

Wiltshire Council  
Annual Complaints Report  
2013/2014

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## **Overview**

This is the first annual report where all three complaint procedures currently used in Wiltshire Council are explained and complaints management across the organisation is examined. This report provides information about complaints made during the twelve months between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014.

The current complaints procedures being used are the Children Services statutory complaints procedure, the Adult Care statutory procedure and the Council's own Corporate Complaints Procedure.

How it is decided which complaint procedure to use is largely dependent on the nature of the complaint. As a general rule, complaints specifically regarding child and adult social care issues will be referred to the statutory procedure whereas more generic service issues, process/procedural issues and decision making issues will be more appropriate for the corporate procedure. The complaints team decide and advise on which one is applicable.

Wiltshire has a statutory duty to investigate complaints under

- Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006,
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Health and Social Care Acts 2003.
- Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009

The purpose of any complaints procedure whether it is statutory in nature or not is to ensure that:

- The views and experiences of people who use services are heard to ensure the organisation remains focused on the customer.
- The organisation learns from complaints and seeks improvements to service provision and working practices
- It is a simple and effective way of raising a complaint.
- The complaint is dealt with fairly and consistently.
- It encourages an open and transparent environment that people trust and engage with
- The complainant receives a comprehensive response within the timescales stated

## **Complaints Data and Deltascheme**

Historically formal complaints have been logged on Excel spreadsheets which performed a purpose as far as tracking complaints were concerned. But Excel is ineffective when trying to extract information for reporting and monitoring.

Deltascheme is the new complaints management tool, which has been in operation within the complaints team since October 2013. It has had some teething problems so in considering the complaint numbers and other data provided, attention should be paid to this.

Attention should also be given to the fact that one person can go through all stages of a complaint procedure and it is those individual stages that are recorded not the individual complainant. One person could therefore have several stages of a complaint against them. So consideration should also be given to that when reviewing the numbers.

It should also be noted that the numbers referred to in this report are complaints directly received and logged by the central customer complaints team. It is extremely likely that the truer picture of complaints received within Wiltshire Council is significantly higher. One of the aims of the complaints team will be to encourage teams to use the central team and signpost complainants and staff to the formal complaints procedure. The intention is to encourage an effective way of managing complaints with one point of contact for both complainants and staff.

## **Structure of the Complaints Procedures**

The diagrams below demonstrate the different stages involved in each of the complaints procedures currently used within the Council.

### **Children Service Statutory Procedure**

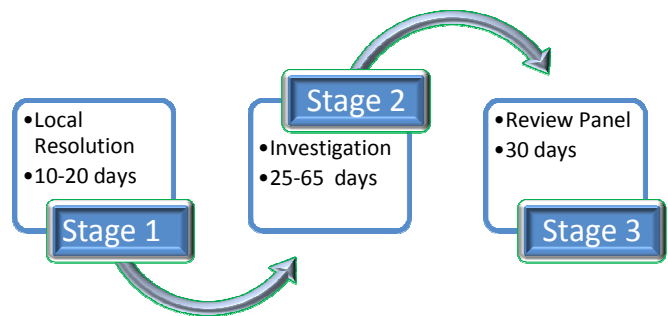
Social Care complaints received from or concerning children and young people is managed through the statutory three stage complaints procedure.

The statutory complaints procedure follows a 3 stage process. Where possible, the aim should be to resolve complaints satisfactorily at Stage 1. The complaints team has been working closely in the last year with service teams and managers to ensure wherever possible this is achieved. If this is not possible the complainant can request a Stage 2 investigation which is where an investigator and independent person are appointed.

The statutory procedure has a final stage which is an independent Review Panel consisting of externally appointed members. They will consider any outstanding issues that the complainant considers have not been addressed in the Stage 2 investigation. Panel members are individuals who are also Investigators (IO) and Independent Officers (IP) but who have not been used for the investigation. The complainant and department are given the opportunity to put forward their case and both the IO and IP

attend to answer any outstanding questions. The findings are then produced by the panel and the Service Director must write out to the complainant with their comments and any action that is taken as a result within 15 working days.

The Local Government Ombudsman is the final route of redress for the complainant.

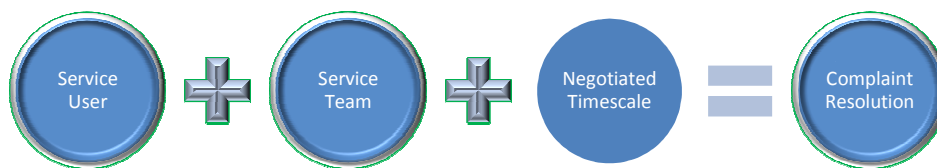


Process for Statutory Procedure

### Adult Care Statutory Procedure

The statutory procedure when dealing with complaints concerning Adult social care issues is different from that of Children Services. This concentrates on working with the individual to understand that nature of their complaint and then agreeing a mutually worktable timescale by which to provide a response. Wherever possible it should be undertaken within a reasonable time period and no longer than 65 working days.

The Local Government Ombudsman is the final route of redress for the complainant.



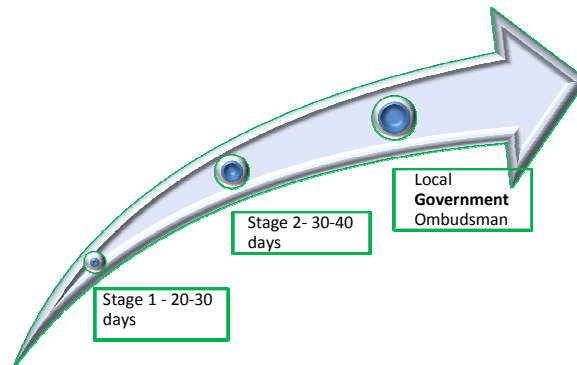
Process for Statutory Procedure

### Corporate Complaint Procedure

The corporate complaint procedure is a 2 stage procedure and follows the same process in terms of progression that the statutory ones do. Stage 1 will be dealt with by the service team involved with the complaint. This gives staff the opportunity to respond

to and address any misunderstandings or breakdown in communications that may have occurred. It is encouraged wherever possible that teams spend time on their response as it can bring an end to a complaint which saves time and effort on both sides.

