

Notice of a public meeting of

Decision Session - Combined Executive Member Decision Session

To: Councillors Pavlovic and Lomas

Date: Tuesday, 2 December 2025

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: West Offices - Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

AGENDA

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00pm on Tuesday, 9 December 2025 (5 working days after meeting)**.

*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any items that are called in will be considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5:00pm on Friday, 28 November 2025 (2 working days before meeting)**.

1. Appointing a Chair

To confirm arrangements for chairing the meeting as follows:

Councillor M Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Safer Communities – Agenda items 1-7.

Councillor K Lomas, Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion – Agenda item 8 and Urgent Business.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive and note apologies for absence.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members and co-opted members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

(1) Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:

Type of Interest	You Must
<i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i>	<i>Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i> OR <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; speak on the item only if the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Affects)</i> OR <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote unless the matter affects the financial interest or well-being: (a) to a greater extent than it</i>

	<p><i>affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and</i></p> <p><i>(b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item only if the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting unless you have a dispensation.</i></p>
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(2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.

(3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

4. Minutes (Pages 7 - 10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Combined Executive Member Decision Session held on Tuesday, 4 November 2025.

5. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee. Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Friday, 28 November 2025.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill in an online

registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

6. City of York Council Annual complaints (Pages 11 - 88) performance and service improvement report April 2024 to March 2025

This covering report presents the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report April 2024 to March 2025 (ACP&SI).

7. Historic Windows Planning Design and (Pages 89 - 100) Conservation Advice Note

This report aims to enable the council to publish guidance on caring for historic windows and considering changes.

8. Advertising/Bus Shelter Contract Update (Pages 101 - 112)

The Council has had a concession contract in place for a concessionaire to provide and maintain bus shelters with either no advertising, paper adverts or Free-Standing Units (FSUs) since 15 July 1999. This contract ended on 31 December 2024.

This report seeks approval to enter a new Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the incumbent supplier for a further 10-months, commencing on 1 January 2026 and expiring on 31 October 2026, to ensure ongoing maintenance of Bus Shelters and a smooth removal and installation of new shelters. This will minimise the impact on residents.

9. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer: Ben Jewitt
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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

Alternative formats

If you require this document in an alternative language or format (e.g. large print, braille, Audio, BSL or Easy Read) you can:



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我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (ہولی) میں بھی میا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Decision Session - Combined Executive Member Decision Session
Date	4 November 2025
Present	Councillors Douglas and Kent
In Attendance	Claire Foale - Chief Strategy Officer Tania Weston – Regeneration Project Manager Shaun Gibbons – Head of Carbon Reduction

38. Appointing a Chair (10:00)

Resolved: That Councillor Douglas would chair the meeting for items 1-6 and Councillor Kent for items 7-9.

39. Apologies for Absence (10:01)

There were no apologies for absence received.

40. Declarations of Interest (10:01)

The Executive Member were invited to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests, or any disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

41. Minutes (10:02)

Resolved: That the minutes Combined Executive Member Decision Session on 2 September 2025 be approved as a correct record.

42. Public Participation (10:02)

It was noted that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

43. Heritage Estate Programme (10:03)

Officers introduced the report that sought the approval to develop a 10-year Heritage Strategic Delivery Plan and the appointment of a Heritage Champion for the city. It was noted that the strategy would assist in maintaining heritage assets and collections which could require significant maintenance to maintain. The strategy would seek to attract investment for York's heritage assets, create future job opportunities, maintain York's heritage for residents and visitors, as well as grow York's international recognition.

The Executive Leader welcomed the report noting that it would be a strategy to take care of the city's heritage assets. She welcomed the opportunity to set the scene for additional investment to be brought in and assist York to be a modern city with well-managed important heritage assets. She also confirmed that the Executive had agreed to appoint Cllr Kilbane the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy & Culture as the cities Heritage Champion to work with the Council and partners to promote the cities heritage assets.

Resolved:

- i. Approved the establishing of the Heritage programme which will be focused on making the most from and for York's heritage assets.
- ii. Confirmed that Cllr Kilbane the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy & Culture was appointed by the Executive as the Heritage Champion for the Council.

Reason: By harnessing the opportunities from York's heritage assets, the benefit will stretch far beyond York's boundaries as new conservation, sustainability and community engagement practices are shared nationally and celebrated globally.

