

Moray Council

Complaints Annual Report



2016/17

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1. Chief Executive's Foreword

Scotland's public sector has a duty to the people it serves, and part of that duty involves responding positively to complaints. This annual report serves three purposes

- to comply with a national requirement to report against a suite of eight Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) Performance Indicators (PIs)
- internally to inform management to help us learn from complaints and improve services; and
- externally to provide information and feedback to the public who engaged with us during the complaints process.

In this report you will find details of how we have performed in dealing with complaints, the outcomes of some investigations and how we have changed our services as a result. I am pleased to see many work practices modified as a result of a complaint, which I feel shows we are listening to the public when they're not happy.

Naturally, not every complaint is upheld, but clearly they are all addressed at either front line stage or through a more detailed, thorough investigation within respective timescales including authorised extensions. We take our commitment to the SPSO framework seriously and I am confident that our customer care will continue to improve as a result of complaints we receive.

Roddy Burns
Chief Executive

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This Complaints Annual Report summarises the council's performance in terms of handling customer complaints received between 01 April 2016 and 31 March 2017.
- 2.2 The 2016-2017 reporting period provides the fourth full year of data under the new model Complaints Handling Procedure. This annual report is presented in accordance with the National Performance Framework, which was published in August 2013. The Complaints Standard Authority developed a suite of eight performance indicators in association with the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network on which we are represented. These indicators are a valuable source of information about council services as this helps to identify recurring or underlying problems, derive learning from complaints and highlight potential areas for improvement.
- 2.3 The council always aims to provide the highest possible quality of service to our community, but we recognise that there are times when we get things wrong and we fail to meet the expectations of our customers. The council welcomes feedback as it provides information that helps services learn from complaints and to modify and improve the way services are delivered. Complaints are viewed as a positive communication tool and are encouraged. We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction, by one or more members of the public, about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.
- 2.4 Our complaints procedure has two stages:
- **Stage one** – 'front line resolution': we will always try to resolve complaints quickly, within five working days, and in exceptional circumstances extend for a further five days.
 - **Stage two** – 'investigation': if customers remain dissatisfied with our stage one response, they can escalate their complaint to stage two. Complaints that are complex or need detailed investigation from the outset can be looked at immediately at stage two. These complaints will be acknowledged within three working days and a written response provided within twenty working days; this can be extended in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.5 Following completion of our complaints process, if a customer remains dissatisfied they can ask the SPSO to consider their complaint further and we advise them of this entitlement.
- 2.6 In support of the Complaints Handling Procedure, the council has a Complaints Management System enabling us to record, track and report on complaints information across all services. Within this system, actions are logged to record how we have dealt with and responded to complaints.
- 2.7 Monitoring complaints information, the preparation and publication of quarterly reports and this annual report helps to provide a clear basis for identifying service failures ('learning from complaints') and information on how effectively the council is handling complaints ('complaints performance').
- 2.8 The Performance Indicators covered in this report provide a tool that the council and the public can use to judge objectively how well complaints are being handled and how they inform service improvement activity.
- 2.9 The complaints performance data in this report will also inform our Annual Public Performance Report summarising our performance against the Statutory Performance Indicators.
- 2.10 Compliance with the Complaints Handling Procedure is monitored by Audit Scotland in conjunction with the SPSO and in line with the principles of the Best Value Shared Risk Assessment arrangements.

2.11 This year, statutory social work complaints continued to be processed using the previous three stage complaints process as the new two stage process was not introduced until 1 April 2017 which is out with this reporting period. As the previous process is not aligned with the model Complaints Handling Procedure, Social Work Policy complaint figures are not included in great detail in this report. Social work complaints under the new two stage process will be included in the 2017-18 annual report and will be reported on in greater detail.

3 Executive Summary

Areas of Good Performance

- 3.1** The most notable improvements in complaints performance have been in relation to stage one complaints with year on year improvement over the past three years in relation to the percentage of:
- complaints received being closed off at stage one
71.5% in 2016-17 versus 45.7% in 2014-15, including a 20% increase on last year
 - stage one complaints being upheld
40.1% in 2016-17 versus 14.3% in 2014-15
 - stage one complaints closed off within the five working day target
93% in 2016-17 versus 87% in 2014-15

This shows that we are dealing with complaints at the point closest to service delivery. It also suggests a changing culture where staff have greater confidence in acknowledging mistakes, allowing for learning and improvement to be made.

Areas requiring improvement

- 3.2** This year the feedback received through the complaints survey was more positive in nature than in previous years – although there is still room for improvement in relation to reducing the percentage of customers being dissatisfied with certain elements of the complaints process.
- 3.3** Our main areas for improvement have been identified in previous reports which indicates that targeted work is needed to address these ongoing issues.
- 3.4** While we had anticipated that the new complaints handling procedure and subsequent training and awareness raising would result in an increase in overall complaints reporting there has in fact been a significant reduction in recorded complaints by most of our front line services.

The rate of complaints received per 1,000 population has also declined over the past three years, from 5.17 in 2014-15 to 4.31 in 2016-17. The rate across Scotland in 2015-16 was 13.03 per 1,000 population.

While varying methods of recording complaints means that a direct comparison is not possible, Moray's figures do suggest a significant under-reporting of complaints. Education and Social Care services seem to resolve most of their complaints through stage two indicating that it is more likely that there has been under recording of minor complaint issues. This has therefore impacted upon school and overall figures.

We will continue to work with staff at our quarterly Complaints Administration Group meetings, provide guidance and support to individual services, and share best practice in order to reverse this trend. Specific training sessions will also be provided for school staff in order to raise awareness and increase their recording of minor complaints.

- 3.5** Performance in resolving stage two complaints within the 20 working day timescale is another area for improvement. This year, 62% were completed on time meaning that more than a third of all stage two complaints were responded to out with the timescale. Further, of those being closed off beyond 20 working days, this year only 27% had an approved extension.
- 3.6** Gaining approval to extend our response time beyond the five and twenty working day timescales also continues to be an area where improvement is limited. Although the percentage of all complaints receiving approval increased from 15% in 2014-15 to 22% in 2016-17, we saw a drop

in performance from 2015-16 when 31% of all overdue complaints received an authorised extension. Representing less than a quarter, this indicates scope for improvement in this area.

Complaint deadlines are now monitored by the complaints officer. Respective department complaint administrators and Head of Service are made aware of non-adherence to time limits and advised to close, escalate from stage one to stage two, or apply an authorised extension. This should improve upon these figures – particularly authorised extensions.

- 3.7** In relation to learning from our complaints:
A high volume of complaints are received by Direct Services in relation to failure to empty recycling bins. Training has been delivered to the front-line team to highlight the issue and ideas were generated through discussion with the team as to remedy this issue. The senior manager has agreed to take these suggestions on board.
- 3.8** From last year we also aimed to reduce the number of complaints upheld against our policies and procedures; we stated that we would do this by using the learning and improvement framework which was circulated to management through the Complaints Admin Group. This will continue to be our aim for the coming year.

4 Complaints Performance Indicators

The aim of the model Complaints Handling Procedure is for as many complaints as possible to be resolved at the front line (i.e. at stage one) with as few as possible requiring progression to investigation (i.e. stage two) in order to improve both the customer's experience and the council's service provision.

The SPSO PIs provide the minimum requirement for a local authority to self-assess, report on performance and to undertake benchmarking activities. These indicators are:

- Indicator 1 – complaints received per 1,000 of population
- Indicator 2 – closed complaints
- Indicator 3 – complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld
- Indicator 4 – average times
- Indicator 5 – performance against timescales
- Indicator 6 – number of cases where an extension is authorised
- Indicator 7 – customer satisfaction
- Indicator 8 – learning from complaints

A breakdown of 2016-17 figures for relevant indicators will be explained in this section together with 2015-16 figures and some 2014-15 to allow for benchmark comparisons. A breakdown of indicator figures for services is included as an appendix.

4.1 Indicator 1 – Complaints received per 1000 of population

This indicator records the total number of complaints received by the council. This is the sum of the number of complaints received at stage one (front line resolution) and the number of complaints received directly at stage two (investigation). To allow for a fair comparison across all 32 councils in Scotland, the figure of complaints per 1,000 of population is used.

Table 1: Number of complaints received by Moray Council (per 1,000 population)

Complaints received by Moray Council	2015-16	2016-17
Total number of received	460	414
Population (mid-year population estimate)	95,510	96,070
Number of complaints per 1,000 population	4.82	4.31

*Some of the complaints dealt with during the period relate to complaints raised before April 2016, and some raised in March 2017 would be unresolved before the end of March 2017. So there will not be a direct correlation between numbers received and numbers responded to.

Areas of Good Performance

Compared to the 2015-16 figures, there has been a reduction of 10% in the number of complaints received and a slight rise of around 0.6% in the population size. Consequently, the number of complaints per 1,000 population has reduced by 10.5% compared to 2015-16 (Table 1).¹

This reduction can in part be seen as positive and reflects that where learning and improvement approaches are taken, such as by Housing and Property, then recorded complaints can reduce.

Areas requiring improvement

However it is recognised that there is still under recording of complaints across a number of departments and awareness training will be put in place to try and improve this. A recent

¹ It is worth noting that MSP enquiries are logged on the same database as complaints. When figures are taken from the system for this report MSP enquiries are filtered out – even though some are clearly complaint matters. This will contribute to an extent to the relatively low numbers of complaints recorded.

Ombudsman report provides some insight into the impact of complaints on staff performance and morale and we will take this into account when developing and rolling out our training programme.²

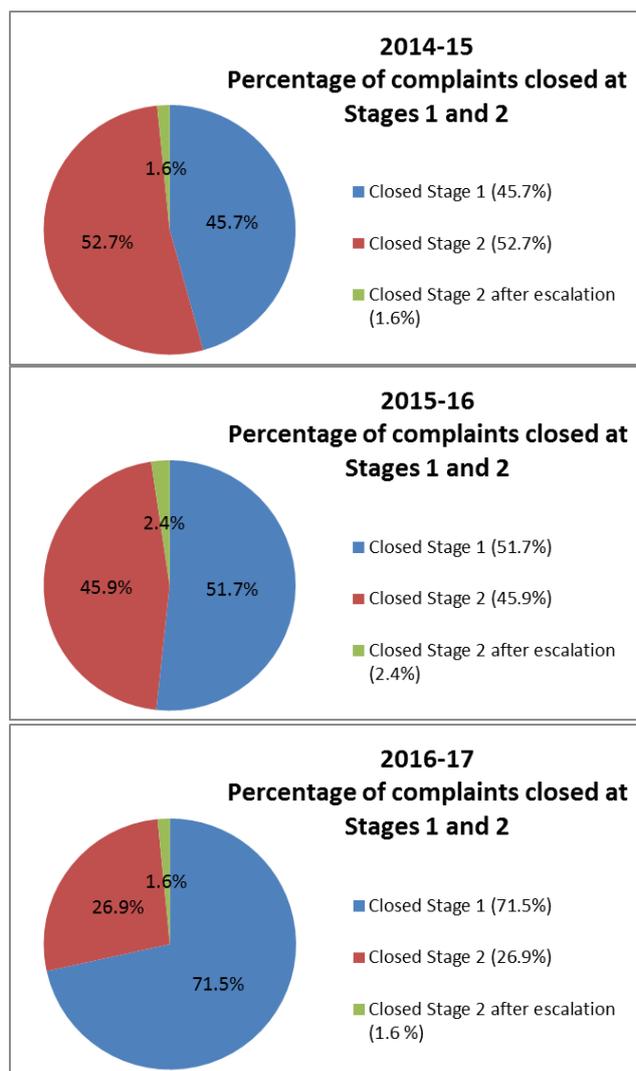
4.2 Indicator 2 – Closed Complaints

This indicator provides information on the number of complaints closed at stage one and stage two as a percentage of the 383 closed complaints (note that there were 414 complaints received with 31 not closed during the reporting period). The term ‘closed’ refers to a complaint that has had a response sent to the customer and at the time no further action is required.