However should the complainant wish to pursue this, then the stage 2 comes to the complaints team for investigation. Again the Local Government Ombudsman remains the final course of redress if the complainant wishes to pursue their complaint.



Process for Corporate Procedure

### **Accessing the Complaints Procedures**

Complaints can be made in a number of ways. The Council's website has current and up to date information on how to make a complaint. Explanation is given on the different complaints procedures.

There are a number of methods by which an individual can make a complaint. This can be via a telephone call, an e-mail, by letter or by completing an online form which directly feeds into the complaints generic e-mail inbox. The complaints team monitors this on a daily basis.

The team also has a dedicated number which customers can ring and speak to a member of the team.

If any of these methods prove difficult to the individual, members of the complaints team are happy to meet with individuals at their nearest available Council offices. Consideration will also be given to home visits but the health and safety of complaints staff is the priority in these circumstances and this would only be offered in exceptional circumstances.

### **Advocacy Services**

Advocacy Services for Children and Young People is currently delivered externally by the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS). The service covers advocacy for looked after children and care leavers, children and young people wishing to make a complaint

and children and young people (aged 5+) who are subject to Child Protection proceedings.

These services can be accessed in a number of ways. The young person/parent or carer can refer themselves directly to the service, a social worker can make the request directly or the complaint department can make the referral on behalf of the Child or Young Person. Contact details are available on the complaints leaflet issued by the Council and also via the Council's website. A supply of the Council's leaflets has also been made available to NYAS.

For adults seeking independent support and guidance on making a complaint in any of the Council's other service areas, they will usually be referred to Swan Advocacy who have offices across the county as well as website, e-mail address and telephone number details.

The complaints team has made direct contact with both organisations and met in person, to ensure both sides can promote the other in terms of ensuring the individuals know where and how to raise their complaint

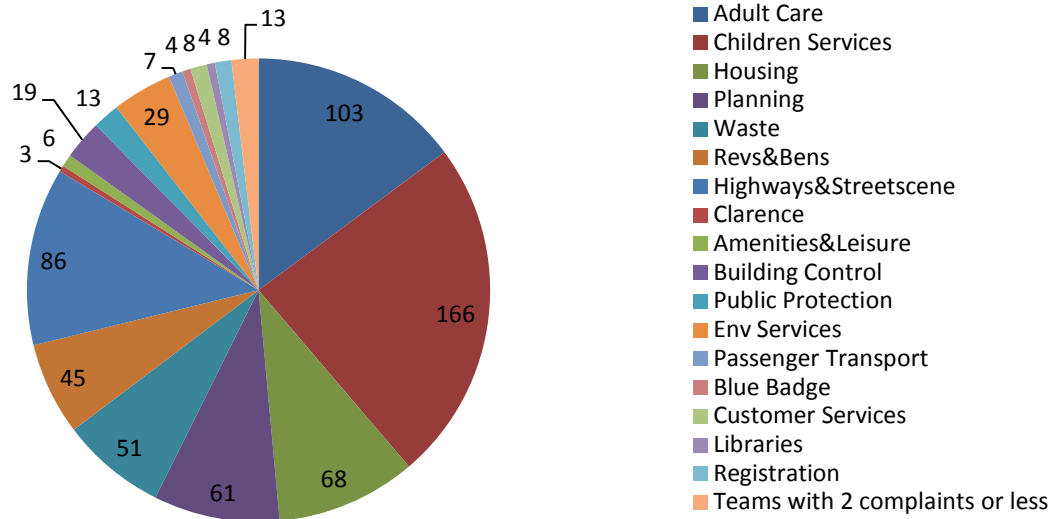
### **Complaints Analysis**

Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 the Council received a total of 696 complaints.

475 complaints were dealt with at Stage 1 of the corporate procedure with 93 of those progressing to Stage 2 of that procedure. Within the statutory Children Services procedure there were 14 dealt with at Stage 1 complaints with 4 being escalated to Stage 2. It should be noted that of those 4, 3 were concerned with the same complaint. Of the one that was left, this was eventually withdrawn by the complainant. The remaining number was concerned with Local Government Ombudsman investigations, decisions and enquiries. The Council and Ombudsman's office record stats in a different way so attention should be given to this when reviewing these figures against the Annual Letter produced by the Ombudsman's office each year.

As this is the first report using a new database and considering all three complaint procedures, comparisons will not be generally provided on this occasion. The key is to look ahead and encourage a positive outlook for the organisation and a positive experience for the customer.

## Total Number of Complaints received by Customer Complaints Team



The chart above reflects a generally accepted split of complaints across the organisation. It comes as no surprise that the areas generating the most complaints concern social care in some way. Whilst there is a slight difference between Adult Care and Children Services, the difference is not so great as to warrant a particular concern in the way the service areas are dealing with complaints. They are both dealing with individuals who are distressed, angry and vulnerable and want to challenge the decision the Council makes about their lives. It is therefore not unreasonable to expect a comparably larger number of complaints against other services.