Initiating the programme now is to enable the council to put in place the partnership and governance arrangements that would ensure a city response based on shared and approved priorities – providing Executive with greater oversight.

This programme would act as the governance arrangements for all subsequent heritage-related projects which involve the council, including those led by partners such as the York Museum Trust or World Heritage Steering Group.

44. Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2024/25 (10:14)

The Head of Carbon Reduction introduced the report which provided the Corporate Emissions data for 2024-25. He noted that additional data capturing had resulted in a small increase in emissions but noted that overall use of fossil fuels were down. He confirmed that the Council's largest source of emissions continued to be gas heating. He also highlighted work undertaken in 2024-25 which included the continued roll out of heat pumps and fleet electrification which, was expected to be at 90% for vehicles under 3.5 tons in 2026.

The Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency welcomed the report and highlighted the dual benefits that had been achieved in both reducing emissions and reducing costs, such as, the roll out of ELD street lighting that was saving £365,000 per year. She also highlighted the roll out of heat pumps at Council properties like Alex Lyon House had reduced Council tenants' energy bills.

The Executive Member enquired about the Council's work on Scope 3 emissions. The Head of Carbon Reduction confirmed that monitoring Scope 3 could be challenging but that the Council was working on ways to monitor and reduce scope 3 emissions, such as, working with the Council's procurement team with the aim for the new Social Value policy to put an emphasis on carbon emissions.

Resolved:

- i. Approved the Annual Emissions Report for publication.

Reason: To monitor progress against the Council's ambition to be net zero by 2030.

45. York Emissions Inventory Report 2025 (10:26)

The Head of Carbon Reduction introduced the report. He confirmed that the Council would expect a slight change in methodology moving from the SCATTER tool, which was been discontinued, to the UK local authority and regional emissions dataset. He confirmed the accuracy of the data would remain the same. He also confirmed that city wide emissions continued to decline and were now below levels in 2020 which had been a low year for emissions in part due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency enquired about the work undertaken with partners around the city to reduce emissions. It was confirmed that the Council had relaunched the York Climate Commission in 2025 which helps bring people together and aims to hold the Council and other partners to their climate targets. It was noted that the Council also engages in events such as green business forums. The last City Leaders Forum also focused on sustainability.

Resolved:

- i. Approved the York Emissions Inventory Report for publication.
- ii. Approved the adoption of the UK local authority and regional emissions dataset as the reporting methodology for future city-wide Emissions Inventories.

Reason: To provide transparency of progress against the ambition for York to be net zero by 2030.

Cllrs Douglas and Kent, Chairs

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.33 am].



Meeting:	Decision Session – Combined Executive Member Decision Session
Meeting date:	02/12/2025
Report of:	Director of Housing and Communities
Portfolio of:	Councillor M Pavlovic

Decision Report: City of York Council Annual complaints performance and service improvement report April 2024 to March 2025

Subject of Report

1. This covering report presents the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report April 2024 to March 2025 (ACP&SI) which is provided in full at Annex 1.

Benefits and Challenges

2. Ensuring the council has clear, consistent, and legally compliant processes for investigating and responding to complaints (corporate, adult social care, and children's social care), comments, compliments, concerns, and Ombudsman cases and can evidence compliance with Ombudsmen complaint handling codes, is essential for transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.
3. The benefits are:
 - Improved public trust and confidence
 - Demonstrates fairness, openness, and responsiveness.
 - Builds confidence that residents' voices are heard and acted upon.
 - Legal and regulatory compliance
 - Reduces risk of non-compliance penalties or reputational damage.
 - Identifies issues early, preventing escalation to costly Ombudsman investigations or legal challenges.

- Reduces time and resources spent on prolonged disputes.
- Service improvement and learning
- Enables evidence-based decision-making and targeted improvements.
- Ensures concerns in adult and children's social care are addressed promptly.
- Positive reputation and community engagement
- Compliments and positive feedback can be used to showcase good practice.
- Strengthens relationships with residents and stakeholders.