This indicator will report:

- the number of complaints closed at stage one as % of all complaints
- the number of complaints closed at stage two as % of all complaints
- the number of complaints closed at stage two after escalation as % of all complaints

Figure 1: Percentage of complaints closed at Stages 1 and 2 (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



² Ombudsman, *Making complaints work for everyone* – December 2017

Areas of Good Performance

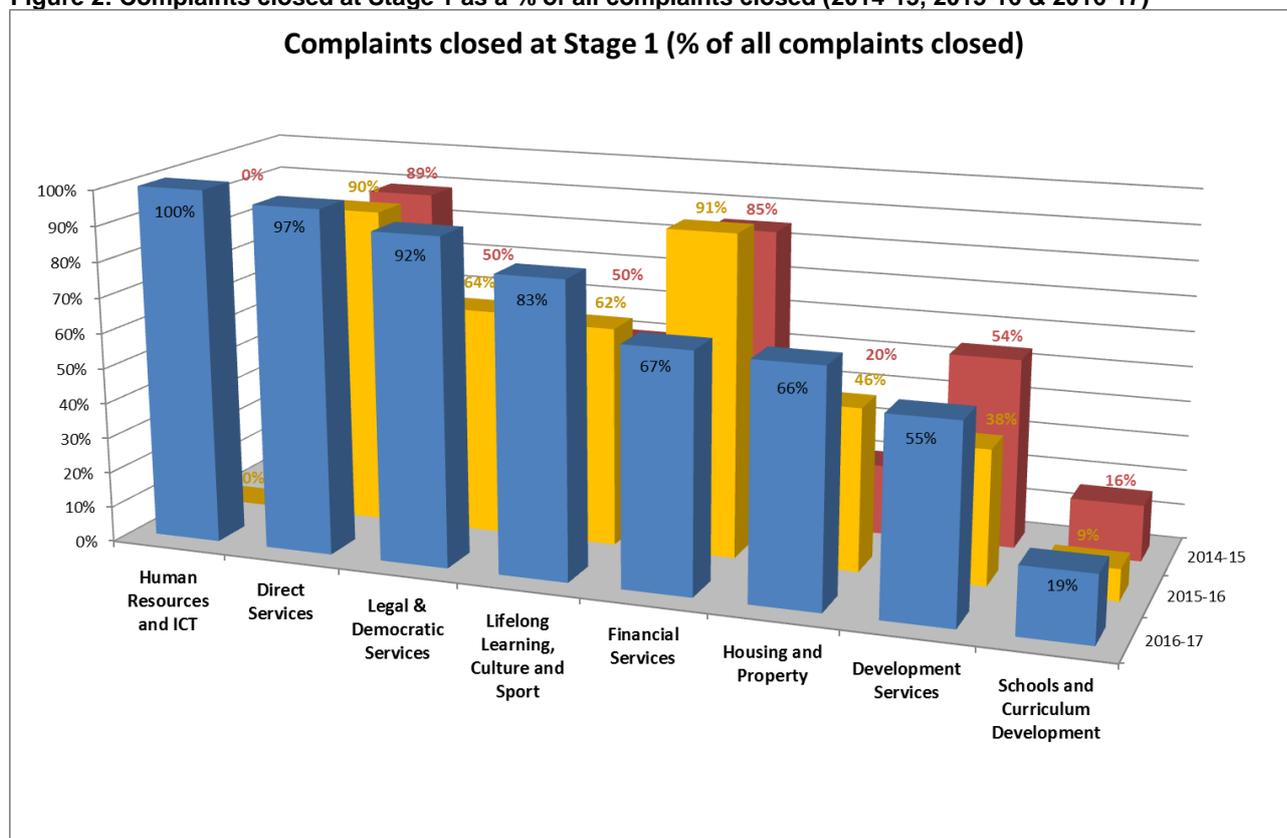
During 2016-17 our ratio of complaints dealt with at front line resolution stage compared to those dealt with at the investigation stage continues the improvement made last year. Almost three-quarters of the complaints were resolved at the front line stage (71.5%), an increase of 20% from 2015-16 and over 25% more than in 2014-15 when fewer than half of all complaints were resolved at this stage (45.7%). We will strive to increase this level of performance in the coming year.

This performance reverses the trend of 2014-15 and is due to the continued emphasis on highlighting the complaints model to individual services at the quarterly Complaints Administration Group meetings, providing complaints handling inputs to department staff, including the sharing best practice.

Similar to reporting period 2015-16, Environmental Services received the majority of complaints – 303 (65%). This is to be expected as they are responsible for busy service provision such as roads, waste management and planning where complaints often arise. Education and Social Care were the next highest – 59 (13%). Corporate Services – 19 (4%) and the Chief Executive’s office – 1 (0.4%) received the remaining complaints. (Figure 23 – Appendix). With the high percentage of Education and Social Care being dealt with at investigation stage, it is likely that there is under recording of minor complaint issues.

Direct Services continues to lead the way in resolving complaints at front line – 163 (97%). In 2015-16 Housing and Property showed the greatest improvement of all services and recorded a 26% increase in resolving complaints at the front line stage compared to 2014-15. In 2016-17 Housing and Property continued their improvement and resolved 66% of complaints at front-line, up from 46% in 2015-16 (Figure 2). Development Services were able to resolve more than half the complaints they received at the front line stage (55%), an improvement on 38% in 2015-16.

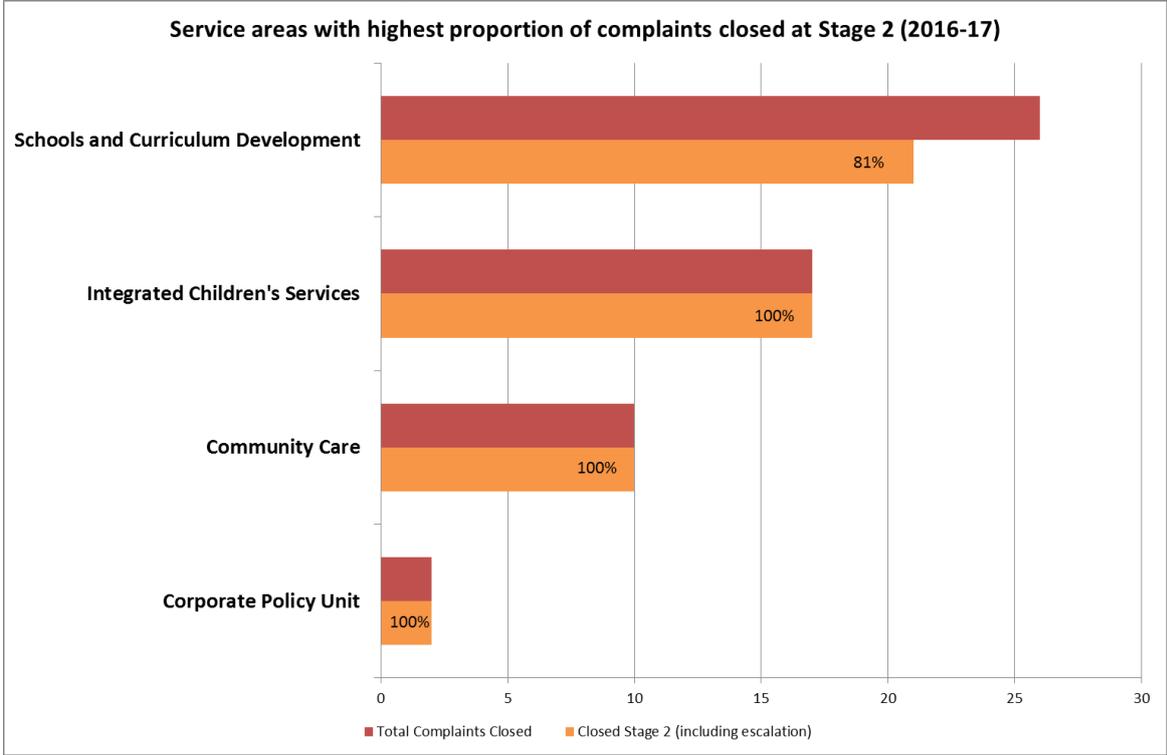
Figure 2: Complaints closed at Stage 1 as a % of all complaints closed (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



However, some services continue to resolve the majority of, if not all, complaints at the investigative stage. All of the 17 Integrated Children’s Services complaints were dealt with at stage

two, as were all 10 complaints raised against Community Care. In addition, 21 of the 26 Schools and Curriculum Development (81%) complaints were resolved at stage 2 (Figure 3). Both complaints raised against Corporate Services were closed at the investigative stage, but due to the small number this is not considered statistically significant. There needs to be greater emphasis placed on front line recording as this will identify learning and improvement at an early stage and may negate the need for more complex and time consuming investigations.

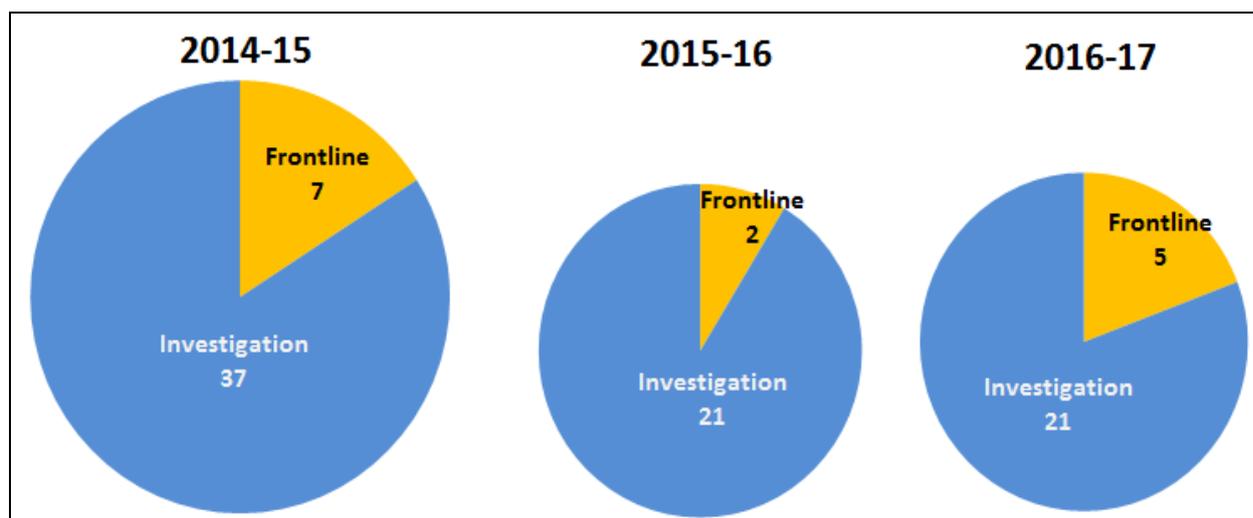
Figure 3: Complaints closed at Stage 2 as a % of all complaints closed (2016-17)



Stage two complaints often involve speaking with several witnesses, meeting with complainants and liaising with partner agencies. In such circumstances, concluding these enquiries and providing a written response to a complainant normally exceeds five working days.

There were 3 more complaints received by Schools and Curriculum than in 2015-16 (Figure 4). Of the 26 recorded only 5 (19%) were resolved at front line stage. This is a slight improvement compared to the 2 (9.5%) resolved at the same stage in 2015-16 however is less than the 7 resolved in 2014-15 (18.9%). An area where improvement has been made is in the thoroughness of investigations of such complaints. One to one investigations by the Complaints Officer/ Quality Improvement Officer and quality assurance checks of stage two final responses have allowed complex investigations to withstand SPSO scrutiny with little or no recommendations made.

Figure 4: Schools and Curriculum Development complaints resolved (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



4.3 Indicator 3 – Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld

There is a requirement for a formal outcome (upheld, partially upheld or not upheld) to be recorded for each complaint.

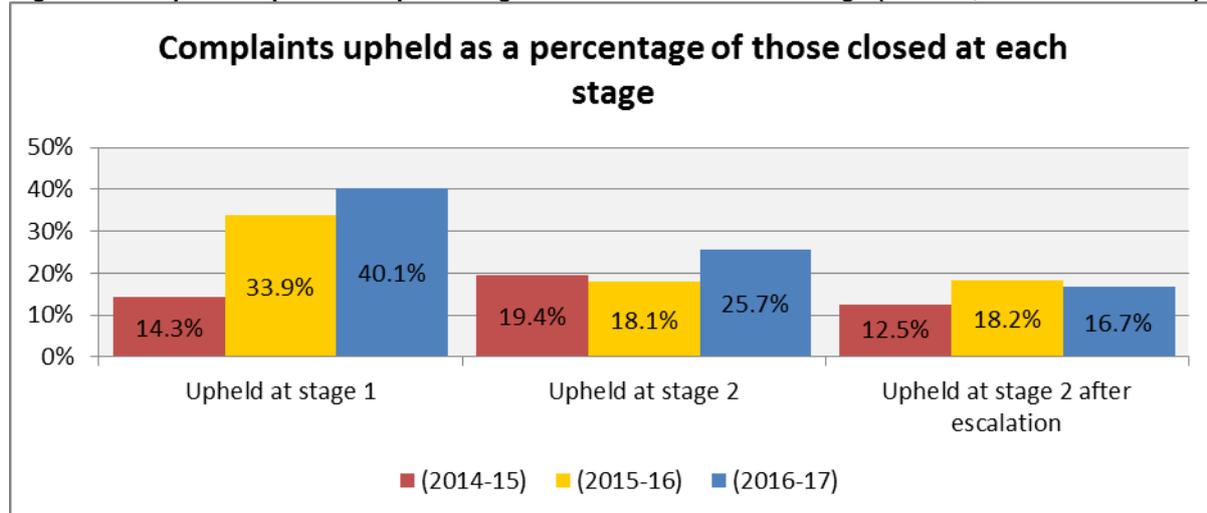
This indicator will report:

- the number of complaints upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one
- the number of complaints not upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one
- the number of complaints partially upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one
- the number of complaints upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two
- the number of complaints not upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two
- the number of complaints partially upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two
- the number of escalated complaints upheld at stage two as % of all escalated complaints closed at stage two
- the number of escalated complaints not upheld at stage two as % of all escalated complaints closed at stage two
- the number of escalated complaints partially upheld at stage two as % of all escalated complaints closed at stage two

A complaint is defined as 'upheld' when it is found to be true or confirmed. A 'partially upheld' complaint results when there are several complaint issues raised and some, but not all, of them are upheld. Complaints are 'not upheld' when they are found to be untrue; that the service provided was of a reasonable standard in line with typical expectations; or if a request for services was misdirected as a complaint. The council reviews all complaints and each customer is contacted to confirm to them whether their complaint has been 'upheld', 'partially upheld' or 'not upheld' together with an explanation of the findings.