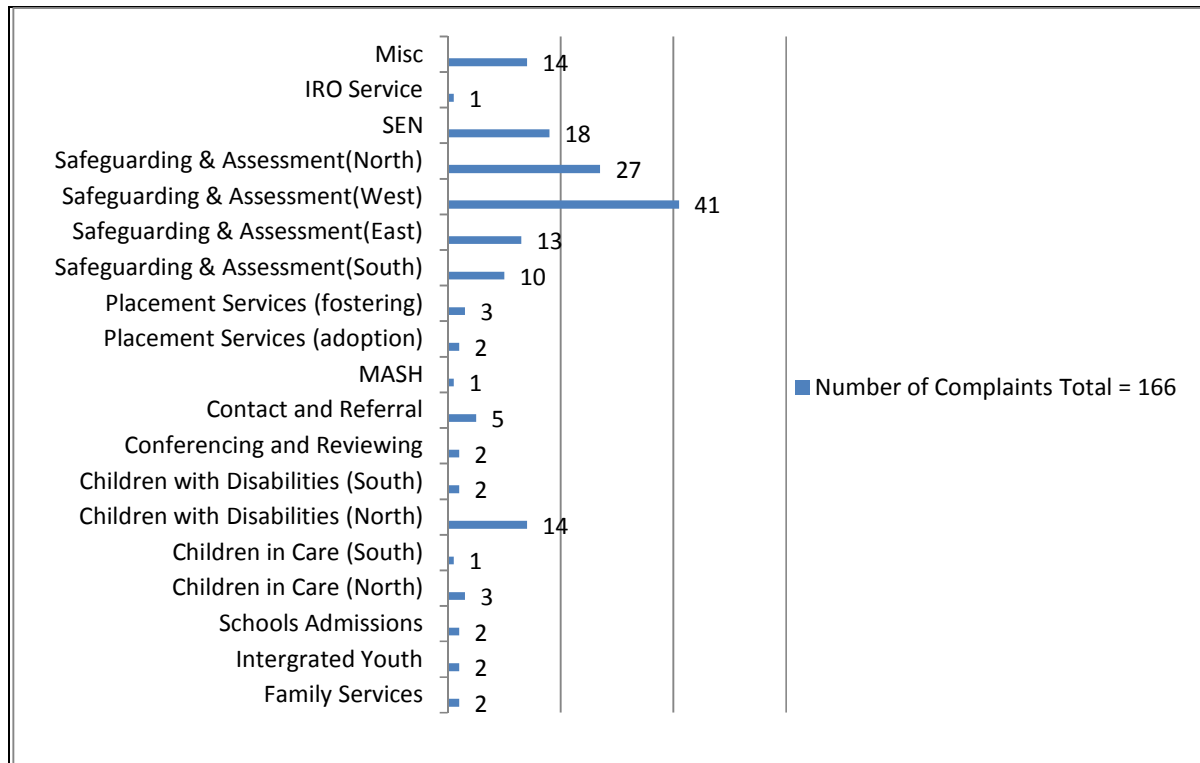
The next three significant service areas of Highways, Housing and Planning are also unsurprising in terms of complaints being raised. Service areas where people and/or contentious decisions are taken are going to be challenged by the people affected by those decisions.

To look at each service area would make this a lengthy document. So I considered the top 5 service areas in terms of complaints received for the purposes of this report.

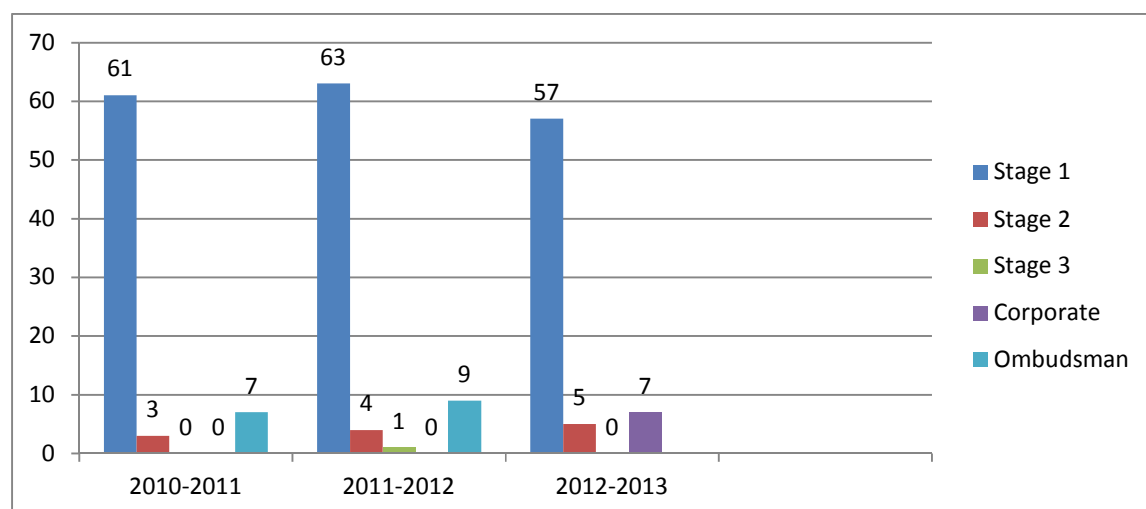


## Children Services

### Complaints by Service Team Area



In the reporting year 2012/2013 there were 7 complaints under the corporate procedure and 57 under the statutory procedure at Stage 1. Of those, 5 went to Stage 2 of the statutory procedure. Whilst the level of complaints has increased within Children Services for this reporting year, there are key points to acknowledge.



Whilst the numbers have risen from the previous year, only a small percentage has progressed to the later stages. Complaints in this service area are always going to be consistent regardless of whether the complaints procedure is robust or not.

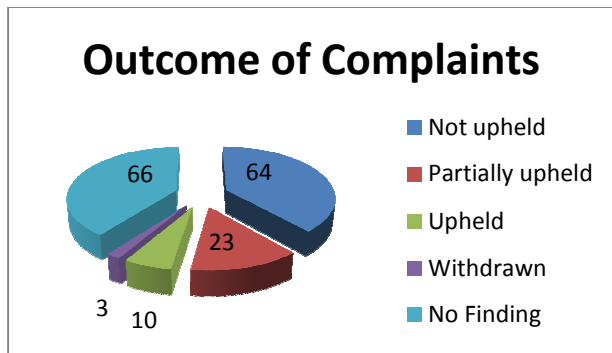
There are peaks in the Safeguarding teams but this pattern is expected given they are the access points for families in potentially vulnerable, distressing and dangerous situations. Emotions run high and people want answers to questions they ask about the decisions made about them.