4. The challenges are:

- Resource and capacity constraints
- High complaint volumes can strain staff and budgets.
- Requires skilled officers to manage complex cases, especially in social care.
- Risk of inconsistent responses across services
- Requires robust training and monitoring to maintain standards.
- Managing expectations
- Residents may expect immediate resolution or outcomes beyond council powers.
- Balancing transparency with confidentiality in sensitive cases.
- Complexity of social care complaints
- Reputational risk
- High-profile Ombudsman findings can attract media attention.
- Poor handling of complaints can erode trust and lead to scrutiny

Policy Basis for Decision

5. The Council, as a social housing landlord, owns and manages housing stock and delivers landlord services. In this capacity, the Council is the governing body with direct accountability for complaint handling performance and compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Service's (HOS) statutory complaint handling code.
6. The code requires landlords to:
- embed a positive complaint handling culture
 - undertake annual self-assessments
 - publish compliance reports to demonstrate transparency and learning.

7. To ensure these obligations are met, governance responsibilities rest with the Council's elected members and senior leadership, who are responsible for promoting openness, accountability, and continuous improvement in housing services.
8. This Committee plays a critical role in the Council's governance framework and is receiving the ACP&SI for information, as part of the Council's commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement in complaint handling, in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

Financial Strategy Implications

9. Not applicable for this report.

Recommendation and Reasons

10. To note the performance details contained in this covering report and at Annex 1.
11. To note the outcomes of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) cases and published performance data.

Reason: So that Members and residents are provided with the LGSCO and HOS reports and findings to enable them to scrutinise complaints, comments, compliments and concerns to improve service delivery and ensure transparent, robust decision-making processes.

Background

12. The council produces and publishes an annual complaints performance and service improvement (ACP&SI) report which covers:
 - Complaints relating to adult social care services (including Public Health) and children's social care services, managed under two distinct legislative frameworks.
 - Complaints regarding other council services, handled through the council's corporate complaints and feedback procedures.
 - Cases referred to Ombudsman services, including the LGSCO and HOS.

- Other types of feedback, such as compliments received.
13. The ACP&SI is also presented to the council's Governance Risk and Assurance Group (GRAG), the Corporate Management Team (CMT), and subsequently to the Audit and Governance Committee.
 14. The ACP&SI report has been compiled by the Corporate Governance Team (CGT), now known as the Information Governance Team (IGT). It covers the period prior to the transfer of the complaints, compliments, concerns, and comments functions to the Complaints, Feedback and Compliance Team (CFCT) within Customer Services, which took place in September 2025.
 15. The ACP&SI also confirms that the council has undertaken a self-assessment of its complaint handling processes. This provides assurance that the council's approach is fully compliant with the HOS complaint handling code and reflects best practice in delivering fair, transparent, and effective complaint resolution. Completing the self-assessment demonstrates the council's ongoing commitment to accountability and continuous improvement, ensuring residents receive a high standard of service and that concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.
 16. Following the HOS consideration of the council's self-assessment submitted in September 2025, they required the council to complete four actions. These were completed and the evidence submitted to the HOS in their timescale. This included:
 - a statement would from Councillor Pavlovic as the 'Member Responsible for Complaints' (MRC). This can be found on the council's website [Signed MRC statement for ACP&SI report April to March 2025](#) and attached at Annex 2 for information.
 - updated, resubmitted and published the council's self-assessment which can be found at [Housing Ombudsman Service – complaint handling code – annual submission for year 2 \(2025/2026\)](#)

Consultation Analysis

17. No consultation was undertaken for the ACP&SI at Annex 1. However, feedback from regular performance reports to Audit and

Governance Committee, Corporate Management Team (CMT) and meetings and discussions with managers, informs the annual report.

18. It was also presented to the council's Governance Risk and Assurance Group (GRAG), the Corporate Management Team (CMT), and to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee (CSC) on Monday 10 November 2025.
19. CSC noted the following:
 - the report provides a comprehensive overview of complaints performance, including volumes, response times, outcomes, and learning from complaints.
 - service improvements identified through complaint learning have been implemented, with further actions planned to enhance customer experience.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

20. Members are asked to note the performance details and outcomes at Annex 1. An overview of the full report which was also provided to CSC is set out below

