



Leicestershire
County Council

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – SEPTEMBER 2025

CORPORATE COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS
ANNUAL REPORT 2024 – 2025

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present for the Commission's consideration the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report, covering the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. This is attached as appendix A to this report.

Background

2. The Council manages and coordinates complaints using one of three policies and associated processes, these are:
 - a) Children's Social Care Complaints Policy (statutory)
 - b) Adult Social Care Complaints Policy (statutory)
 - c) Corporate Complaints Procedure (complaints relating to other services provided by the Council where there is no access to a statutory complaint procedure)
3. An annual report is produced for each policy, with complaints managed under the Corporate Complaints Procedure as the primary subject of this report. However, please note the main annual report does include some figures in relation to statutory case volumes for completeness.
4. The annual reports relating to the two statutory processes are considered at their respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees in September of each year.
5. The Council's annual Corporate Complaints and Compliments Report is produced by the Complaints and Information Service and provides an insight on the key trends pertaining to complaints and compliments as well as wider case information.
6. As detail is included in the main annual report itself, the purpose of this summary report is to highlight the headline trends and insight emerging from the analysis of complaints activity during 2024/2025.

Headlines (2023-24 comparative data is in brackets)

Demand/Volume

7. For 2024/25:

- a) 1,287 corporate complaints were received – a 12% decrease (1,470) from 2023/2024.
- b) Children and Family Services and Environment and Transport departments consistently present as the top two departments in terms of volume due to 'SENA' and 'School and SEN Transport' related complaints.
- c) 67 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries were received – a 20% decrease (84) from 2023/2024.

Performance

8. The top five service areas where cases were closed were:

- SENA
- School & SEN Transport
- Child Protection
- Drainage
- Child in Need

Stage 1 response times

- 9. During 2024/2025, the percentage of complaints responded to within 10 and 20 working days decreased from the previous year; however, 93% were responded to within 40 working days (maximum recommended by the ombudsman), which is an improvement from 2023/2024 (90%).
- 10. There remain some pressures particularly around SEN complaints which has impacted overall response timescales.
 - 44% of all complaints received a response within 10 working days.
 - 71% received a response within 20 working days.
 - 93% received a response within the maximum 40 working days.

Escalation to stage 2 and response times

- 11. If a complainant remains dissatisfied following the outcome of stage 1, they may request further consideration of their complaint. Such requests will be considered under stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure.
- 12. In 2024/2025 75 complaints escalated to stage 2, this escalation profile has, positively, had a decreasing trajectory since 2022/2023. This means less complainants have requested a stage 2 review year on year.

13. 51% of all stage 2 complaints received a response within 20 working days. This has decreased from 2023/24 (61%).

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

Enquiries

14. The LGSCO received 122 enquiries in 2024/2025 compared to 104 in 2023/2024 (17% increase).

Decisions Upheld

15. 40 (33%) of the 122 were investigated, with 33 of the 40 upheld, giving an uphold rate of 83%. The average uphold rate for similar authorities, as reported by the LGSCO, is 89% for 2024/2025. Adjusted for Leicestershire County Council's population, this is 4.5 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents. The average for authorities of this type is 5.3 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents, demonstrating above average performance.
16. For comparison, the 2023/2024 dataset, showed 83% of complaints were upheld, with an average of 85% in similar authorities, giving 4 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents, with an average of 4.5.

Upheld Cases

17. Most upheld cases related to SENA (15) and financial assessment (10) for care and support.
18. It is worth noting that in the LGSCO's Annual Review of Local Government Complaints 2024-25 report it said, 'Education & Children's complaints, and in particular the growing issues with special educational needs provision, made up 27% of the cases we received during the year, and made up 48% of cases we upheld. We found fault in more cases this year, with 91% upheld. We continue to maintain the view that urgent change is required to national policy on support for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and we await the Government white paper, now expected in Autumn 2025.'
19. In respect of adult social care, it said, '13% of the cases we received were about adult social care. Our casework tells us that delays in the assessment process and poor communication with individuals and families continue to be key themes.'

Remedy Payments

20. The Council continues to have regard to the LGSCO's guidance on remedies, and this has prevented several complaints escalating through appropriate local settlement offers.
21. Financial payments made across Corporate Complaints decreased by 22% from £27,222 in 2023/2024 to £21,113 to 2024/2025. Whilst this is positive, it

should be cautioned that this figure does not include redress offered by the Council at the local stages of its procedure.

Public Reports and Compliance

22. The LGSCO monitors remedies being carried out by the Council where fault has been found and remedial actions proposed. Failure to carry out remedies within agreed timeframes is recorded as non-compliance.
23. Cases that raise serious issues, highlight matters of public interest or cases of non-compliance can lead to the LGSCO issuing a Public Report.
24. The LGSCO did not issue any public reports against the Council during 2024/2025, and the Council complied with all recommendations.

Compliments

25. There was a 7% decrease in the volume of compliments recorded during the year with 393 (down from 422 in 2023-24) across all services; with Libraries, Heritage and Museums receiving 57% of the total volume.

Recommendations

26. The Commission is asked to:
 - (i) note the contents of the Corporate Complaints Annual Report, attached as Appendix A, covering the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
 - (ii) provide comment and feedback on the content and analysis within the report.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

None

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Background Papers

Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2023 – 2024: Scrutiny Commission – 10 June 2024

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=7444&Ver=4>

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List of Appendices

Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2024 – 25

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