## Nature of concern

<b>Corporate Stage 1 - Nature of Concern</b>	
Delay in service	9
Decision making process to deliver service	10
Breach of confidentiality	12
Inappropriate action	21
Conduct of staff	16
Failure to provide service	14
Poor/lack of communication	12
Discriminatory behaviour	2
Incorrect advice	3
Refusal to take action/deliver service	1
	<b>Total 100</b>
<b>Corporate Stage 2 – Nature of Concern</b>	
Conduct of staff	2
Failure to provide service	8
Poor/Lack of communication	1
Decision making process	6
Delay in service provision	2
Inappropriate action	1
Breach in confidentiality	2
	<b>Total 22</b>
<b>Statutory Stage 1 – Nature of Concern</b>	
Delay in Service	3
Decision making process to deliver services	1
Breach of confidentiality	1
Inappropriate action	2
Conduct of Staff	2
Failure to provide service	1
	<b>Total 10</b>
<b>Statutory Stage 2 – Nature of Concern</b>	
Conduct of staff	3
	<b>Total 135</b>
Outstanding 31 complaints will be withdrawn, not pursued or Ombudsman investigations	

The key point to raise here is that the corporate procedure has been used more significantly than it has been in recent years. One reason for this is the consideration of the complaint and who is making it. The statutory process is aimed at and for children and young people to raise complaints about the service provided to them. They are entitled to a representative, quite often their parent, who will make the complaint for them. But complaints raised under this heading of children are more often than not about the adult involved and does not focus on the child at all or the service they have received. This can be addressed as a service issue through the corporate procedure.

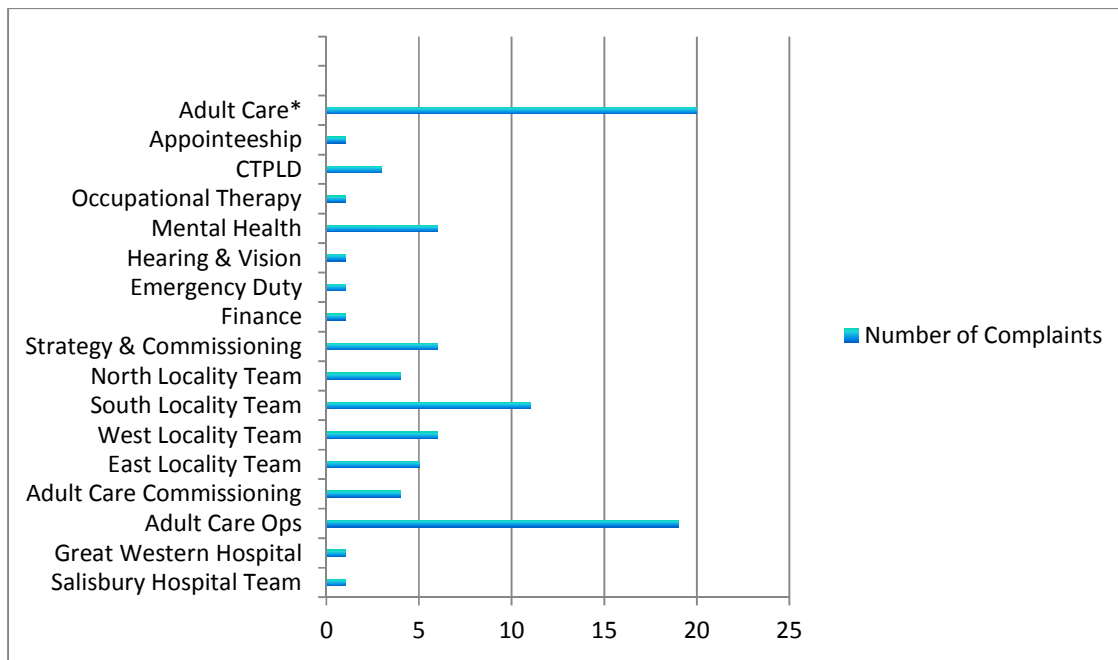
## Outcome of Children Service Complaints



There is no significant trend to identify here. It should be noted that the 'No Finding' category can refer to a variety of reasons from the complaint decision not being made in this reporting year to the individual not pursuing the complaint but not officially advising that it has been withdrawn. Lack of communication from the complainant is the most likely reason

## Adult Care

### Complaints by Service Area



The top category of Adult Care encompasses complaints which either were not apparent at first which team was responsible or where this crossed several service areas but the crux was adult care. The method of recording does not allow several service teams to be recorded, so there is an option of choosing a generic service area. As the complaints team get used to the new database and understand the way of recording and extracting information, it is hoped there is will be a better way of reflecting this.

## Nature of complaint

<b>Corporate Stage 1 - Nature of Concern</b>	
Delay in service provision	3
Delay in making a decision	3
Decision making process to deliver service	4
Breach of confidentiality	1
Inappropriate action	5
Conduct of staff	5
Failure to provide service	12
Poor/lack of communication	1
Discriminatory behaviour	1
Incorrect advice	1
Not complying with customer wishes	1
	<b>Total 37</b>
<b>Corporate Stage 2 – Nature of Concern</b>	
Failure to provide service	1
Poor/Lack of communication	1
Decision making process	4
Delay in service provision	1
Inappropriate action	4
Breach in confidentiality	1
	<b>Total 12</b>
<b>Statutory Stage 1 – Nature of Concern</b>	
Delay in service provision	5
Decision making process to deliver services	7
Refusal to deliver a service	1
Lack of communication	1
Inappropriate action	2
Conduct of Staff	1
Failure to provide service	2
Inaccurate assessment	1
	<b>Total 20</b>
	<b>Total 69</b>
Outstanding 34 complaints will be withdrawn, not pursued or Ombudsman investigations	

Like the trend in Children Services, the corporate procedure has been used more. Again the reason for this is that a significant number of complaints raised here about decisions being taken and generic service issues. When they are about the social care package of the individual, then the statutory process is invoked.