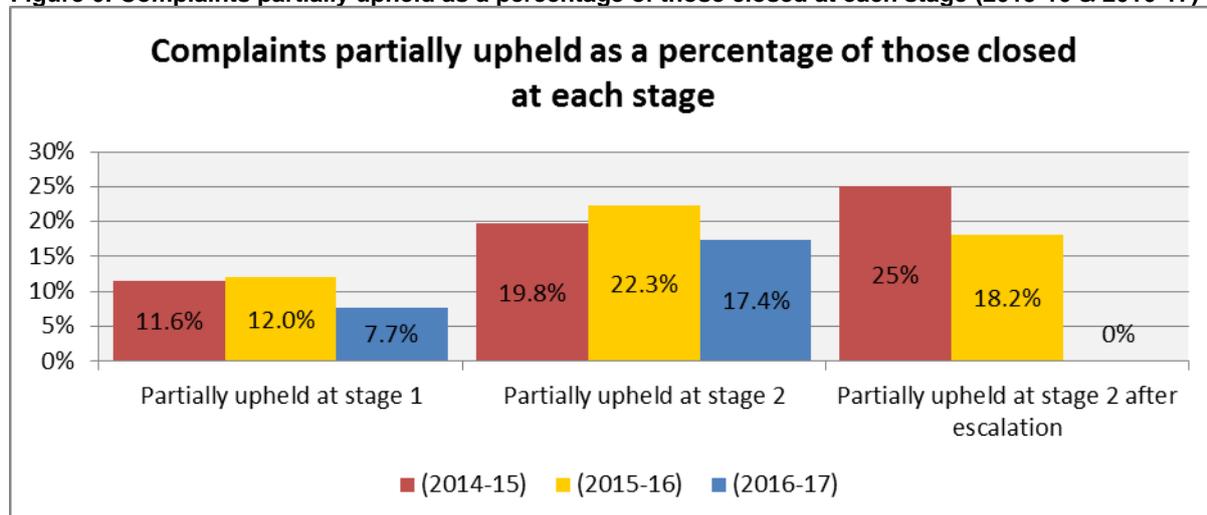
Upheld Complaints

Figure 5: Complaints upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



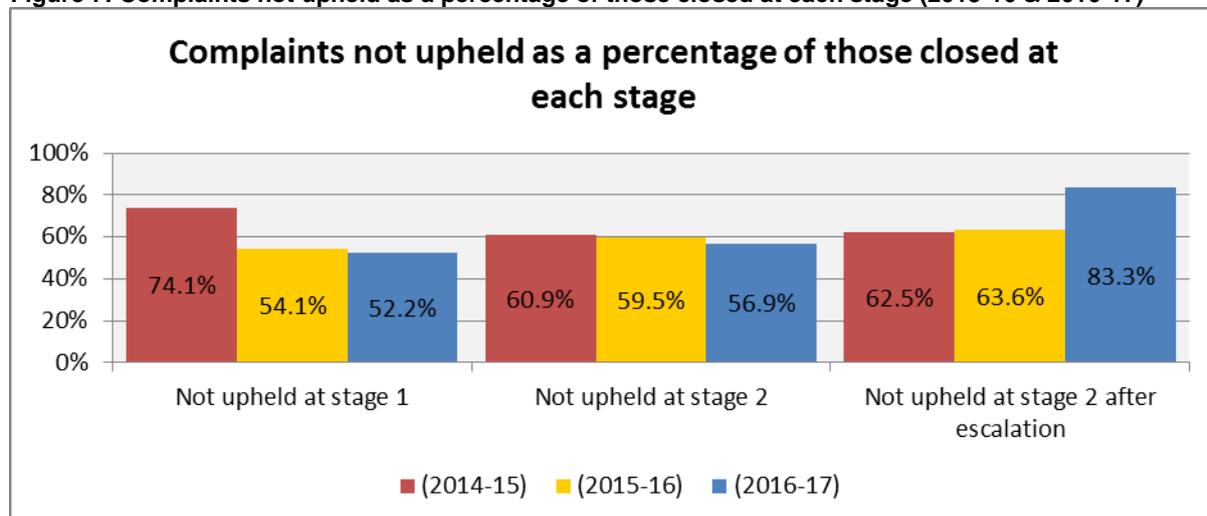
Partially Upheld Complaints

Figure 6: Complaints partially upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage (2015-16 & 2016-17)



Not Upheld Complaints

Figure 7: Complaints not upheld as a percentage of those closed at each stage (2015-16 & 2016-17)



The most significant change in the past 2 years has been the outcome of front line (stage one) complaints. In 2015-16 almost half (46%) of all complaints closed were 'upheld', or 'partially upheld', at front line (stage one), compared to just one-quarter in 2014-15. In 2016-17 the proportion was similar with 47.8% of closed complaints 'upheld' or 'partially upheld' at front line. This demonstrates that mistakes are being acknowledged, apologies given and learning and improvement outcomes are being sought and implemented.

For stage two complaints closed at the investigation stage the proportion 'upheld', or 'partially upheld' was 43% in 2016-17 similar to 40% in 2015-16 and 39% in the previous year.

For all the complaints closed during 2016-17, at both stages one and two, almost half (46%) were fully 'upheld' or 'partially upheld' overall, compared to 43% in 2015-16 and 33% in 2014-15. This shows that many customers continue to raise concerns with service provision, and a greater proportion of all complaints require us to review and improve the way services are being delivered.

4.4 Indicator 4 – Average Times

This represents the average time in working days to close complaints at stages one and two of the model CHP.

This indicator will report:

- the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one
- the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two
- the average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation

Figure 8: Average time in working days to respond to complaints at each stage (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)

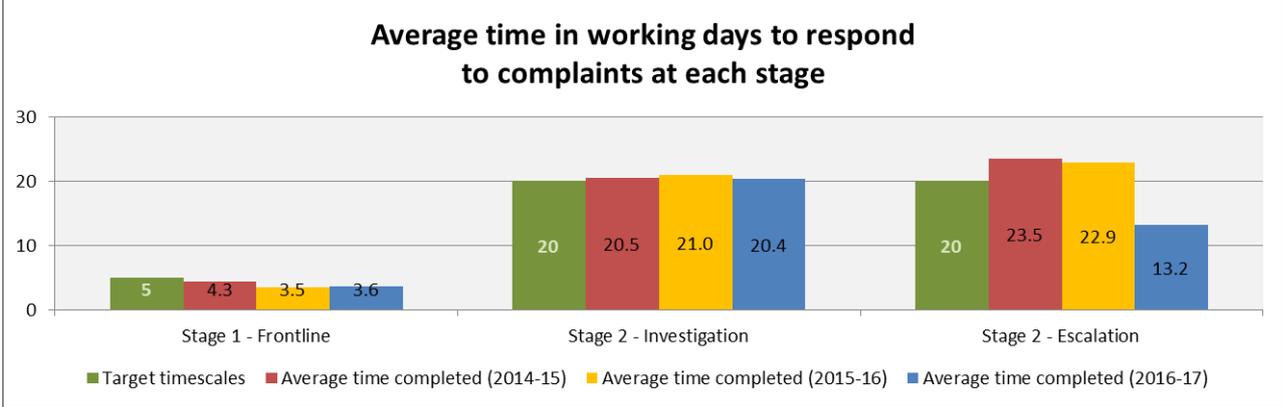
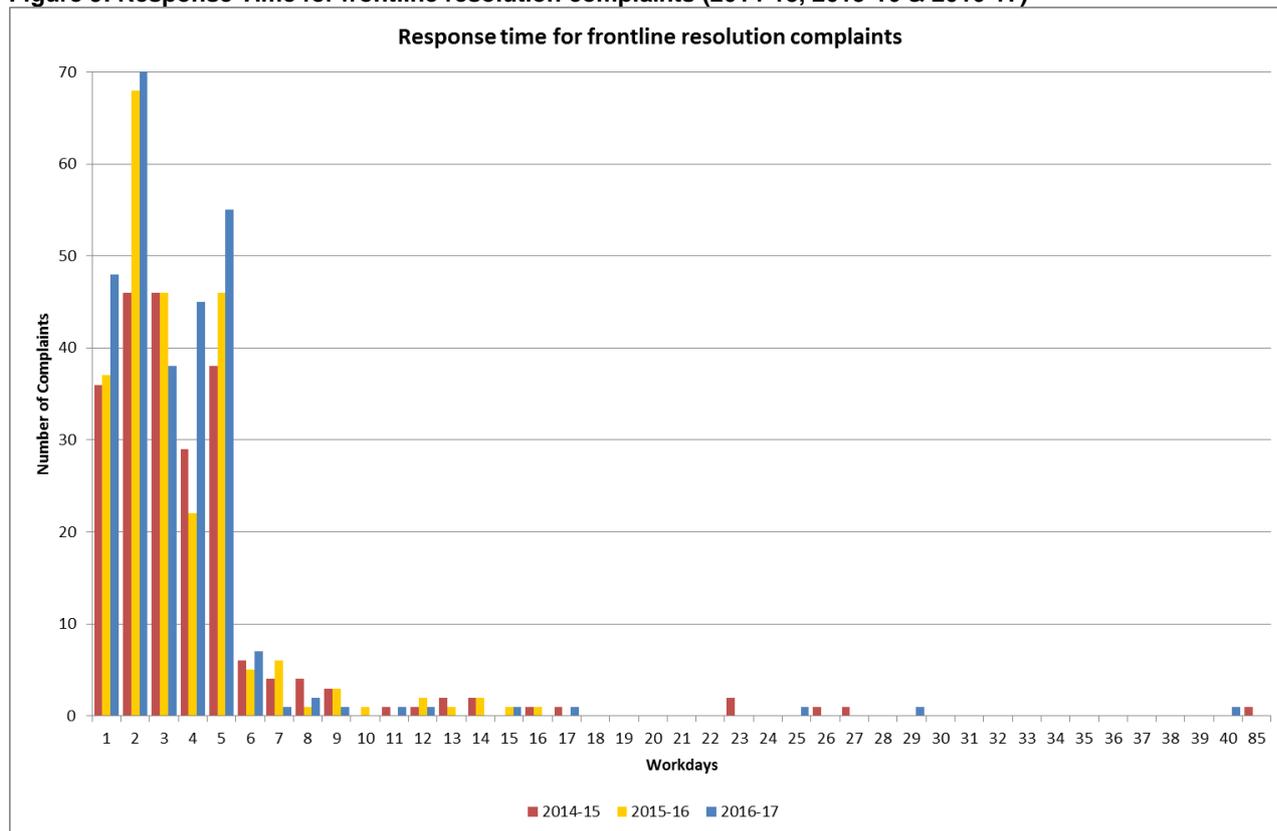


Figure 9: Response Time for frontline resolution complaints (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



Areas of Good Performance

The typical number of days taken to respond to complaints is generally below the SPSO’s five and 20 day timescales. 93% of all front line complaints were closed within five days, within the Complaint Handling Procedures’ aims. Service areas where this is not the case are those where the nature of the complaints tend to be more complex and therefore take longer to investigate and come to an agreeable resolution.

Frontline resolution times, 3.6 days on average, are on a par with 2015-16 (3.5 days) and one day shorter than in 2014-15, while the average time for resolving all stage two complaints (investigation and escalated investigation) is 20.4 days; marginally outside the Complaint Handling Procedures’ guidelines and a small improvement from 21 days recorded in 2015-16.

The majority of ‘front line resolution’ complaints are dealt with within five working days, with just 1% exceeding the maximum extension period of 10 working days, compared to 3% in 2015-16 and 5% in 2014-15. Those complaints extended should have been closed as a front line resolution complaint (stage one) and re-assigned as an investigation (stage two).

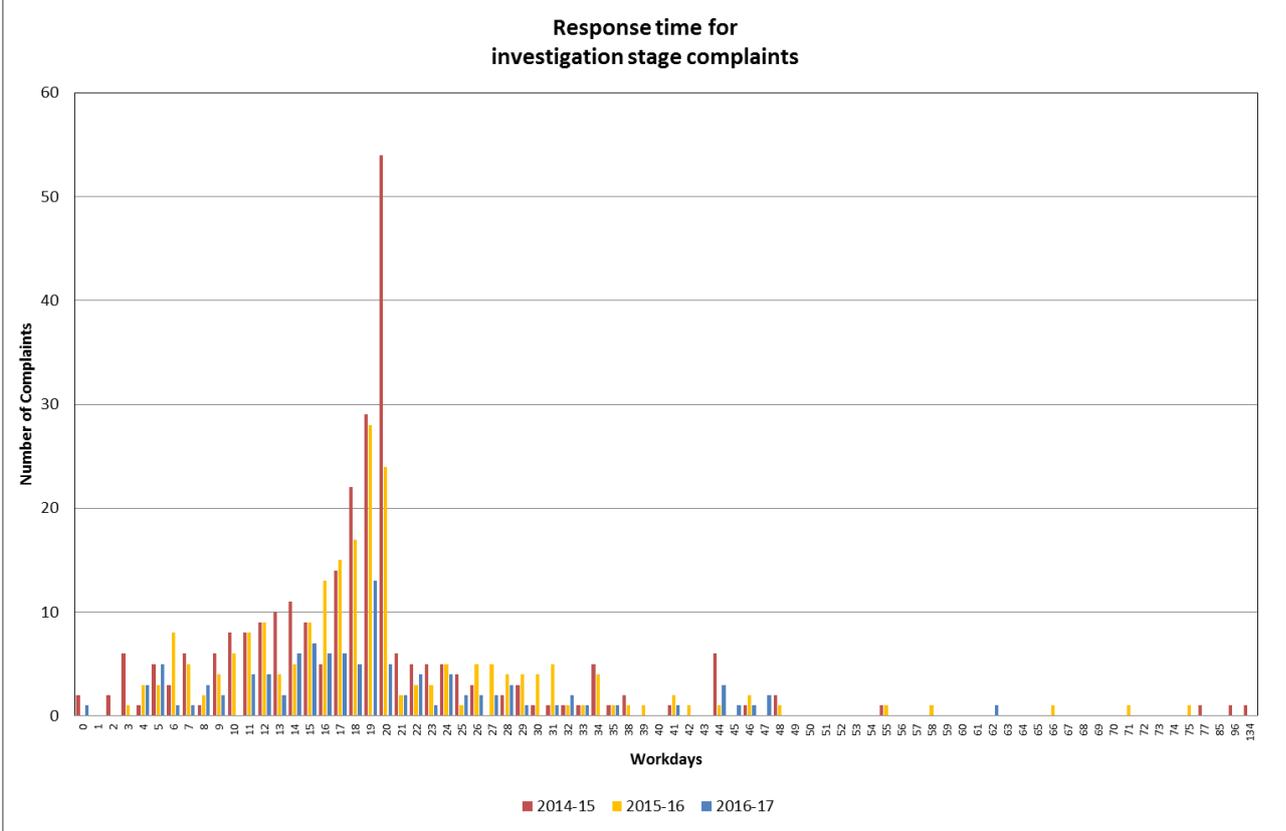
Eighteen of the front line complaints closed during 2016-17 took longer than five days. The majority (eight) were complaints relating to Direct Services, and ranged from one day overdue to 35 working days late. Housing & Property Services had four late front line complaints, ranging from one day late to 20 working days overdue. The remainder of the late front line complaints had been raised against Development Services; Lifelong Learning, Culture & Sport; and Schools & Curriculum Development.