Children's social care complaints overview

21. Whilst the team reports on compliments received about these services in the annual report, we know that many more are received that are either not recorded or passed on to be recorded. However, some examples from section 7 in the annual report are shown below:
 - *Thank you so much. It's a relief talking with you today. You actually listened and that meant a lot to me. Thank you for going above and beyond. We're grateful.*
 - *A big thank you to your beautiful team for all your efforts, hard work, overtime into every child and young person you look after! You guys are such a solid and supportive team.*
 - *Thank you for how professional and easy you was to liaise. I wish all authority's had people like you in them then things would be straight forward and amicable thank you once again.*
 - *thank-you for fighting my corner. I was so scared when social services got involved as I love my children so much and I thought I was going to loose them when actually you've made me a stronger person and helped me more than you will ever know.*

- *professional and easy to liaise with. I wish all authority's had people like this.*
- *grateful for the help and support that we received. The dedication and willingness to listen and assist have made such a positive impact.*
- *I really appreciate all the help and visits you have done for me and my family and also being there at our difficult days which will not be forgotten!*

22. For children's social care complaints, the team conducts an initial assessment of the issues raised. This includes evaluating the severity and complexity of the complaint, potential risks to the individual and others, implications for the council, any history of similar complaints, and the likelihood of recurrence. Based on this assessment, complaints are graded into Stage 1, 2, or 3. Additional factors considered include the desired outcomes, who is best placed to investigate and respond effectively, and the complainant's preferences regarding how the complaint should be handled.
23. During 2024/2025, there was a reduction in the total number of complaints received under the children's social care procedure, falling from 40 in the previous year to 35.
24. It is important to note that the volume of complaints received can vary year to year. This fluctuation is typical of social care complaints across the Yorkshire and Humberside region.
25. Analysis of this decrease suggests several contributing factors. These include proactive measures taken by the council and the service area, such as ongoing staff training and awareness sessions. These initiatives aim to improve understanding of the complaints procedure and ensure that children and young people are aware of their rights and are supported in raising concerns.
26. Feedback from complaints, particularly where recurring themes are identified, provides valuable insight for service improvement. As in previous years, the most common themes relate to lack of action, inappropriate action, and the quality of advice or communication. Work continues with the service area to address and improve these persistent issues. Further details on lessons learned and service improvements are provided in Section 23 of the report at Annex 1.

Adult social care complaints overview

27. Whilst the team reports on compliments received about these services in the annual report, we know that many more are received that are either not recorded or passed on to be recorded. However, some examples from section 24 in the annual report are shown below
- *Staff member has been very kind and helpful, and has gone over and above to help.*
 - *Helped me get my parent moved to a safe, lovely, and caring place in York.*
 - *Grateful for support of parent, they were happier than they had been in years.*
 - *Social worker was really calm and great worked so well with family member, making a stressful situation easier to navigate.*
 - *Kind considerate social worker, who has shown has a high standard of training and knowledge of dementia suffers.*
 - *Worker is the most personable and helpful social worker we have worked with to date and in our opinion an excellent ambassador for your department.*
 - *The care provided has been really good and has eliminate all risks to wellbeing.*
28. For adult social care complaints, the council is required to use the Department of Health's grading tool to assess the seriousness of each complaint and determine the appropriate response. This tool is outlined in Section 26 of the report at Annex 1.
29. In 2024/2025, the number of complaints handled under the statutory adult social care complaints procedure decreased from 44 in the previous year to 35.
30. It is important to note that a reduction in complaint numbers is consistent with the expected year-on-year variation. This does not indicate any barriers to accessing the complaints process, nor does it suggest that customers are unsupported in raising concerns that provide valuable feedback.
31. Complaint feedback, particularly where recurring themes are identified, offers essential insight for service improvement. This year's report highlights that previously implemented service improvements have contributed to a reduction in complaints not being responded to, which was a concern in the previous year. Further details on lessons learned and service improvements are provided in Section 39 of the report at Annex 1.

32. Complaints relating to services delivered under Public Health functions also fall within the scope of the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 and are therefore managed in the same way as adult social care complaints. No complaints were reported to the team for Public Health services during 2024/2025.