### Outcome of Complaints

**Not upheld – 46**

**Partially upheld – 18**

**Upheld – 4**

**No Finding - 14**

**Total = 69**

## Housing

Dealing with housing complaints is a complicated process because it very much depends on the nature of the complaint as to which organisation deals with it and where that is then escalated to if the complainant wishes to pursue their complaint independently.

Regardless of whether it has been an issue dealt with by the Council or one that a housing association has addressed, the escalation of housing complaints has historically been dealt with by the Local Government Ombudsman.

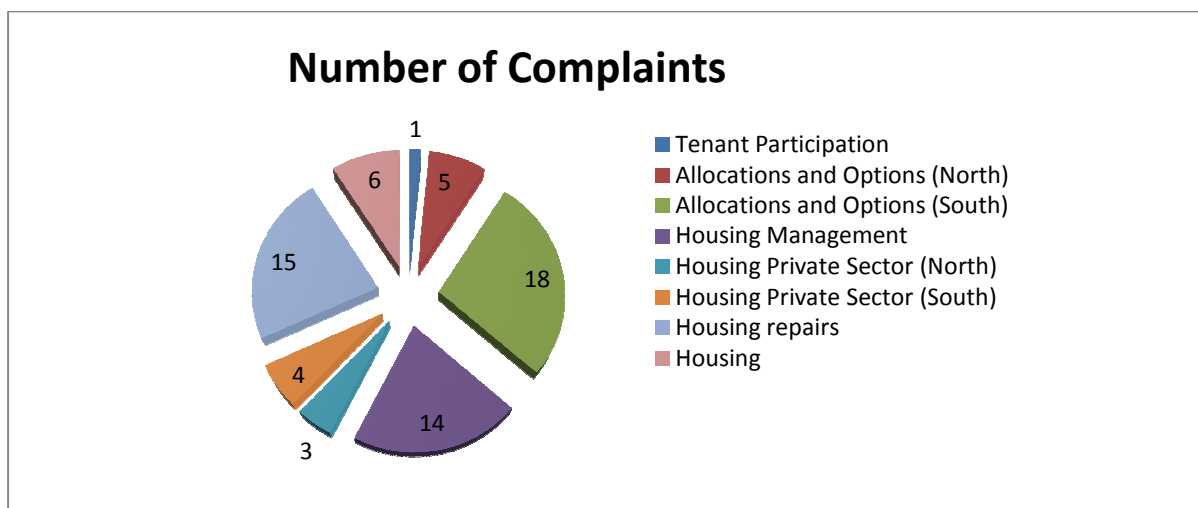
Since April 2013, the way some housing complaints are dealt with once they have gone through the appropriate organisation's complaint procedure, has changed.

The Housing Ombudsman will now deal with all complaints about social housing. The Local Government Ombudsman's website states;

***The Housing Ombudsman will continue to investigate complaints against housing associations and in addition, will investigate complaints about a local authority's landlord function. This means that complaints about a local authority's relationship as landlord to its tenants or leaseholders will be considered by the Housing Ombudsman rather than the Local Government Ombudsman.***

***The Local Government Ombudsman will continue to consider complaints about local authorities' wider activities, for example in discharging their statutory duties in homelessness. There are areas where there may appear to be some over-lap between the jurisdiction of the two Ombudsmen...Both Ombudsmen are able to conduct joint investigations and are putting in hand liaison arrangements to ensure that there is early discussion of cases which engage both jurisdictions.***

As far as the complaints received by the Complaints Team are concerned, there is not a specific service area that spikes significantly in terms of issues being raised. The largest number of complaint sit within an Allocation and Options team, which, given the subject area is not unsurprising.



## Nature of complaint

Corporate Stage 1 - Nature of Concern	
Delay in service provision	14
Decision making process to deliver service	8
Inappropriate action	5
Conduct of staff	1
Failure to provide service	11
Poor/lack of communication	6
Discriminatory behaviour	2
	<b>Total 47</b>
Corporate Stage 2 – Nature of Concern	
Failure to provide service	3
Refusal to deliver a service	1
Decision making process	3
Delay in service provision	1
Overcharging	1
Discriminatory behaviour	2
	<b>Total 11</b>
	<b>Total 58</b>
Outstanding 10 complaints will be withdrawn, not pursued or Ombudsman investigations	

Again based on the numbers received by the complaints team there is no significant trend identified here. The top category of a Delay in Service Provision is wide ranging and could be anything from repairs not being undertaken quickly enough to an issue with the housing allocation process.