Areas requiring improvement

Compared to 2015-16 and 2014-15 there are fewer complaints taking longer than 10 days, however, in 2015-16 none took longer than 15 working days, while in 2016-17 there were 4, with the longest taking 39 days to close. While significant improvement has been made since the implementation of the Complaints Handling Procedure since 2014-15, weekly monitoring is now

taking place and complaint administrators for relevant departments are being reminded to ensure they follow the correct database timeline process for stages.

Figure 10: Response time for Investigation Stage Complaints (including Escalated Investigations) (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



The majority of investigations are responded to within the 20 day timescale or within agreed extension periods. Of the 109 complaints closed at stage two (investigation and escalated) 40 (37%) took longer than the target response time. Integrated Children’s Services complaints often require investigation of lengthy and complicated issues. This accounted for 11 of their investigations taking more than 20 days to complete (just over half of the complaints investigated by the Service). One Community Care complaint took 62 days to resolve at the investigation stage; the longest of all complaints to be closed in 2016-17, but an improvement on 75 days for the longest investigation in 2015-16 and much reduced from a 134 day investigation recorded in 2014-15.

More complaints are being closed when they are complete although, as can be seen from figure 10; there remains a slight surge at 19-20 days, albeit less marked than in previous years. There continues to be a better spread of closing showing that the complaints are taking only as long as they need.

4.5 Indicator 5 – Performance against Timescales

The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days.

The model Complaints Handling Procedure requires complaints to be closed within five working days at stage one and 20 working days at stage two. This indicator will report:

- the number of complaints closed at stage one within five working days as % of total number of stage one complaints
- the number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as % of total number of stage two complaints

- the number of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days as a % of total number of escalated stage two complaints

The analysis provided for Indicator 4 is equally applicable for this indicator.

Table 2: Indicator 5 - Closure timescales (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)

Performance Against Timescales		Number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as a %	Number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as a %	Number of escalated complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as a %
2016-17	Total no. of complaints	274	103	6
	No. of complaints within timescales	256	64	5
	Meeting target times	93%	62%	83%
2015-16	Total no. of complaints	242	215	11
	No. of complaints within timescales	219	133	7
	Meeting target times	90%	62%	64%
2014-15	Total no. of complaints	224	258	8
	No. of complaints within timescales	195	146	8
	Meeting target times	87%	57%	100%

Areas of Good Performance

During the past year, the Complaints Officer provided training to Direct Services and Education and Social Work. The council improved its performance by closing the majority (93%) of front line complaints within the target times, maintaining the performance of the previous year. The services have performed equally well in closing stage two complaints within 20 working days (62% for both years), this improvement being maintained on the 2014-15 performance of 57%. Our performance has improved considerably for escalated complaints where all but one was completed on time. Performance issues continue to be discussed with complaint administrators and highlighted through quarterly management reports. Closer monitoring and reinforcement is being done to improve further on this performance.

4.6 Indicator 6 – Number of Cases where an extension is authorised

The number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the five or 20 working day timeline has been authorised.

The model Complaints Handling Procedure allows for an extension to the timescales to be authorised in certain circumstances. This indicator will report:

- the number of complaints closed at stage one where extension was authorised, as a % of all complaints at stage one
- number of complaints closed at stage two where extension was authorised, as a % of all complaints at stage two

Areas requiring improvement

This is an area where there is room for improvement.

Table 3: Indicator 6 – Extensions (2015-16 & 2016-17)

Number of cases where an extension is authorised		% of complaints at stage one where the extension was authorised	% of complaints at stage two where the extension was authorised
2016-17	Total no. of overdue complaints	42	37
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	7	10
	Percentage with extensions	17%	27%
2015-16	Total no. of overdue complaints	18	63
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	1	24
	Percentage with extensions	6%	38%
2014-15	Total no. of overdue complaints	30	113
	No. of complaints with authorised extensions	5	16
	Percentage with extensions	17%	14%

The council always aims to respond to complaints as quickly as possible. There are, however, times when a complaint is particularly complex and it is identified that a thorough investigation of the issues will require time out with the prescribed timescales. In these situations the council agrees with a complainant to extend the timescale for closing the complaint and will detail the reasons such as having to interview a number of potential witnesses and for a need to gather reports from a variety of sources. A senior manager must always approve such an extension before it is granted and this is recorded with revised time limits on our complaints database.

However, as the data in Table 3 testifies, the majority of complaints taking longer than the stipulated times still do not receive such approvals. That said, there has been an improvement in 2016-17 with 22% of all overdue complaints receiving an approval, compared to 15% in 2014-15. However, performance has dropped off since 2015-16 when 31% of all overdue complaints had an authorised extension. The increase since 2014-15 is attributed mainly to monitoring and reminding complaint administrators to obtain and have authorised extensions recorded.

Figure 11 gives a breakdown by service where front line complaints were extended without authorisation with the exception of one complaint that was authorised. While figure 12 gives a breakdown by service where investigation complaints were extended without authorisation compared to those where authorisation had been given.

The new complaints database, introduced in April 2017, allows for closer monitoring which will help to identify complaints that have extended beyond 20 days without authorisation. Senior management will be notified of such cases and administrators reminded weekly to update the database. It is anticipated that this will provide continued improvement in 2017-18.

Figure 11: Front line complaints not responded to in stipulated timescales, without authorised extensions (2016-17)

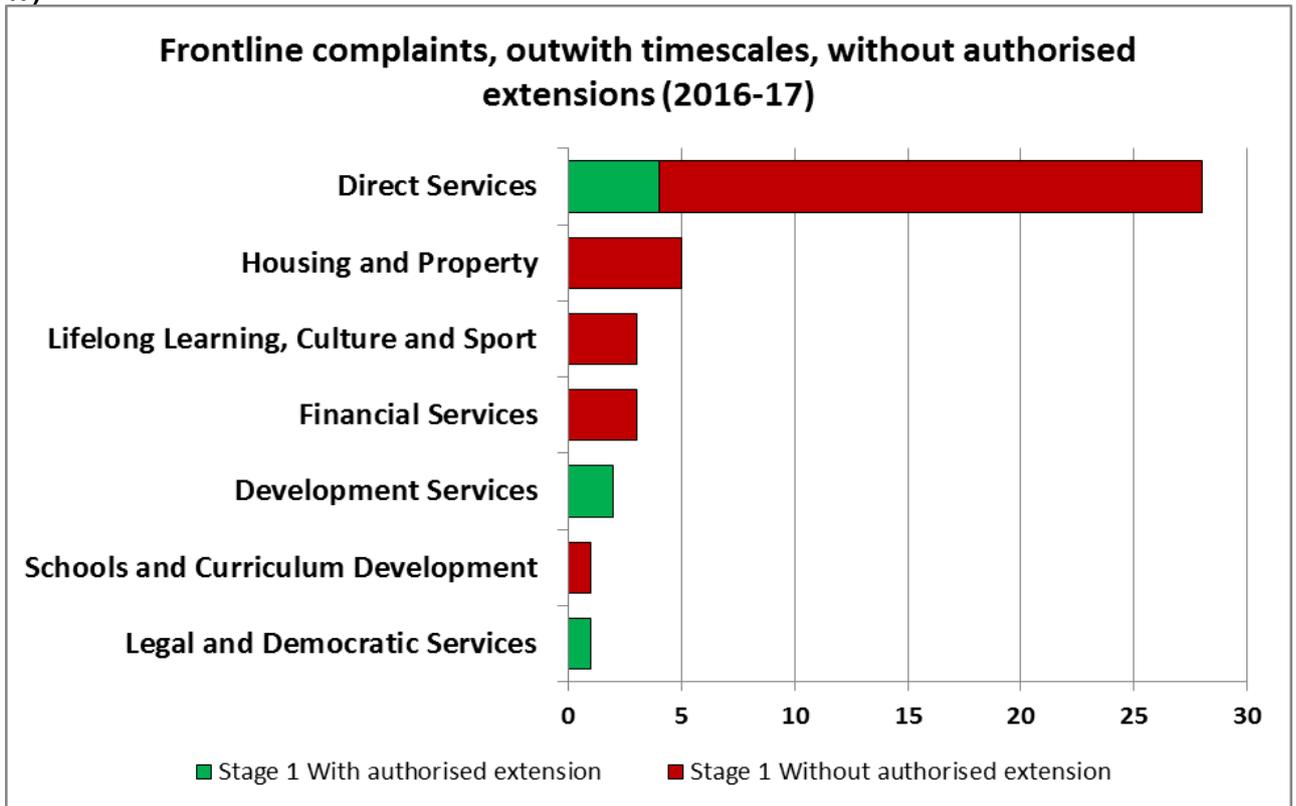
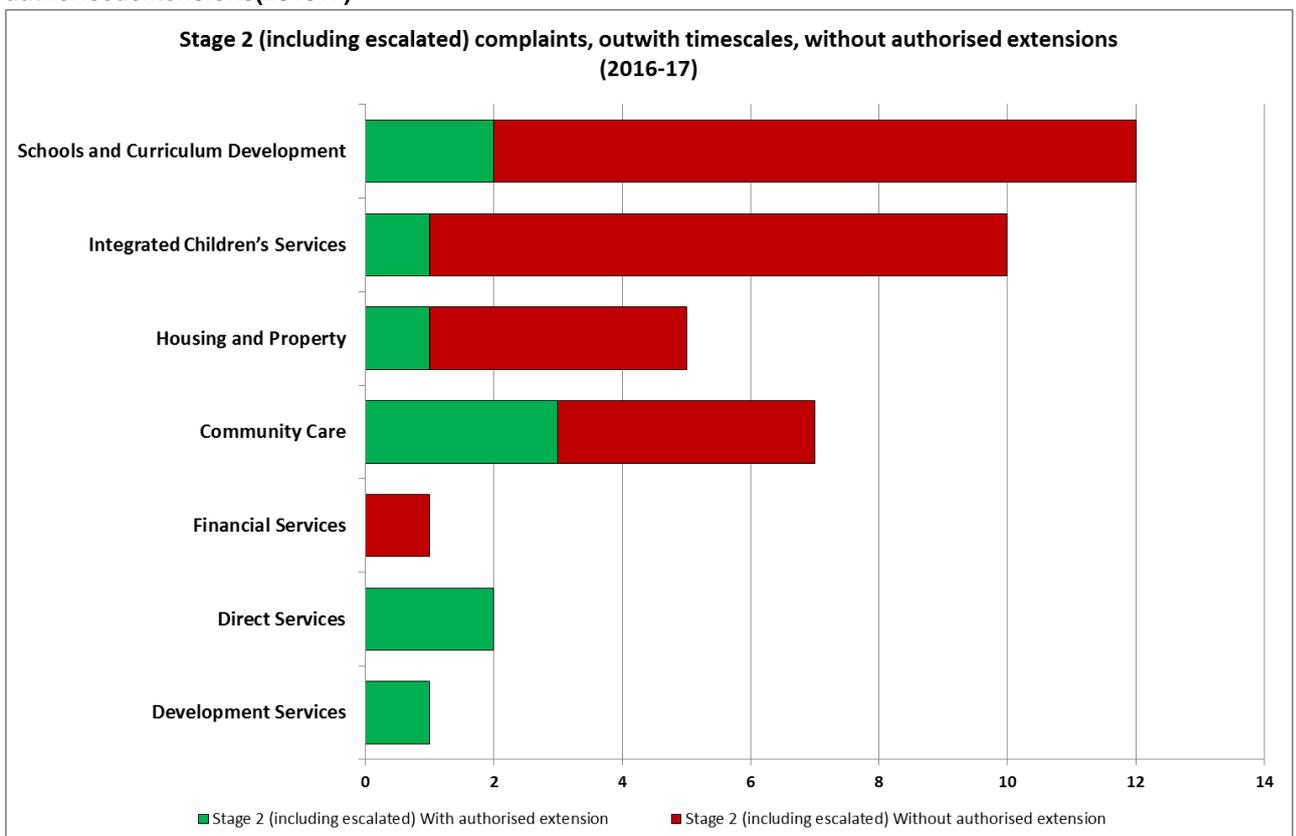


Figure 12: Stage 2 (including escalated) complaints not responded to in stipulated timescales, without authorised extensions (2016-17)



4.7 Indicator 7 – Customer Satisfaction

The SPSO requires a statement to report on customer satisfaction with the complaints service provided.

A customer satisfaction survey was sent out to customers with the aim of helping the council focus on areas where improvements or change could be made to our complaints procedure and service provision.

In assessing customer satisfaction within the complaints service, complainants are asked to consider:

- how satisfied they were with the way their complaint was handled
- how easy the complaints process was to follow
- how well we complied with the CHP
- how well we provided service delivery, timeliness and information
- how professional the attitude of staff was

Customer Satisfaction Feedback Survey

A Complaints Handling Customer Feedback Survey was carried out between June 2016 and March 2017. There were 368 surveys sent out, 154 by post and 214 by email. We received 35 (23%) postal responses and 38 (18%) online responses, giving an overall survey response of 73 (20%). The survey considered 5 factors; service delivery; information; timeliness; staff professionalism and staff attitude.

It is recognised that customers don't always get the outcome they seek and this can be reflected in their survey response, even when they are being asked to comment on the complaints handling process rather than the outcome. This is evident in some responses where the majority of their survey is not completed and only one statement relating to their continued complaint dissatisfaction is entered.

Regardless of this, constructive customer feedback will always be welcomed as it provides us with an opportunity to learn from and improve upon the way we deal with customers and provide services.

It was encouraging to see some customers praising our explanation of policy and procedure and also the positive attitude of those staff members initially recording or subsequently dealing with the complaints. This demonstrates that staff are embracing the complaints process as a means of helping customers. The positive feedback received provides support and re-assurance to staff members that they are doing a good job in recording, investigating and resolving complaint issues.