Corporate complaints, comments, compliments and concerns overview

33. The corporate 4Cs procedures are used for all complaints about council services where there is no statutory procedure or other legal or appeal process.
34. Whilst the team reports on compliments received about council services in the annual report, we know that many more are received that are either not recorded or passed onto the team to record. However, some examples from Section 41 in the annual report are shown below
- *Thank you for the hard work of the council for getting rewire and damp work done quickly.*
 - *Thanks to everyone involved in putting my house in order went above and beyond making our temporary move as easy as possible for which I am extremely grateful.*
 - *Thank you for helping while I was at James House.*
 - *Help and support from the Refugee Resettlement Team was so appreciated and really helped.*
 - *Thank you for replacing the street sign.*
 - *Very pleased with new LED downlighting street lights on our street. A big improvement.*
 - *Well done on the complete resurfacing of the road outside Morrisons, James street. Good job.*
 - *The traffic warden at Monk Bar is always so helpful and friendly.*
 - *The chaps that cut the grass did a great job.*
 - *Thanks for quick action from the crew to remove fallen tree branch.*
 - *Just a note to say what a great job your men have done on the alley.*
 - *Street/gully cleaning just been completed. Really good job from the team concerned.*
 - *Thanks for the support, empathy and professionalism given to me by the Blue Badge Dept while I was recently completing my renewal application.*

- *The Falls Prevention team was “absolutely fantastic,” and very, very happy with the service provided.*
 - *Thank you to NEO for getting the noise reduced.*
 - *The update restored our faith in the planning process and in local government.*
 - *Thanks to the waste crew for helping clear rubbish strewn everywhere.*
 - *Thanks to crews for stacking boxes after collection.*
 - *Thank you for making the medical collection so easy.*
 - *Thank you to the team who emptied our recycling boxes this morning. They worked hard, were very energetic about their tasks, left no spillage around, and we were impressed.*
 - *Hazel Court staff were brilliant, really helpful and helped sort out which waste needed to go in which skip. They even helped taking items to the correct areas, making sure anything that could be recycled was.*
 - *Parking team unbelievably helpful explaining the appeals process and making sure I had everything I needed to sort this issue out efficiently. I was never kept waiting on the phone more than a few minutes.*
35. The timescales for investigating and responding to corporate complaints during the time period for this annual report were
- Grade One - 20 working days (10 for Housing Complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman guidance)
 - Grade Two - 30 working days (20 for Housing Complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman guidance)
36. In 2024/2025, a total of 1,132 complaints were received, compared with 1,391 in the previous year. This reflects a typical year-on-year fluctuation but is also from service improvements made in waste services where they go back out to collect missed green waste bins and replace lost or damaged during collection bins free of charge without a resident having to make a complaint.
37. It is noted that 11 complaints did not receive a response during this reporting period. While this represents a significant improvement compared to previous years, it is a slight increase on last year's performance. Work continues to ensure every complaint is responded to even though it be out of time.
38. A total of 332 comments were logged during 2024/2025, compared with 642 in the preceding year.

39. It is important to note that higher volumes of complaints received by a particular service area is mostly likely due to their weekly services to every household in York. These services are among the most visible and frequently accessed, which naturally results in a greater number of complaints.
40. Complaints provide senior managers with valuable insight into how services are delivered, enabling targeted improvements. Collaborative work continues across council teams to ensure that learning from complaints leads to meaningful service enhancements, with evidence of completed actions being captured. Further details on lessons learned and service improvements are provided in Section 47 of the report at Annex 1.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) overview

41. The annual review of Local Government Complaints in England for 2024-2025 has been published by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). It pulls together the national picture of trends and common issues that have arisen from their cases over the last year. You can find a copy on their website [Annual Review of Local Government Complaints 2024-2025](#)
42. The LGSCO's annual review is a key part of their work to share learning from their casework. The LGSCO received a record number of complaints in the last year, over 20,000 for the first time, marking a 16% increase in each of the last two years.
43. The LGSCO casework continues to be dominated by complaints about children and education, housing, and adult social care. With extremely high uphold rates in some areas (for example the LGSCO upheld 94% of complaints they investigated about special educational needs) in their view and set out in their annual review "*...points strongly to a local government system in crisis*".
44. Alongside their annual review, the LGSCO publishes complaints data at local authority level, which can be found on their website at [your council's performance](#) The data and reports for the council can be found at <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/city-of-york-council/statistics> and in section 2 of the report at Annex 1

Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) decided cases overview

45. The HOS publishes performance information about landlords on their website annually.
46. Whilst there was the same number of cases (determinations) in 2024/2025 as the previous year, there was a decrease in the number of findings (points of fault), maladministration findings and orders made for the council to put right compared with the previous year 2023/2024.
47. Further details about the HOS annual performance information and cases are set out in section 2 of the report at Annex 1.