### Outcome of Complaints

**Not upheld – 35**

**Partially upheld – 14**

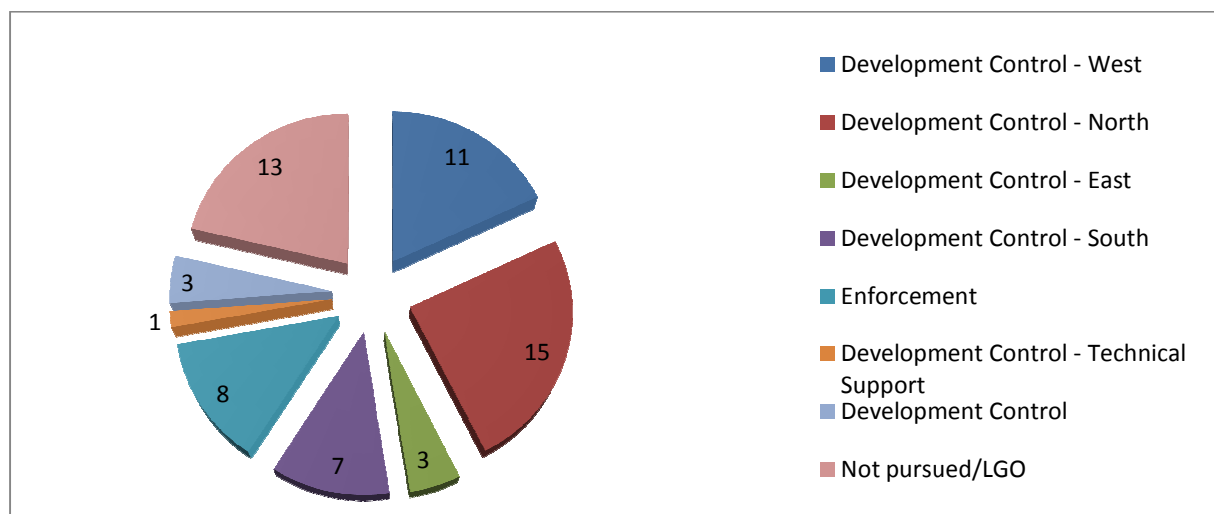
**Upheld – 6**

**No finding – 3**

**Total = 58**

## Planning

The complaints procedure cannot change the decisions taken by the planning committee and this is one of the more common and difficult things to explain to a complainant when they come seeking a change to that decision. What the complaints process will do is review and consider the policy and procedures used, the service and communication provided to the individual and how challenges to the planning team.



## Nature of complaint

Corporate Stage 1 - Nature of Concern	
Delay in service provision	1
Decision making process to deliver service	8
Inappropriate action	9
Conduct of staff	4
Failure to provide service	4
Poor/lack of communication	7
Incorrect advice	1
	<b>Total 34</b>
Corporate Stage 2 – Nature of Concern	
Failure to provide service	1
Inappropriate action	3
Decision making process	9
Delay in service provision	1
Incorrect advice	1
Discriminatory behaviour	1
	<b>Total 16</b>
	<b>Total 50</b>
Outstanding 11 complaints will be withdrawn, not pursued or Ombudsman investigations	

The majority of most planning complaints will be about the decision made about a particular application. Expectations of the individual in this area can sometimes be difficult to manage. Communication is one of the biggest sources of frustration and teams are always encouraged to engage at the early stages of a complaint.

### Outcome of complaints

**Not upheld – 40**

**Partially upheld – 3**

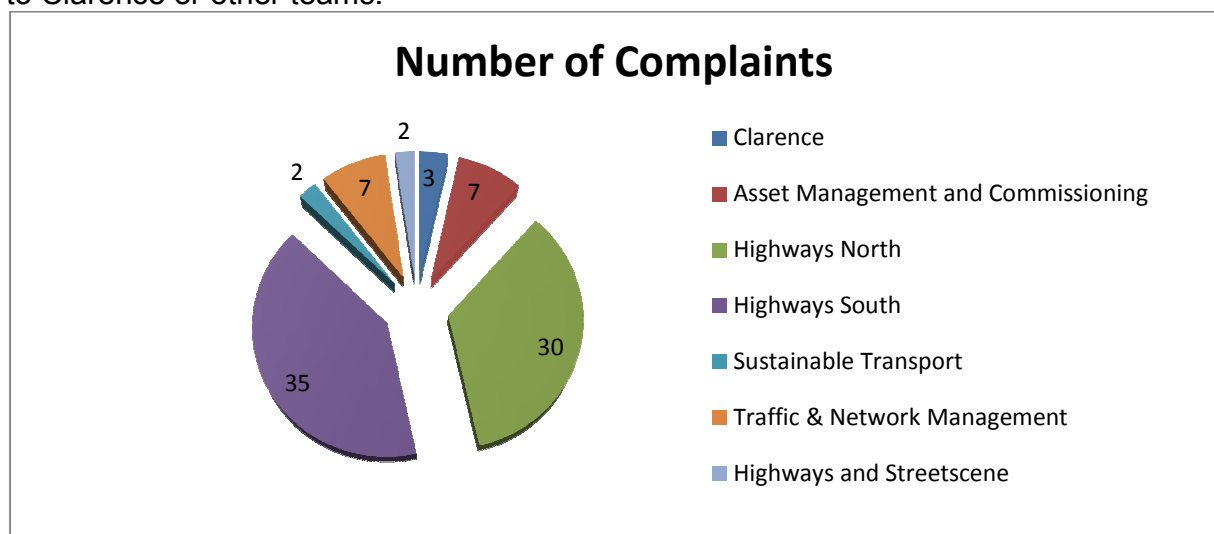
**Upheld – 4**

**No finding – 3**

**Total = 50**

## Highways & Streetscene

Out of the 86 complaints received around this service area, the majority were dealt with at Stage 1 of the complaints procedure. Only six progressed to Stage 2. There was no one particular theme which was repeated. Most were around condition of the highway, broken lights and general service issues resulting from previous communication either to Clarence or other teams.



## Nature of complaint

<b>Corporate Stage 1 - Nature of Concern</b>	
Delay in service provision	18
Decision making process to deliver service	5
Inappropriate action	1
Incorrect advice	1
Conduct of staff	2
Failure to provide service	32
Poor/lack of communication	12
Discriminatory behaviour	1
	<b>Total 72</b>
<b>Corporate Stage 2 – Nature of Concern</b>	
Decision making process	4
Delay in making a decision	2
	<b>Total 6</b>
	<b>Total 78</b>
Outstanding 8 complaints will be withdrawn, not pursued or Ombudsman investigations	

The single biggest reason for raising a complaint in this service area is around the failure to provide a service. This will usually be around why action has not been taken following a report to CLARENCE or something similar being highlighted to one of the service teams directly.