Arising from the survey, the main dissatisfaction mirror those of 2015-16 where we are:

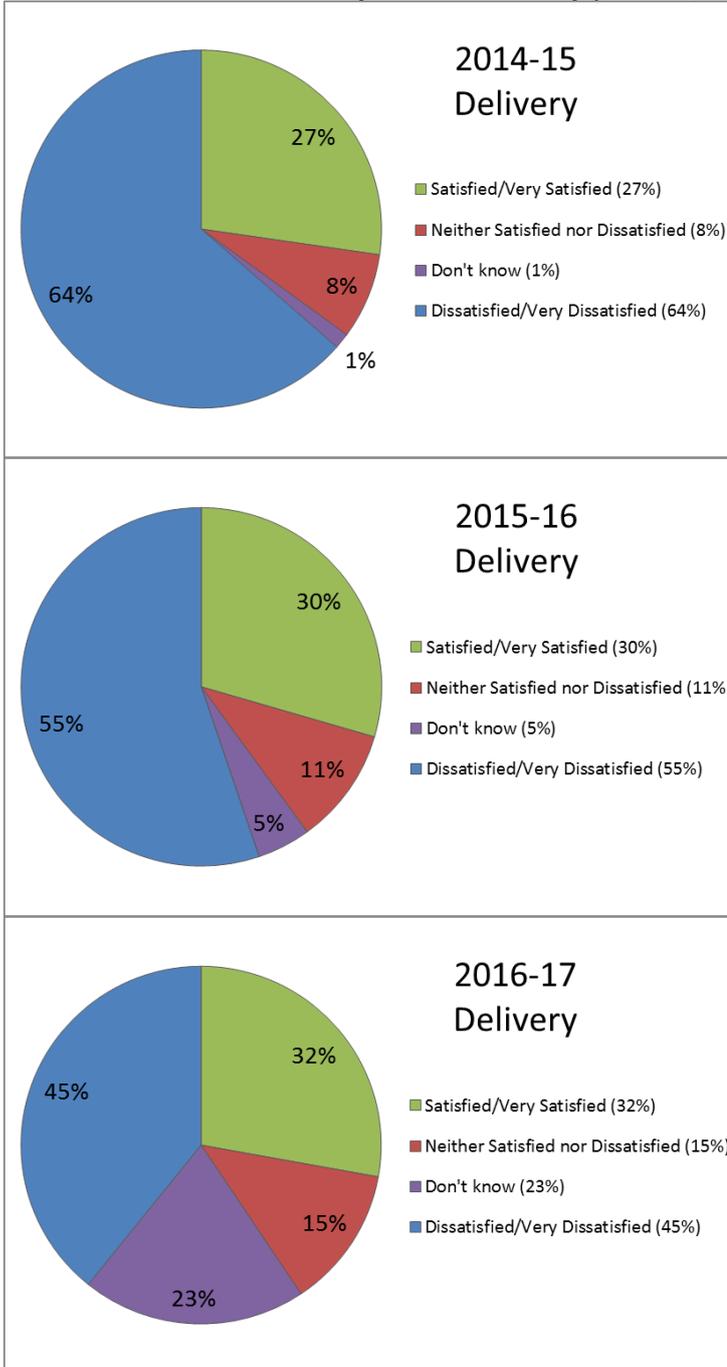
- not updating customers;
- not adhering to policy timescales;
- poorly handling complaint issues;
- not taking the issues seriously; appearing disinterested;
- not apologising for service failures.

In 2016-17, there were a greater number of positive feedback comments and these can be viewed as improvement. This included areas such as:

- staff being identified and praised for taking responsibility;
- complaints being thoroughly investigated within timescales and following policy;
- apologies being given where we recognised that we got things wrong.

4.7.1 Service Delivery

Figure 16: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Service Delivery (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



In the survey customers were asked about ‘the overall service our staff provided and how we responded to their complaint’.

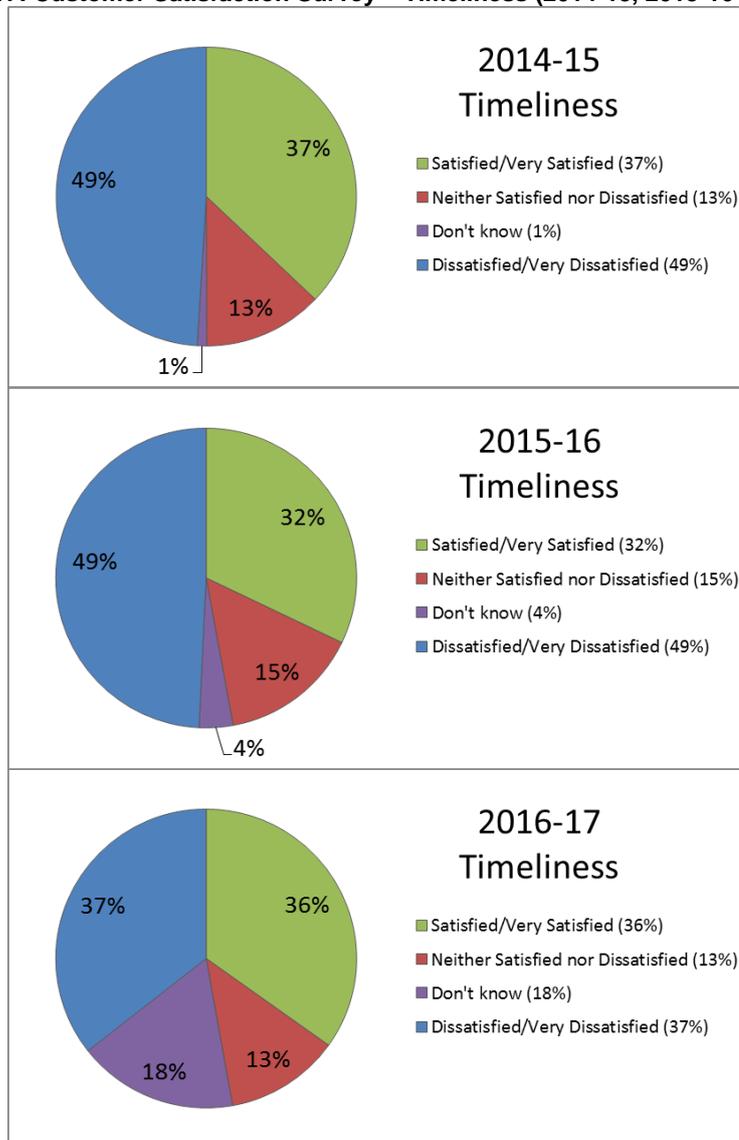
Comments regarding staff were mixed, with 45% of customers stating they were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with how well council staff handled their complaint. This is an improvement from 2015-16 when 55% of customers were in this category, and continues the improvement from 2014-15 where overall dissatisfaction was at 64%. Additionally, the proportion of those who were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ slightly increased to 32%, up from 30% the previous year, and 27% the year before.

The proportion of customers who are ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with their final response continues to reduce. 39% were unhappy with the response they received in 2016-17, which is an

improvement on the 54% of customers who responded negatively in 2015-16 and the 61% in 2014-15. The above figures shows improvement on how we are handling and responding to complaints.

4.7.2 Timeliness

Figure 17: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Timeliness (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



Timeliness is an issue within the complaint process with over one-third (37%) being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the time taken to resolve their complaint. However, this is an improvement from 2014-15 and 2015-16 when almost half (49%) of the customers were unhappy with the service provision.

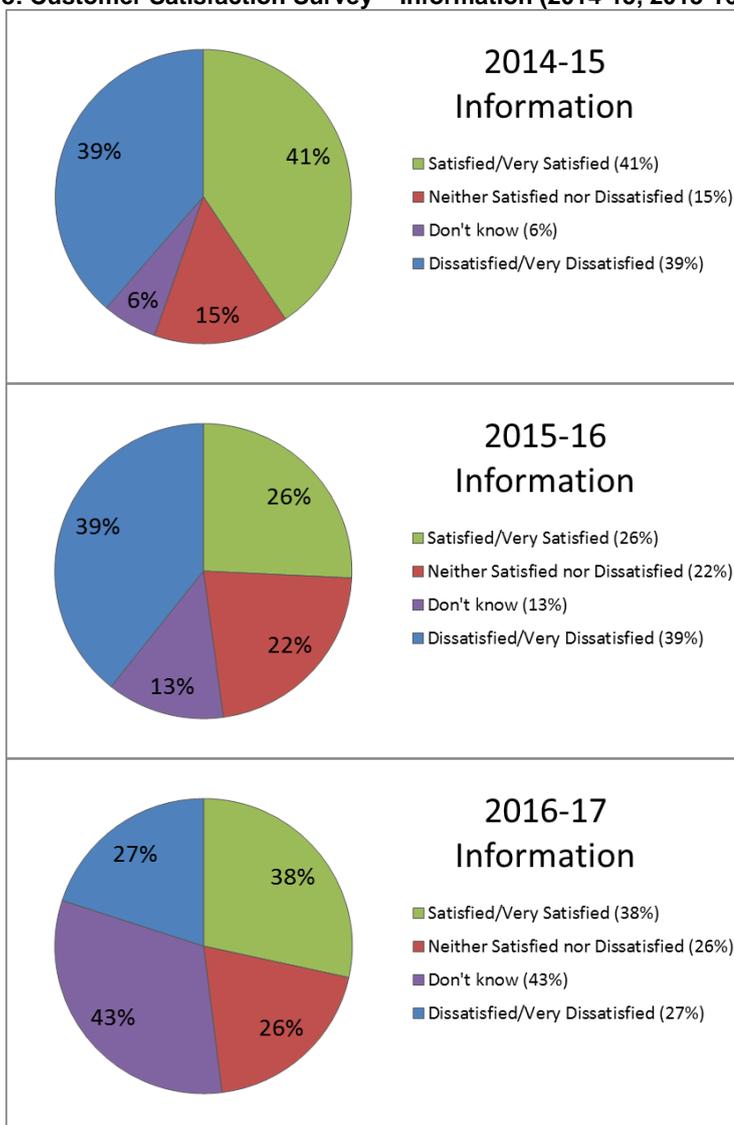
Customer satisfaction increased to 36% from 32% (2015-16) and closer to the 2014-15 rate of 37%. The relatively low rate may be due to customers feeling that services are not resolving their complaints within timescales. The statistics in the Appendix (Tables D and F) and at sections 4.4 and 4.5 above contradict this. They illustrate that survey perceptions are not supported by the data and complaints are being dealt with more quickly than in previous years. One comment was that 'school holidays had thrown out the complaint timeline'. Although the counting of working days changes where there are school holidays and we are adhering to timescales, we need to explain this to the customer.

It is worth noting that some complaints can be more complex, requiring lengthy investigation. Such enquiries often take us out with timescales and is an area where we need to ensure we are having

extensions authorised and agreed with customers. It is recognised that we have been poor in this area. Training, closer monitoring and updating by complaint administrators are steps put in place to bring about improvement.

4.7.3 Information

Figure 18: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Information (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



Information is a key aspect of a complaint policy and we asked customers; about the quality of information given to make a complaint; how we responded to information provided and if we covered all the issues reported.

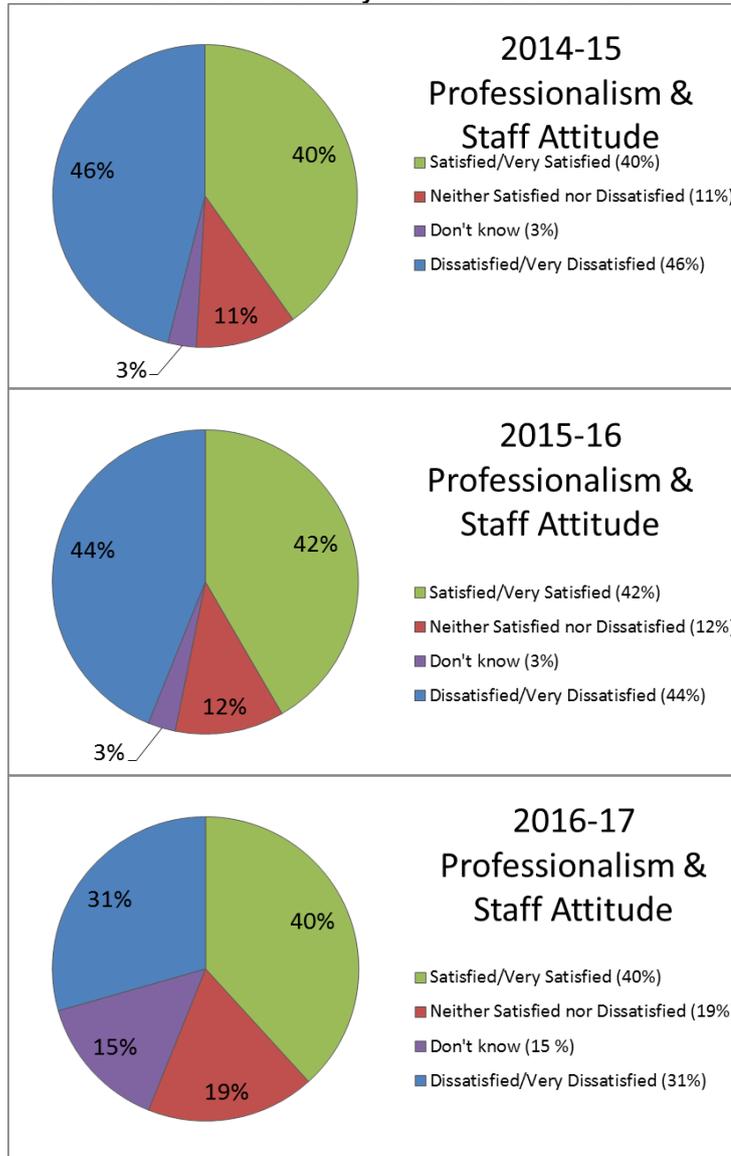
The survey results show several issues related to the information provided to customers (See Figure 18). 38% were positive about the ease of following the Complaint Handling Procedures this year, which compares with the proportion that responded positively in 2014-15 (41%) and represents an improvement over the 26% who responded this way in 2015-16.

