillor Saghir Alam	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance
Councillor Dominic Beck	Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
Councillor Amy Brookes	Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Victoria Cusworth	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Councillor Denise Lelliott	Cabinet Member for Jobs and Local Economy
Councillor David Roche	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor David Sheppard	Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion

Decision title	Date added to the Forward Plan	What is the decision?	Cabinet Portfolio	Who will be consulted	Documents to be considered	Wards affected	Is the decision to be made in private	Directorate and contact for further information
<b>KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 20 DECEMBER</b>								
<b>ADULT CARE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND HOUSING</b>								
HRA Business Plan 2022-23	October 2021	To consider and recommend to Council the approval of the 2022-23 HRA Business Plan.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
Housing Rent and Service Charges 2022-23	October 2021	To consider and recommend to Council the approval of the HRA rent and service charges for 2022-23.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
Proposals for the REACH service	August 2021	To seek approval to consult on the day opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autism with complex needs in relation to models of delivery and location.	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	Ward Members, Customers and Staff.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
The location of Parkhill Lodge Residential Service.	August 2021	To seek approval following consultation on the location of Parkhill Lodge service.	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	Ward Members, Customers and Staff.	Report	All Wards	Open	Anne Marie Lubanski Tel: 01709 822397 annemarie.lubanski@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>								
New Council Plan 2022 - 2025	August 2021	To approve the new Council Plan and the Year Ahead Delivery Plan.	Leader of the Council	Relevant officers, Members and stakeholders, including public consultation.	Report	All Wards	Open	Jo Brown jo.brown@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>								
Medium Term Financial Strategy	August 2021	To consider a review and update of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and agree any required actions.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT</b>								

Decision title	Date added to the Forward Plan	What is the decision?	Cabinet Portfolio	Who will be consulted	Documents to be considered	Wards affected	Is the decision to be made in private	Directorate and contact for further information
Removal of Overage agreement on Westgate Chambers	October 2021	To agree to the removal of the overage clause that was included in sale of Westgate Chambers.	Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders	Report and Appendices	Boston Castle	Part exempt	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 24 JANUARY 2022</b>								
<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES</b>								
Proposal to make prescribed alterations to the Willows School	November 2021	To note outcome of the statutory consultation and seeking determination of the proposals to increase the number of registered places on a permanent basis.	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Ward Members, constituency MP's, Parish Councils, parents/carers of children attending the school, all schools and wider stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Suzanne Joyner Tel: 01709 247617 suzanne.joyner@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>								
November 2021/22 Financial Monitoring	November 2021	To note the current revenue and capital monitoring position and agree any required actions.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT</b>								
Cycling Strategy and Delivery Plan	November 2021	To approve the Cycling Strategy.	Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment	Relevant Members, Officers and stakeholders.	Report and Appendices	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Domestic Abuse Strategy	November 2021	To approve the Domestic Abuse Strategy.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Public, Partners, Colleagues, ILSC, Cabinet Members	Report and Appendices	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Towns and Villages Fund	November 2021	To approve the approach for the implementation of the Towns and Villages fund.	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working	Relevant officers, Members, communities.	Report	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk

Decision title	Date added to the Forward Plan	What is the decision?	Cabinet Portfolio	Who will be consulted	Documents to be considered	Wards affected	Is the decision to be made in private	Directorate and contact for further information
<b>NON-KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 24 JANUARY 2022</b>								
<b>FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>								
New Applications for Business Rates Relief	November 2021	To consider the recommendation for a new application for Business Rates discretionary relief.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
Town Centre Wi-Fi	November 2021	To provide an update on the planned delivery of Town Centre Wi-Fi.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and stakeholders.	Report	Boston Castle	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT</b>								
Modern Slavery Annual Transparency Statement	November 2021	To approve the annual modern slavery transparency statement for publication.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant colleagues, Cabinet Member, Partners.	Report and Appendices	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 14 FEBRUARY 2022 OR LATER</b>								
<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>								
Social Value Annual Report	November 2021	To receive the Social Value Annual Report including progress toward social value in commissioning, procure and real living wage accreditation. It will also plot planned developments for the coming year.	Leader of the Council	Directorates, Stakeholders and partners	Report	All Wards	Open	Sharon Kemp Tel: 01709 822770 sharon.kemp@rotherham.gov.uk

Decision title	Date added to the Forward Plan	What is the decision?	Cabinet Portfolio	Who will be consulted	Documents to be considered	Wards affected	Is the decision to be made in private	Directorate and contact for further information
<b>REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT</b>								
Clean Air Zone (CAZ) - Submission of Full Business Case	November 2021	To approve the submission to government of the Full Business Case for implementation of the Rotherham and Sheffield Clean Air Zone	Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment	Cabinet Members.	Report	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Application for Moving Traffic Enforcement Powers	November 2021	Approval to submit an application to DFT for powers to enforce moving traffic offences under Pt 6 TMA 2004 and, if approved, to submit to Council for decision.	Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment	Full Council	Report	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Town Deal and Levelling Up fund approvals	November 2021	To agree delegation to S151 Officer, Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and Strategic Director Regeneration & Environment to sign off Business Cases for all Town Deal and Levelling Up projects.	Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy	Relevant Members, officers and stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
Strategic Acquisitions	November 2021	To seek delegation to the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport to negotiate and agree terms in relation to strategic acquisitions to facilitate the delivery of the regeneration programme. Where agreement cannot be reached to exercise Compulsory Purchase Order	Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy	Relevant Members, officers and stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Part exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Paul Woodcock Tel: 01709 822971 paul.woodcock@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>NON-KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON 14 FEBRUARY 2022 OR LATER</b>								
<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>								
Year Ahead Plan final progress report.	November 2021	To report on the achievements of the Year Ahead Plan up to end November 2021.		Relevant officers, Members and stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Jo Brown jo.brown@rotherham.gov.uk
<b>FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>								



Decision title	Date added to the Forward Plan	What is the decision?	Cabinet Portfolio	Who will be consulted	Documents to be considered	Wards affected	Is the decision to be made in private	Directorate and contact for further information
Business Rates Discretionary Relief Renewals in 2022/23	November 2021	To consider the recommendation for the annual renewal applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
December 2021/22 Financial Monitoring	November 2021	To note the current revenue and capital monitoring position and agree any required actions.	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
Budget and Council Tax 2022-23	November 2021	To recommend to Council the Budget and Council Tax for 2022/23 including the Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategies	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk
Local Council Tax Support Grant 2021/22	November 2021	To consider proposals for the use of the Local Council Tax Support Grant	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance	Relevant Members, Officers and Stakeholders.	Report	All Wards	Open	Judith Badger Tel: 01709 822046 judith.badger@rotherham.gov.uk

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SCHEDULE 12A**  
**ACCESS TO INFORMATION: EXEMPT INFORMATION**  
**PART 1**  
**DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND**

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes –
  - a. to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - b. to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

**PART 2**  
**QUALIFICATIONS: ENGLAND**

*Paragraphs 1-8 repealed.*

- 9 Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
- 10 Information which –
  - a. falls within any of paragraphs 1 to 7 above; and
  - b. is not prevented from being exempt by virtue of paragraph 8 or 9 above, is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**  
**SECTION 100A(3) – DEFINITION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Confidential information means –

- a. information furnished to the council by a Government department upon terms (however expressed) which forbid the disclosure of the information to the public; and
- b. information the disclosure of which to the public is prohibited by or under any enactment or by the order of a court;

and, in either case, the reference to the obligation of confidence is to be construed accordingly.