### **Outcome of complaints**

**Not upheld - 32**

**Partially upheld - 19**

**Upheld - 9**

**No Finding - 18**

**Total - 78**

## **Local Government Ombudsman Investigations**

At the time of this report being written the Local Government Ombudsman's office had not published its Annual Letter to Councils, which provide a breakdown of complaints and enquiries received by them. Councils and the Ombudsman's office have different ways of recording contacts and the start/end of a complaint investigation. So it is useful to compare these figures. Especially as this is the first year for collating Ombudsman figures on the new database.

Further explanation in the form of a brief report by the Complaints Manager concerning how Ombudsman investigations are received and dealt with by this Council will be provided alongside a copy of the Ombudsman's Annual Letter when it is received in July.

## **Customer Information**

Unfortunately the database has not on this occasion provided substantial data to warrant any more than a mention in this annual report. Historically demographic data from people making complaints is difficult to gather. But we will be reviewing whether there is a way of gathering this information more effectively.

By far the most common method of making a complaint remains in the written format. Whether that is by e-mail, by letter or by completing the online form through the Council's own website. People want to be able to have a clear trail of communication.



Where individuals contact the complaints team by phone, a written record is made and sent to the individual for clarification. This helps the investigating officer keep on track and is useful to refer to should the individual dispute the original issues being raised.

We continue to work with the customer's preference in terms of making a complaint and contact with the team and ensure that the process is a quick and effective process for them.

### **Outcome and Learning from complaints**

- Whilst teams have continued to struggle with the conflicting priorities placed upon them, it is encouraging that both Children Services and Adult Care in particular have engaged with and understood the benefits of working with the complaints team. As a result all staff have worked in a more cohesive way which has established good working relationships.
- The key to successful complaints management across the organization is to engage with staff and encourage early resolution. Service leads within the complaints team will continue to attend team meetings, keep lines of communication open with managers, sit with staff within their own environment to understand the pressure points and offer advice on responding to complaints.
- To encourage services to learn from complaints by feeding back to Team Managers, Heads of Service and Associate Directors through regular reporting.
- The Complaints team are members of the South West Regional Complaints Managers Group, which meets regularly to discuss best practice in complaints management and any learning points for particular cases that can be taken forward within individual's

### **Links to the Wiltshire Business Plan**

Having a consistent and transparent approach to complaints management contributes to improving the delivery of services across the organization. In its Business Plan, Wiltshire Council sets out a number of priorities and aims of which the complaints service can directly affect. Two of those significantly stand out:-

- We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach
- Our services work well, are joined up and easy to access

By working across the organisation with staff, managers and councillors and encouraging a proactive approach to complaints management, it is hoped that staff will

engage in a positive way with the complaints process so that it runs as a thread through the customer focus approach the organisation wants to take, as set down in its Business Plan.

### **Looking ahead**

Through the team service plan attached at Appendix 1, the Complaints Team will be focussing on:

- Ensure complaints profile is visible via the website and leaflets being available on main reception points
- Continuing to engage with staff across the service teams to encourage engagement with and adoption of the complaints procedures used by the Council
- Service leads within the Council continue to work directly with key areas to understand where the conflicting priorities are and where there is a need for training and support of staff
- Developing a complaints policy that includes for example; guidance on the different procedures, suggested remedies including compensation levels, what to do about vexatious and abusive behaviour.
- Work with Corporate Learning & Development to design specifically tailored packages that can be delivered to key services to help them develop a good understanding of complaints management

### **Conclusion**

Dealing with complaints is the reality of working in the public sector. At a time when public funding is reduced, difficult decisions have to be taken and explanations have to be provided.

How we deal with providing those answers is the difference between a professional, transparent and realistic approach and one where all those concerned become embroiled in a timely, costly and negative process.

Wiltshire Council recognises the importance of having an effective and accessible complaints management system, to ensure that complaints and concerns are dealt with as quickly as possible. At a time when the pressure on services and staff is increasing, it is vital that all levels of the council from staff to councillors and Corporate Directors engage with and adopt a consistent approach to handling and resolving complaints.

The aim of the central complaints team is to make the process of raising a complaint and the action of investigating it, a positive one. That means that officers within the team have to engage with both the customer making the complaint and the staff who

are investigating and trying to resolve it. The key to successful complaints management is having an honest and open conversation with those concerned.

Acknowledging and accepting things go wrong is the first step to effectively dealing with a complaint. The current economic climate is unlikely to change any time soon and public authorities will need to accept that the decisions they make and how those decisions are arrived at, will come under considerable public scrutiny.

Having a transparent and robust approach to dealing with complaints can only contribute to the Council's focus on delivering more for less and keeping the individual at the centre of its priorities.

## **Customer Complaints Service Team 2014-2015**

### **Overview of Service**

The Customer Complaints Team plays a critical role in changing how the Council responds to and learns from complaints. We aim to provide support to both members of the public accessing the complaint procedures and to our colleagues when dealing with responses.

We aim to provide a positive experience to the customer and a learning opportunity for the Council.

We want the way Customer Complaints Team functions and operates to contribute towards the Council's requirement to achieve significant savings. This means that we are reviewing ways of working and seeking ways to deliver services to outside bodies to potentially generate an income stream.

### **Medium Term Aims**

Success in the medium term will involve establishing strong and supportive relationships with our colleagues and other stakeholders to enable positive engagement which will encourage the robust use of complaints procedures within the council.

- **Partnerships**

The Customer Complaints team will be proactive and work with colleagues, customers, councillors and other stakeholders to promote and support the complaints procedures to ensure the Council meets its obligations within a statutory and legal framework and to encourage a positive response and find (when appropriate) alternative ways of redress.