There has been an improvement in the numbers of customers who are content that the communication methods met their needs this year. 34% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied in 2016-17 compared to 43% in 2015-16 and 41% in 2014-15. Staff stating that they have no knowledge of the complaints process, not providing a final update, no reply being received other than an automated email are poor communication issues that are avoidable. The Complaints Officer has done training with high volume or complex complaints services such as Direct Services, Education and Social Work to highlight and improve upon these issues.

There was a slight improvement in the proportion of respondents who were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” on how to make a complaint, 33% in 2016-17, 30% in 2015-16 and 32% in 2014-15.

4.7.4 Professionalism and Staff Attitude

Figure 19: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Professionalism & Staff Attitude (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)



A similar proportion of customers were positive about the professionalism and attitude of the staff (40%) compared to 42% in 2015-16. Encouragingly, fewer customers (31%) indicated that a member of staff did not seem to take responsibility for their complaint compared to 44% in 2015-16 and 47% in 2014-15. Favourable comments received to support this were; ‘I was very pleasantly surprised that a staff member came to my home to resolve it on the spot, very good, thank you’; ‘staff were perfect and polite’; ‘dealt with in an efficient and pleasant manner’. This helpful and encouraging feedback allows us to demonstrate that our staff members are taking ownership and responsibility to resolve complaint issues.

Client feedback on how well staff handling complaints was marginally lower than last year (39% in 2015-16) with 37% reporting they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’. In 2014-15 this figure was also 40%.

4.8 Indicator 8 – Lessons learned: a statement outlining changes or improvements to services or procedures as a result of the consideration of complaints.

The council has a clear commitment to listen to our customers and act on their feedback. Learning from complaints is a continuous process that helps the council to resolve common issues and further improve the services that are provided. The council is continually working on learning from complaints and implementing changes to working practices as a direct result of investigating complaints.

The council records some service improvements within the Complaints Management System; however other service improvements, such as those associated to Education, are also recorded on a separate system. On 1 April 2017, we moved to a new complaints handling system. This will allow all departments, including Education, to record complaints on one system for more consistent recording and reporting purposes. This should be reflected in the 2017-18 report.

4.8.1. Indicator 8 - Learning Outcomes

Managers review complaints that are upheld or partially upheld to determine if change or improvement would prevent re-occurrence. When a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, the remedies offered will generally fall into one or more of the following four categories:

- **Redress** – Putting things right where they have gone wrong, admitting where mistakes have been made.
- **Reimbursement** – Covering vouched actual costs incurred as a direct result of mistakes made by the council.
- **Reinforcement** – Recognising that a correct council policy/procedure has not been followed or we have fallen short of what could be expected. Training and instructing staff to prevent re-occurrence.
- **Revision** – Reviewing current practice to amend and improve working practices.

The following is a summary of some of the service improvements arising from complaints that were upheld or partially upheld in 2016-17:

Table 4: Actions taken in response to complaints upheld (2016-17)

Department	You said...	We listened and took on the following upheld complaints...
Chief Executive's Office	Via our Facebook social media site, we provided you with excessive information regarding the cost of and reasons for a traffic flow survey, didn't sign post you to the specific information you required and ceased communication with you.	We apologised for our poor service delivery and briefed relevant staff to ensure that they provide concise and relevant information or sign post customers to where information can be found.
Financial Services	Contractor staff damaged your bed and wallpaper whilst fitting a carpet.	We visited you, viewed the damage, met with the contracted company, secured compensation for you and gained an assurance that they would introduce a protocol to photograph properties before and after work completions.
Legal and Democratic Services	Having resolved your Housing Benefit complaint, you sought further information on this from Contact Centre staff. You did	We listened to your recorded conversation, apologised for the manner in which you were spoken to. The staff member was given on the

Department	You said...	We listened and took on the following upheld complaints...
	not like the way you were spoken too or that you weren't allowed to get your point of view across.	job training to allow her to present as more composed when explaining policy and procedure.
Development Services	We made errors during your planning application and local review body process.	We apologised for the errors, accepted your remedies, awarded compensation, reviewed our process and briefed relevant staff to prevent re-occurrence.
Direct Services	You were not notified that the bin lorry had mechanical problems resulting in non-collection of recycling bins.	We apologised, arranged an additional collection and reminded staff to provide earlier indication of vehicle faults to allow the public to be notified via social media and through our contact centre.
Housing and Property	You were unhappy about the attitude of a member of staff and the insensitive nature of letters sent to your mother following the death of your father.	We apologised and reminded staff of the correct procedures to follow.
Community Care	A staff member breached the care standards required for your son who has autism and you weren't provided with enough support.	We apologised and dealt with the staff member in question by review and through professional supervision. The complaint and the background were discussed during a managers' group meeting with the focus on sharing the learning from this experience.
Integrated Children's Services	You and other residents were unhappy with the anti-social behaviour coming from a Children's Residential care home	Our ICS, responsible for the management of the premises, apologised, met with residents and staff and devised a behaviour improvement plan
Schools and Curriculum Development	Photos of your child were uploaded onto the school's social media page when the consent form had specifically stated that no photos were to be included on social media.	School Management spoke to you, apologised for the error and reassured you that the photos had been taken down from their social media page. A new school procedure was put in place to prevent this happening in the future.

5. Impact of Digital Survey

To ensure that we are getting feedback from as many channels as possible, we have changed the method for collecting customers' views. For example, all of the responses to the 2014-15 Customer Satisfaction Survey were received by post and there was only a 20% response rate to the survey. To increase the rate of response digital options have been implemented. During 2015-16 a mixture of e-mails and paper copy surveys were sent out to complainants. E-mails received a 53% response rate and 20% of paper surveys were returned. The same approach has been used in 2016-17, but the response rate for e-mailed surveys was down to 18%, while paper survey response rates remained at 23%. This contradicts what we previously thought that the digital method was the best method to capture customer views and we will continue to use both.

6. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman/Benchmarking

In 2017-18, the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network prioritised benchmarking across all 32 councils. Results from the benchmarking will be included in our 2017-18 Complaints Annual Report. Nationally, all councils submitted 2016-17 data to the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network. The quarterly meetings are held in Glasgow or Edinburgh and Complaints Standard Authority staff attend to update on current SPSO complaint issues. The Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network have identified that there is a huge disparity in how complaint information is being recorded by respective councils. A sub group of Local Authority and Complaints Standard Authority staff will try and identify ways of providing greater consistency in recording to allow meaningful benchmarking to take place.

Now that the model Complaint Handling Procedure has bedded in, we can benchmark our performance comparing our results from this year (2016-17) against the two previous years (2015-16 and 2014-15). We limited our benchmarking to the national performance indicator statistics and drawn on information contained within service figure breakdowns in the attached appendix.

7. Summary

The council is committed to customer service and values feedback from our service users. Customer views and experiences are important to us as they help us to understand what we do well and identify where we need to improve. We want our customers to feel that their feedback is valued, that we will listen and take action on lessons learned in order to improve service provision. Use of digital technology will complement written survey requests providing additional opportunity to receive public feedback.

Utilising the Complaint Handling Procedure and adhering to the robust performance management framework will help us to learn from complaints, improve services and increase customer confidence in our service provision. Our complaint numbers are slightly down this year and statistics for the coming years will reveal if what we are learning from complaints is having a positive impact in reducing complaints about our service provision. Our aim is for our Complaints Officer to highlight to services through training, where we suspect under recording is taking place with a view to increasing complaints recording.

As a result of the feedback gained initially from the model CHP, areas of effective complaints handling have been revealed and areas where improvements have been highlighted will be the focus of the new Complaint Standard Authority learning and improvement framework guidance document. The importance of dealing with complaints quickly, keeping complainants informed and advising complainants what to do if they remain dissatisfied continues to be emphasised to staff through training, guidance on the intranet, reminder messaging, and presentations. The complaints section in the Moray Council website provides the public with policies, reports and general information on how a complaint can be reported and dealt with.

The results of the complaints survey were similar to previous years; however satisfaction with the complaints handling process as a whole appears to be influenced by how satisfied the customer was with the outcome of their complaint. We used the easy-to-use online option and sent paper copies, however, this produced a similar low number of survey responses meaning we were restricted in assessing the effectiveness of it as a learning tool. We will continue to use both online and hard copy methods for our survey.

Welcoming, recording, managing and resolving complaints in an effective manner will increase public confidence in our application of the Complaint Handling Procedure and afford us opportunity to learn and improve our service provision.

Awareness of improvement issues has been raised through the Complaints Administration Group, quarterly reporting to senior management and complaint training to services involved in complaint handling.

APPENDIX

Please note that due to rounding, some totals may add up to slightly more or less than 100%.

Table A: Indicator 2 – Complaints closed at stage one and stage two as a percentage of all complaints closed.

Indicator 2 by service	2015-16				2016-17			
	Stage 1 – Front line resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Total	Stage 1 – Front line resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Total
All Council	242 52%	215 46%	11 2%	468	274 72%	103 27%	6 2%	383
Chief Executive's Office	2 40%	3 60%	0 0%	5	0 0%	2 100%	0 0%	2
Chief Executive's Section	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	1	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0
Corporate Policy Unit	2 50%	2 50%	0 0%	4	0 0%	2 100%	0 0%	2
Community Planning & Development	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0
Corporate Services	36 84%	6 14%	1 2%	43	16 84%	2 11%	1 5%	19
Financial Services	29 91%	2 6%	1 3%	32	4 67%	2 33%	0 0%	6
Human Resources and ICT	0 n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	0	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1
Legal and Democratic Services	7 64%	4 36%	0 0%	11	11 92%	0 0%	1 8%	12
Environmental Services	193 61%	116 36%	9 3%	318	248 82%	50 17%	5 2%	303
Development Services	12 31%	26 67%	1 3%	39	12 55%	10 45%	0 0%	22
Direct Services	107 90%	4 3%	8 7%	119	158 97%	0 0%	5 3%	163
Housing and Property	74 46%	86 54%	0 0%	160	78 66%	40 34%	0 0%	118
Education and Social Care	11 11%	90 88%	1 1%	102	10 17%	49 83%	0 0%	59
Community Care	1 4%	26 96%	0 0%	27	0 0%	10 100%	0 0%	10
Integrated Children's Services	0 0%	38 97%	1 3%	39	0 0%	17 100%	0 0%	17
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	8 62%	5 38%	0 0%	13	5 83%	1 17%	0 0%	6
Schools and Curriculum Development	2 9%	21 91%	0 0%	23	5 19%	21 81%	0 0%	26

Table B: Indicator 3 by service – The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at stage 1

Indicator 3 by service – Stage 1	2015-16				2016-17			
	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total
All council	82 34%	29 12%	131 54%	242	110 40%	21 8%	143 52%	274
Chief Executive's Office	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Chief Executive's Section	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Corporate Policy Unit	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Community Planning & Development	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Corporate Services	10 28%	9 25%	17 47%	36	7 44%	2 13%	7 44%	16
Financial Services	7 24%	7 24%	15 52%	29	0 0%	0 0%	4 100%	4
Human Resources and ICT	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1
Legal and Democratic Services	3 43%	2 29%	2 29%	7	6 55%	2 18%	3 27%	11
Environmental Services	70 36%	17 9%	106 55%	193	99 40%	19 8%	130 52%	248
Development Services	1 8%	3 25%	8 67%	12	0 0%	1 8%	11 92%	12
Direct Services	28 26%	11 10%	68 64%	107	59 37%	13 8%	86 54%	158
Housing and Property	41 55%	3 4%	30 41%	74	40 51%	5 6%	33 42%	78
Education and Social Care	1 9%	3 27%	7 64%	11	4 40%	0 0%	6 60%	10
Community Care	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	1	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Integrated Children's Services	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	0 0%	1 13%	7 88%	8	2 40%	0 0%	3 60%	5
Schools and Curriculum Development	1 50%	1 50%	0 0%	2	2 40%	0 0%	3 60%	5

Figure 20: Stage 1 – % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld, and Not Upheld (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)