HOS and LGSCO complaint handling codes Ombudsmen complaint handling codes overview

48. The council completed the HOS annual assessment and details can be found in section 2 of the report at Annex 1 and also on the website at [Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment – City of York Council](#)
49. Following the previous year's submission, the HOS made several recommendations to improve the council's corporate complaints procedure. All recommendations have been fully implemented within the timescales set by the Ombudsman.
50. Although not applicable to the time period for this annual report, it is timely to advise Committee that as the Housing Ombudsman Service's (HOS) complaint handling code became statutory on 1 April 2024 and as the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) intends to consider their complaint handling code as part of their processes from April 2026, it was necessary to update the corporate 4Cs procedures to ensure full alignment with both complaint handling codes. The updates reflect best practice in complaint management and supports transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.
51. It was also necessary to update parts of the procedures to meet all the recommendations the HOS made.
52. The updated procedures can be found at [Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments policy and procedure – City of York Council](#)
53. Full details about the complaint handling codes can be found at

[The Complaint Handling Code | Housing Ombudsman Service](#)

[Complaint Handling Code - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

54. The key changes and additions to the procedures included the following key enhancements:
- Alignment with HOS and LGSCO Complaint Handling Codes.
 - Clear definition and scope of complaints.
 - Two-stage complaints process with defined response times.
These are:
 - Stage One – response in 10 working days
 - Stage Two – response in 20 working days
 - Escalation procedures to external Ombudsman services.
 - Comprehensive staff training framework on complaint handling.
 - Commitment to learning from complaints and publishing performance data.
55. The rationale for the updates is to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and regulatory codes. It will enhance service quality, improve customer satisfaction, and reduce the risk of maladministration. The policy also supports a culture of openness and continuous learning across the organisation.
56. There is ongoing work being taken forward by CFCT from these updates including:
- Ongoing communication of the 4Cs procedures to all staff and stakeholders.
 - Ongoing delivery of staff awareness and training sessions
 - Monitor compliance and report annually on complaints performance.

Council Plan

57. Compliance is aligned to the current and draft Council Plan which is part of the council's corporate code of governance. This also then aligns with the 10-year Plan (York 2032) such as performance management and service planning.

Organisational Impact and Implications

58. As the ACP&SI report is for Committee's information and to provide their comments and feedback, please see below comments regarding implications that were provided for the report to CSC. However, where required, work will be undertaken on any implications, including those areas where no comments were provided below, following this Committee's comments and feedback.

- **Financial** - there are no financial implications to this report
- **Human Resources (HR)** - there are not specific HR implications associated with the content of the report. However, the key officers will require training / awareness of changes as appropriate
- **Legal** - The Council must continue to comply with statutory complaints handling procedures where applicable and is working towards implementation of the LGSCO complaint handling code for all other types of complaint. Effective learning from complaints helps the Council to fulfil its duty to continuously improve.
- **Procurement** – No implications
- **Health and Wellbeing** – No implications
- **Environment and Climate action** – no implications
- **Affordability** – no direct implication although learning from complaint in Housing, will help improve performance in for example in Building Services to contribute to safe, secure and well-maintained warm homes,
- **Equalities and Human Rights** – similar to affordability implications no direct implications although learning from complaints with reflect inequalities in relation to service delivery will contribute in Housing to improved home environments and tenant experiences.
- **Data Protection and Privacy** - The completion of data protection impact assessment (DPIA) screening questions evidenced there would be no processing of personal data, special categories of personal data or criminal offence data processed for the purposes of this report and annex, so there is no requirement to complete a DPIA.
- **Communications** - Communications around this issue are likely to be primarily reactive and will be covered by media relations arrangements

- **Economy** – No implications

Risks and Mitigations

59. The Council has a statutory duty to comply with all relevant complaints-related legislation, Housing Ombudsman Service and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman guidance and complaint handling codes. Failure to meet these obligations can result in significant consequences and actions including:

- Public reports and findings: Formal reports highlighting maladministration or service failure, often published on Ombudsman websites and shared via press releases.
- Financial remedies: Compensation payments to individuals for distress, inconvenience, or financial loss.
- Compliance monitoring: Increased scrutiny and follow-up investigations for persistent non-compliance.
- Referral to Parliament: In cases of serious or repeated failures, Ombudsmen may escalate matters to Parliament or issue special reports.
- Reputational consequences for councils failing to implement recommendations.