- **People**

People who work within the Customer Complaints Team will feel valued and feel they belong to a team that has a clear direction. Team members will be encouraged to use their own skills, knowledge and experience within the team to contribute to building a supportive and cohesive team environment. They will know what the Service is trying to achieve and why, they'll know what they are personally contributing and the difference they make to the priorities and aims of Wiltshire Council.

## What good looks like and the link with the Business Plan

The priorities listed indicate how the Customer Complaint Team will achieve these medium term aims. Each priority links to the Council's Business Plan.

### Delivery Priorities for 2013-2017

	Priority	Business Plan Outcome(s) (O), Principles (P) or Key Action (KA)
1	Drive forward with the team's purpose to raise the profile of both the complaints and ethical governance services to ensure both staff and members of the public can access the service and procedures easily	Our services work well, are joined up and easy to access (P)
2	Produce policy to include corporate standards on complaints management for the Council including persistent complainants	We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach (KA)
3	Invest in team members within Customer Complaints and Governance to create a supportive and cohesive team whilst ensuring skills, knowledge and expertise is retained	Our staff are innovative and have a can-do approach (P)
4	Introduce a new IT system (Deltascheme) to record and track customer complaints, Code of Conduct and Police and Crime Commissioner complaints to provide regular reports which promote organisational learning and development opportunities	Our services work well, are joined up and easy to access (P)
5	Agree and implement communication strategy for complaints management and ethical governance to include a dedicate site on the Intranet.	Our staff are innovative and have a can-do approach (P)
6	Design and deliver training to town and parish councils using the Seven Principles in Public Life as the focus	We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach (KA)
7	Consider how to support town and parish councils with advice and guidance by developing a Resource	We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach (KA)
8	Providing support to the Monitoring Officer by adopting an ethical governance Action Plan which responds to and monitors those delegated responsibilities	We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach (KA)
9	Design and deliver training to service teams to help them deal with complaints efficiently and in accordance with the council's agreed procedures/policies and to enable them to use Deltascheme	We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach (KA)
10	Raising the profile of complaints by engaging Senior Management and Councillors in realising the benefits of effective and robust complaints management by using data provided by Deltascheme	We will develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and leadership of our workforce, managers and councillors and promote an innovative and can-do approach (KA)

## **Monitoring and Review**

To ensure that this Team Service Plan contributes to the Legal and Governance Delivery Plan we will ask ourselves the following questions:-

### **1) Customer confidence and satisfaction**

Have we improved the complaints process? Has the effectiveness of our interaction with staff and customer improved? Do we know what our customers think?

### **2) Increased awareness**

Are more employees, customers and councillors aware of what the team provides? Do each group know where to go for advice and support?

### **3) Increase satisfaction levels**

Have satisfaction levels with the Service, the partners we support, and the Council increased? Is there an effective way of monitoring this?

### **4) Value for money**

Is the complaints service offering value for money? Do our work practices offer efficiency? Are there feasible ways to generate income?

## **Service Improvement Plan**

	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>1</b>	Drive forward with the team's purpose to raise the profile of both the complaints and ethical governance services to ensure both staff and members of the public can access the service and procedures easily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a dedicated member of staff who will specialise and understand the priorities and issues in service area and who will work with teams to ensure complaints are handled effectively</li> </ul>	Reviewed every 6 months	Team – SB to have overall view but each officer responsible for taking a lead in particular service areas	Ongoing
<b>2</b>	Produce Corporate policy to include corporate standards on complaints management for the Council including persistent complainants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SB to write policy with input from team</li> </ul>	September 2014	SB	Ongoing
<b>3</b>	Invest in team members within Customer Complaints and Governance to create a supportive and cohesive team whilst ensuring skills, knowledge and expertise are retained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To put forward a business case (when appropriate) for training which will develop and motivate the team to provide a service in an improved or alternative way</li> </ul>	Reviewed every 6 months	SB	Ongoing
<b>4</b>	Introduce new database to record and track customer complaints, Code of Conduct and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To design an effective tool for complaints management and</li> </ul>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2014	SB and MG	Completed

	Police & Commissioner complaints to provide regular reports which promote organisational learning and development opportunities	reporting purposes by working with			
<b>5</b>	Agree and implement communication strategy for complaints management and ethical governance to include a dedicate site on the Intranet or Sharepoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify the most effective methods of communication to managers and officers by asking key service areas how they would like to receive information</li> <li>To identify who within the Council deals with Intranet/Sharepoint and work to develop a dedicated resource</li> </ul>	30 September 2014	SB	Ongoing
<b>6</b>	Design and deliver training to town and parish councils using the Seven Principles in Public Life as the focus and incorporating FOI/DP training in consultation with colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and develop a training course and then roll out to town and parish councils</li> </ul>	31 December 2014	Team	Ongoing
<b>7</b>	Consider how to support town and parish councils with advice and guidance by developing a Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore feasibility of developing a resource with potential for income generation</li> </ul>	31 December 2014	Team	Ongoing
<b>8</b>	Providing support to the Monitoring Officer by adopting an ethical governance Action Plan in respect of Standards, Assurance, Constitution and other issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In consultation with the Monitoring Officer, identify key priorities in the governance service and dedicate appropriate resource</li> </ul>	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Team with SB overview	Ongoing
<b>9</b>	Design and deliver training to service teams to help them deal with complaints efficiently and in accordance with the council's agreed procedures/policies and to enable them to use Deltascheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To design service specific training which highlights generic and statutory complaint procedures.</li> <li>To assess key officers and provide training to enable logging of complaints at Stage 1</li> </ul>	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	SB and Team	Ongoing
<b>10</b>	Raising the profile of complaints by engaging Senior Management and Councillors in realising the benefits of effective and robust complaints management by using data provided by Deltascheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To extract key information in report format and provide to Team Managers, Heads of Service, Associate Directors with explanation of any trends/patterns which may identify gaps in service</li> </ul>	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	SB	Ongoing