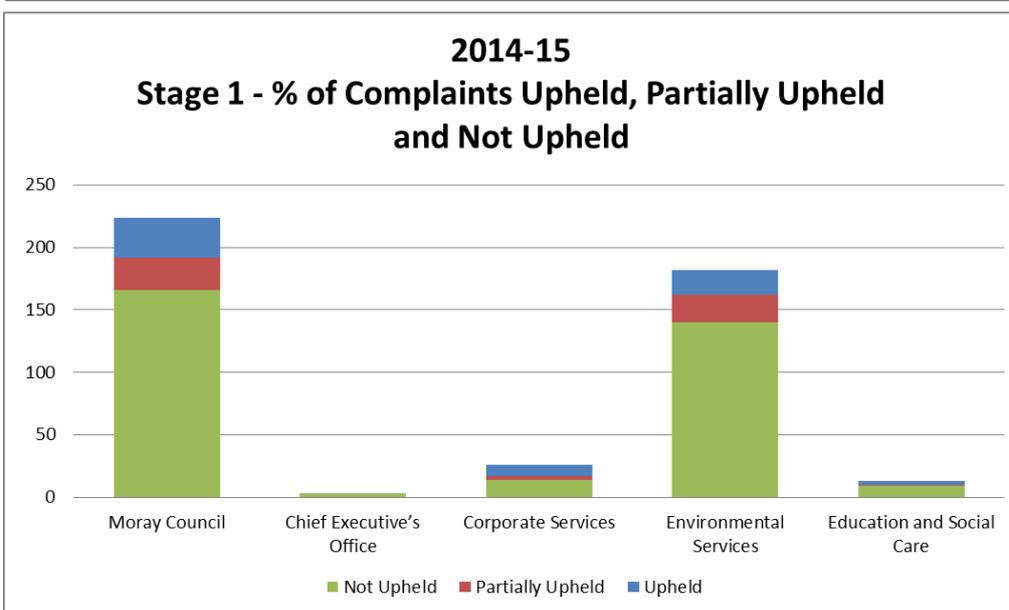
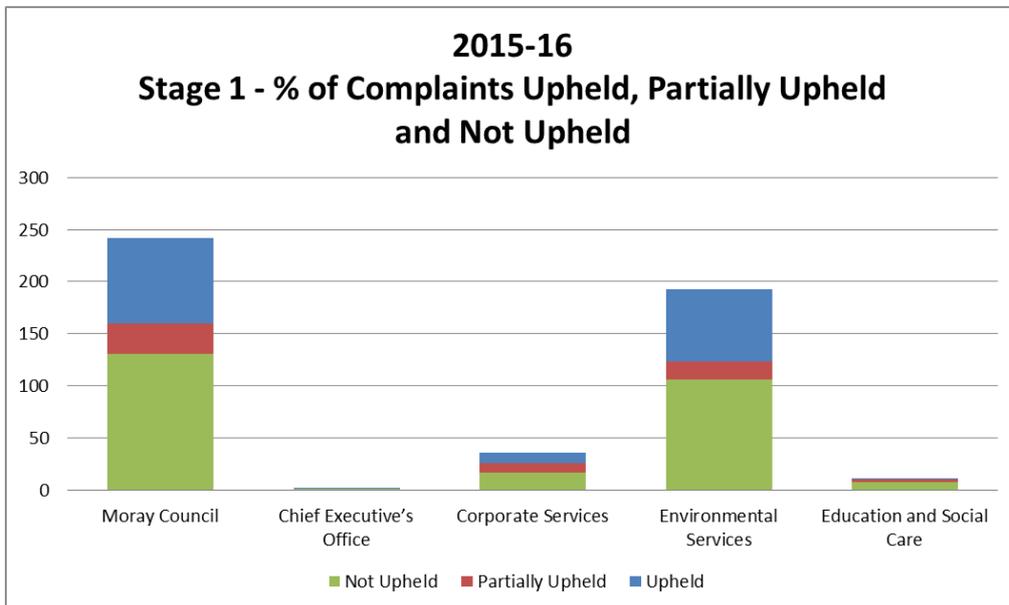
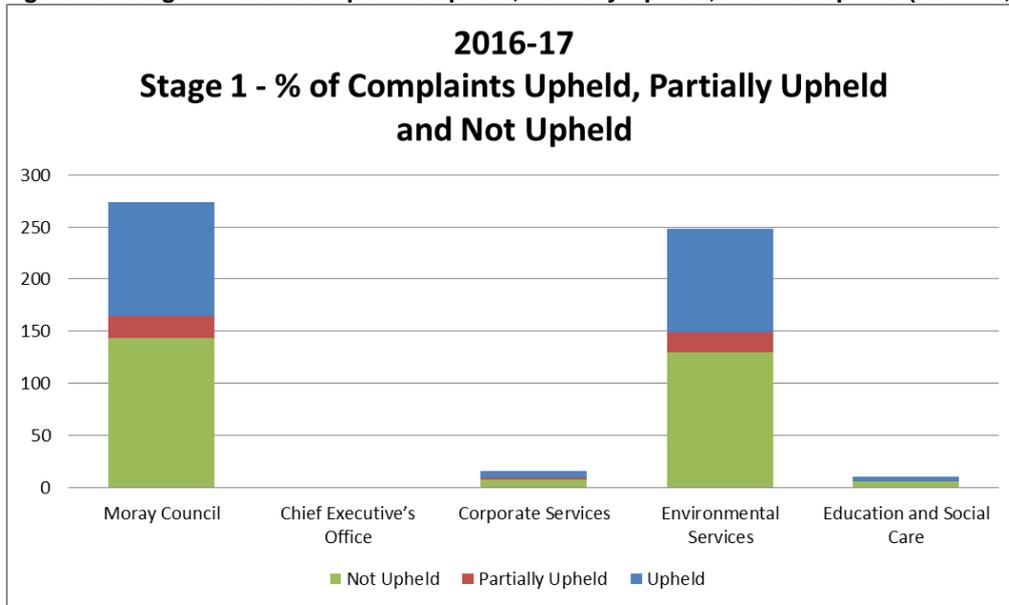


Table C: Indicator 3 by service – The number of complaints upheld/partially upheld/not upheld at each stage as a percentage of complaints closed in full at stage 2 (including escalated complaints.)

Indicator 3 by service – Stage 2 (including escalated)	2015-16				2016-17			
	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Total
All council	41 18%	50 22%	135 60%	226	28 26%	19 17%	62 57%	109
Chief Executive's Office	1 33%	1 33%	1 33%	3	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2
Chief Executive's Section	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	1	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Corporate Policy Unit	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2
Community Planning & Development	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Corporate Services	3 43%	3 43%	1 14%	7	2 67%	0 0%	1 33%	3
Financial Services	2 67%	1 33%	0 0%	3	1 50%	0 0%	1 50%	2
Human Resources and ICT	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0
Legal and Democratic Services	1 25%	2 50%	1 25%	4	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1
Environmental Services	16 13%	13 10%	96 77%	125	14 25%	6 11%	35 64%	55
Development Services	1 4%	3 11%	23 85%	27	2 20%	1 10%	7 70%	10
Direct Services	1 8%	0 0%	11 92%	12	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%	5
Housing and Property	14 16%	10 12%	62 72%	86	12 30%	5 13%	23 58%	40
Education and Social Care	21 23%	33 36%	37 41%	91	11 22%	13 27%	25 51%	49
Community Care	5 19%	10 38%	11 42%	26	2 20%	2 20%	6 60%	10
Integrated Children's Services	11 28%	10 26%	18 46%	39	7 41%	3 18%	7 41%	17
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	3 60%	1 20%	1 20%	5	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1
Schools and Curriculum Development	2 10%	12 57%	7 33%	21	1 5%	8 38%	12 57%	21

Figure 21: Stage 2 – % of Complaints Upheld, Partially Upheld, and Not Upheld (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)

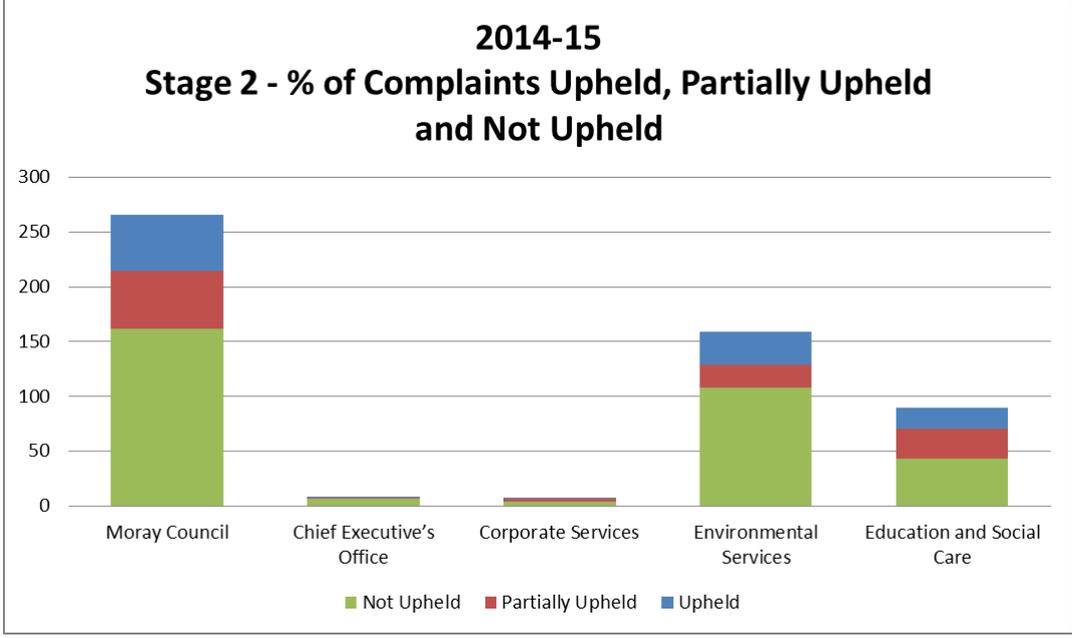
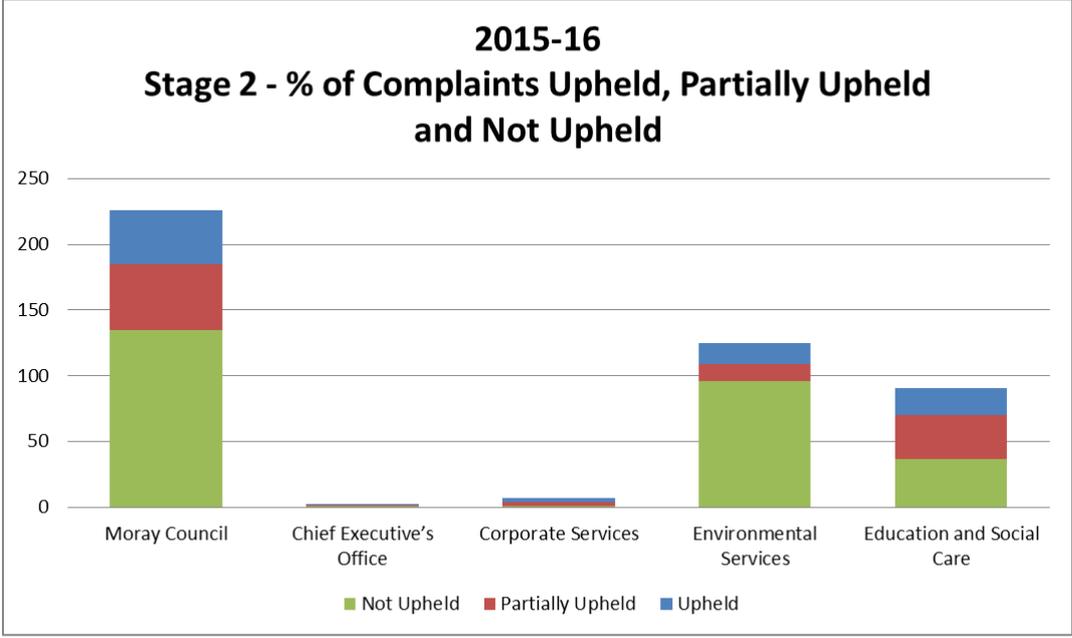
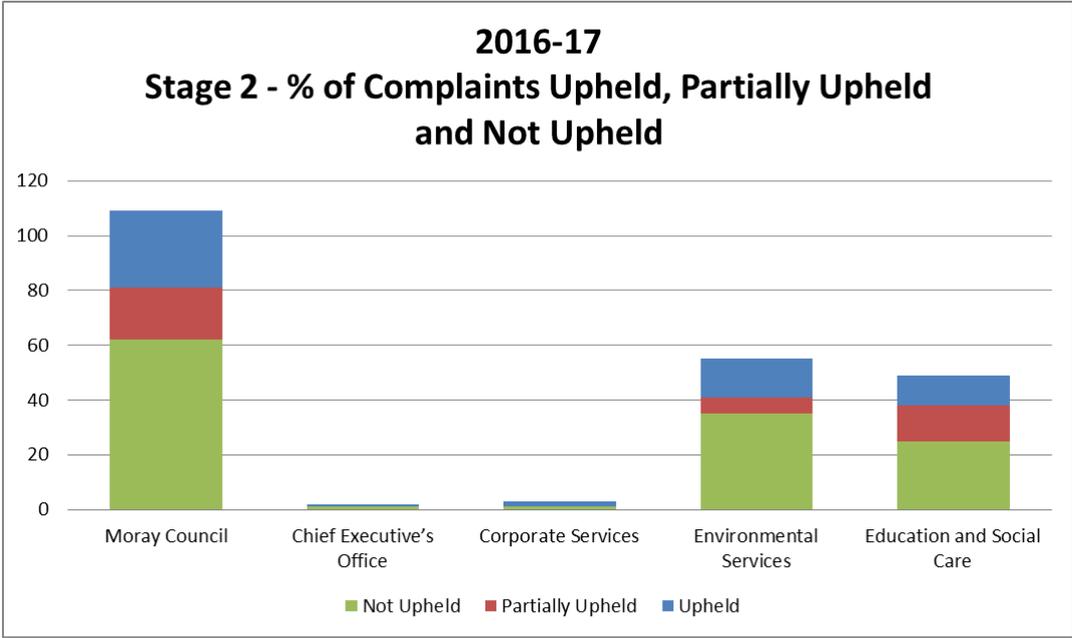


Table D: Indicator 4 by service – The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage.

Indicator 4 by service	2015-16			2016-17		
	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation
Target timescales (number of working days)	5	20	20	5	20	20
All council	3.5	21.0	22.9	3.6	20.9	13.2
Chief Executive’s Office	1.5	24.7	n/a	n/a	17.5	n/a
Chief Executive’s Section	n/a	11	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Corporate Policy Unit	1.5	31.5	n/a	n/a	17.5	n/a
Community Planning & Development	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Corporate Services	3.4	19.2	28.0	3.3	21.0	1.0
Financial Services	3.4	18.5	28.0	2.8	21.0	n/a
Legal and Democratic Services	3.4	19.5	n/a	3.3	n/a	1.0
Environmental Services	3.4	20.5	16.4	3.4	17.1	15.6
Development Services	4.9	16.6	13.0	3.4	16.5	n/a
Direct Services	3.2	34.3	16.9	3.3	n/a	15.6
Housing and Property	3.5	21.0	N/A	3.7	17.3	n/a
Education and Social Care	4.9	21.8	76.0	7.6	24.8	n/a
Community Care	3.0	18.9	N/A	n/a	26.5	n/a
Integrated Children’s Services	n/a	27.4	76.0	n/a	23.8	n/a
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	4.5	15.2	n/a	7.4	9.0	n/a
Schools and Curriculum Development	7.5	16.6	n/a	7.8	25.5	n/a

Figure 22: Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)

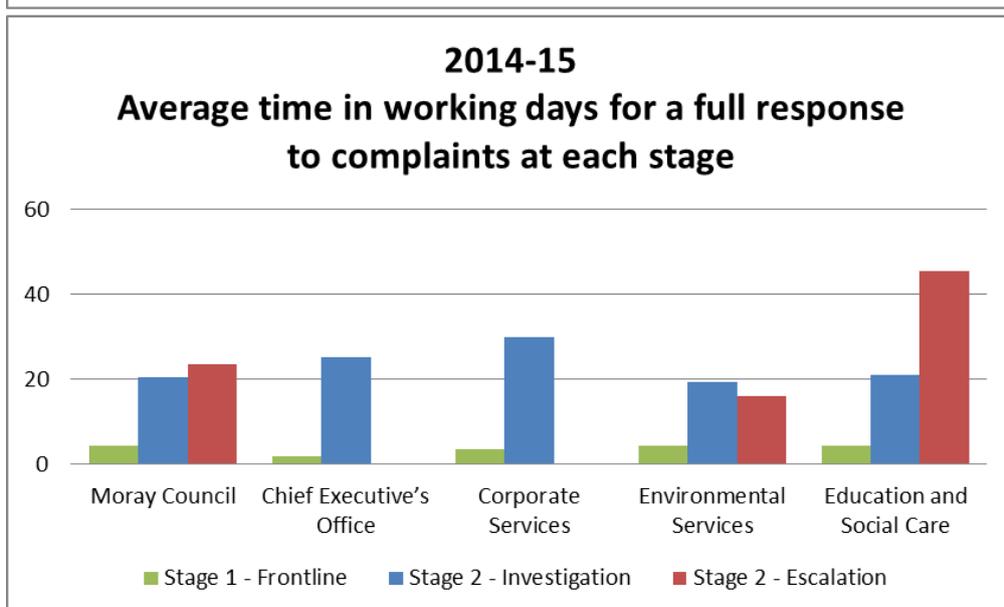
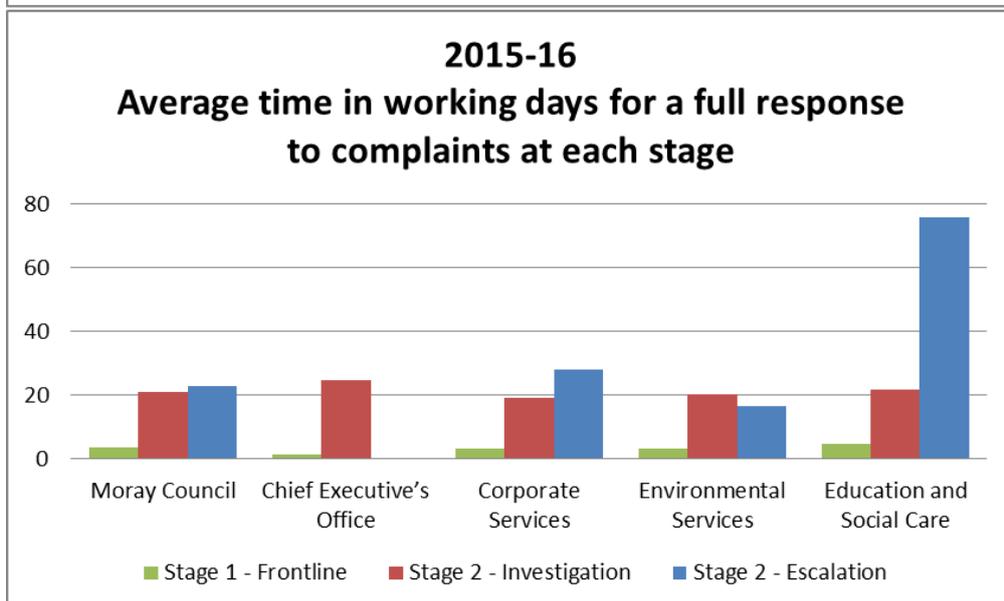
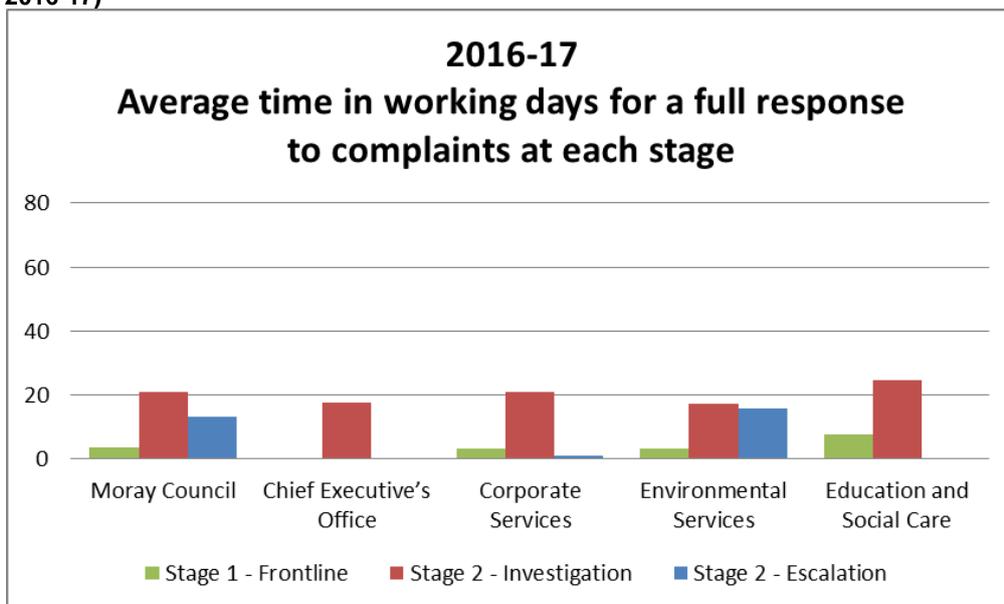


Table E: Average Time in working days to respond to complaints at each stage

Average Time in working days to respond to complaints at each stage	2015-16			2016-17		
	No. of complaints	Total time (workdays)	Average time (workdays)	No. of complaints	Total time (workdays)	Average time (workdays)
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one	242	842	3.5	274	977	3.6
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two	215	4523	21.0	103	2148	20.9
Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	11	252	22.9	6	79	13.2

Table F: Indicator 5 by service – The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days.

Indicator 5 by service (Refer to Table A for Totals)	2015-16			2016-17		
	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation	Stage 1 – Front line Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 2 – Escalated Investigation
Target timescales (number of working days)	5	20	20	5	20	20
All Council	224 93%	64 30%	7 64%	256 93%	64 62%	5 83%
Chief Executive's Office	2 100%	2 67%	- n/a	0 n/a	2 100%	- n/a
Chief Executive's Section	- n/a	0 0%	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Corporate Policy Unit	2 100%	2 100%	- n/a	0 n/a	2 100%	- n/a
Community Planning & Development	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Corporate Services	35 97%	1 17%	0 0%	16 100%	1 50%	1 100%
Financial Services	29 100%	1 50%	0 0%	4 100%	1 50%	- n/a
Legal and Democratic Services	6 86%	0 0%	- n/a	11 100%	- n/a	1 100%
Environmental Services	180 93%	43 37%	7 78%	234 94%	43 86%	4 80%
Development Services	10 83%	9 35%	1 100%	10 83%	9 90%	- n/a
Direct Services	99 93%	0 0%	6 75%	150 95%	- n/a	4 80%
Housing and Property	71 96%	34 40%	- n/a	74 95%	34 85%	- n/a
Education and Social Care	7 64%	18 20%	0 0%	6 60%	18 37%	- n/a
Community Care	1 100%	2 8%	- n/a	0 n/a	2 20%	- n/a
Integrated Children's Services	- n/a	6 16%	0 0%	0 n/a	6 35%	- n/a
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	5 63%	1 20%	- n/a	2 40%	1 100%	- n/a
Schools and Curriculum Development	1 50%	9 43%	- n/a	4 80%	9 43%	- n/a

Table G: Overdue complaints with formal extensions or holding letters issued

Overdue complaints that have holding letters issued, or been granted a formal extension – by service (Refer to Table A for totals)	2015-16			2016-17		
	Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution	Stage 2 - Investigation	Stage 2 - Escalated Investigation	Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution	Stage 2 - Investigation	Stage 2 - Escalated Investigation
Total number of complaints investigated	242	215	11	274	103	6
Total number of late responses	18	59	4	43	36	1
All Council	1 6%	11 19%	2 50%	7 16%	8 22%	2 100%
Chief Executive’s Office	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a
Chief Executive’s Section	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Corporate Policy Unit	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a
Community, Planning & Development	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a	- n/a
Corporate Services	1 33%	0 0%	0 0%	1 25%	0 0%	- n/a
Financial Services	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a
Legal and Democratic Services	1 100%	0 0%	- n/a	1 100%	- n/a	- n/a
Environmental Services	0 0%	3 6.5%	1 50%	6 17%	2 33%	2 100%
Development Services	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a	2 100%	1 100%	- n/a
Direct Services	0 0%	0 0%	1 50%	4 14%	- n/a	2 100%
Housing and Property	0 0%	3 7.3%	- n/a	0 0%	1 20%	- n/a
Education and Social Care	0 0%	8 25%	1 100%	0 0%	6 25%	- n/a
Community Care	0 0%	1 17%	- n/a	- n/a	3 75%	- n/a
Integrated Children’s Services	- n/a	7 30%	1 100%	- n/a	1 11%	- n/a
Lifelong Learning, Culture and Sport	0 0%	- n/a	- n/a	0 0%	- n/a	- n/a
Schools and Curriculum Development	0 0%	0 0%	- n/a	0 0%	2 20%	- n/a

Note: N/A indicates that a service had no overdue complaints at that particular stage

Table H (i): Customer Satisfaction Feedback Survey (2015-16)

Service Delivery Questions	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
How satisfied or dissatisfied were you that The Moray Council handled your complaint in line with the council's Complaint Handling Procedure?	5 9%	12 22%	5 9%	4 7%	24 44%
How satisfied were you with the way this problem was handled?	3 6%	7 14%	3 6%	11 22%	27 53%
Being able to deal directly with someone who could help you?	6 9%	14 21%	13 20%	15 23%	16 24%
In the response to your complaint (i.e. clear, concise, accurate)?	8 11%	15 21%	8 11%	10 14%	26 37%
The response to your complaint covered all the aspects you raised?	9 13%	12 17%	9 13%	10 14%	27 38%
The final response to your complaint?	5 7%	15 22%	5 7%	7 10%	30 44%
The overall service that you received in relation to how your complaint was handled?	7 10%	16 23%	5 7%	6 9%	32 46%
Timeliness Questions					
Time taken for someone to contact you about your complaint?	10 14%	15 21%	9 13%	18 25%	19 27%
The time taken to deal with the complaint from start to finish?	9 13%	11 16%	12 17%	8 12%	24 35%
Information Questions					
The Moray Council complaints handling process is easy to follow.	1 2%	9 18%	13 26%	6 12%	12 24%
Complaint was dealt with using communication methods that met your needs (i.e. email, telephone, letter, etc)?	2 4%	11 23%	11 23%	4 9%	16 34%
On how to make a complaint (e.g. our complaints procedure leaflet or the information on our website)?	9 13%	12 17%	12 17%	8 11%	20 28%
Professionalism and Staff Attitude Questions					
Someone took responsibility for dealing with your complaint?	11 15%	21 30%	8 11%	14 20%	16 23%
How well the complaints handling staff did their jobs?	14 21%	12 18%	8 12%	12 18%	19 28%

Table H (ii): Customer Satisfaction Feedback Survey (2016-17)

Service Delivery Questions	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
How satisfied or dissatisfied were you that The Moray Council handled your complaint in line with the council's Complaint Handling Procedure?	7 10%	14 19%	7 10%	8 11%	18 25%
How satisfied were you with the way this problem was handled?	4 5%	10 14%	9 12%	13 18%	17 23%
Being able to deal directly with someone who could help you?	12 16%	19 26%	13 18%	5 7%	17 23%
In the response to your complaint (i.e. clear, concise, accurate)?	6 8%	13 18%	11 15%	9 12%	24 33%
The response to your complaint covered all the aspects you raised?	8 11%	11 15%	8 11%	13 18%	21 29%
The final response to your complaint?	11 15%	11 15%	6 8%	9 12%	18 25%
The overall service that you received in relation to how your complaint was handled?	10 14%	14 19%	12 16%	10 14%	15 21%
Timeliness Questions					
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Time taken for someone to contact you about your complaint?	11 15%	18 25%	9 12%	14 19%	13 18%
The time taken to deal with the complaint from start to finish?	11 15%	11 15%	9 12%	12 16%	13 18%
Information Questions					
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
The Moray Council complaints handling process is easy to follow.	3 4%	12 16%	17 23%	3 4%	7 10%
Complaint was dealt with using communication methods that met your needs (i.e. email, telephone, letter, etc)?	3 4%	21 29%	10 14%	8 11%	8 11%
On how to make a complaint (e.g. our complaints procedure leaflet or the information on our website)?	8 11%	16 22%	17 23%	5 7%	14 19%
Professionalism and Staff Attitude Questions					
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Someone took responsibility for dealing with your complaint?	12 16%	19 26%	13 18%	5 7%	17 23%
How well the complaints handling staff did their jobs?	11 15%	14 19%	13 18%	6 8%	15 21%

Table I: Percentage of complaints by department (comparison between 2015-16 and 2016-17)

Given the types of service provided by each department, the proportion of complaints dealt with by each department in 2016-17 is broadly similar to 2015-16, although the proportion of complaints responded to by Education and Social Care is half the proportion of the previous year. Environmental Services has the most direct contact with users of council services.

Figure 23: Percentage of complaints by department (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17)