Wards Impacted

60. Not applicable for this report

Contact details

61. For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

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Background papers

No background papers but listed below are links to background information in this report

- [Annual Review of Local Government Complaints 2024-2025 your council's performance](#)
- <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/city-of-york-council/statistics>
- [Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment – City of York Council](#)
- [Housing Ombudsman Service – complaint handling code – annual submission for year 2 \(2025/2026\)](#)
- [Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments policy and procedure – City of York Council](#)
- [The Complaint Handling Code | Housing Ombudsman Service](#)
- [Complaint Handling Code - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)
- [Signed MRC statement for ACP&SI report April to March 2025](#)

Annexes

Annex 1 - City of York Council Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report April 2024 – March 2025

Annex 2 – Member Responsible for Complaints statement for ACP&SI report April 2024 to March 2025

Abbreviations

ACP&SI – Annual complaints performance and service improvement report

CMT – Corporate Management Team

CGT – Corporate Governance Team

IGT – Information Governance Team

CFCT – Complaints, Feedback and Compliance Team

HOS - Housing Ombudsman Service

LGSCO – Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
MRC – Member Responsible for Complaints



City of York Council Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report April 2024 – March 2025

Bryn Roberts

Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

Cath Murray

Information Governance Operational Manager (Previously Designated Complaints Officer for children's social care complaints and Complaints Manager for adult social care and corporate complaints).

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1 Introduction

In this period complaints and feedback were managed for all council areas through the Corporate Governance Team (CGT) to ensure that comments, complaints, concerns, and compliments are dealt with in an independent and consistent way across the council.

The team's name and management has changed to the Complaint, Feedback and Compliance Team (CFCT) which will be reflected in the next report. However ongoing or new work identified for completion in 2025 – 2026 is noted in this report as being completed by the CFCT.

Complaints about adult and children's social care services are dealt with under two separate pieces of legislation:

- The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006
- The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009

Complaints about other council services are dealt with under the council's 4cs procedure for Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments which can be found at [Raise a comment, compliment, complaint or concern – City of York Council](#). This procedure was designed using the guidance and good practice specified in the statutory procedures and by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS).

It is essential that all teams delivering services (including contractors or providers of services on our behalf) formally capture and record complaints. It is only by doing so that complaints can be tracked and where things have gone wrong, managers can ensure that matters are put right. Officers across the council are therefore encouraged and reminded how to recognise complaints and report them through the complaints and feedback process.

Members of the CGT worked as hybrid workers during this period attending appropriate venues as needed to deliver training sessions, conduct investigations, meet with customers etc. The hybrid working arrangements have a positive impact on the service provision, allowing the flexibility to speak to customers, key staff, and managers, at a time and in a manner convenient to all, and appropriate for the circumstances of the contact. This flexibility supported the provision of timely and thorough responses to complainants regardless of whether the complaint is upheld or not.

2 Ombudsmen investigations and annual performance

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) can investigate complaints about council services following the conclusion of the relevant council complaints procedure. The exceptions to this are:

- the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) is the regulator for most housing related services.
- the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the regulator for all information governance complaints, including complaints about data breaches, and responses to requests under the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

The LGSCO provides and publishes annual performance data and their annual letter to the council covering April to March, on their website at [Annual reviews of complaints - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

For the second year, the LGSCO did not comment on or identify issues or areas of concern for the council in their annual letter, as they had done in previous years.

The LGSCO received 53 cases about the council in April 2024 to March 2025 with 50 cases being concluded within this period. This includes cases which may have been received but not concluded in the previous reporting period. Of the 50 cases, 10 were considered as a detailed investigation and of these 7 were upheld. Details for the 7 upheld cases are shown at Annex 1.

LGSCO decided cases	2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025	
	How many	% Rounded down to whole number	How many	% Rounded down to whole number	How many	% Rounded down to whole number
Closed after initial enquiries	38	51%	17	41%	24	48%
Referred for local resolution	6	8%	11	26%	12	24%
Advice given	7	9%	3	7%	0	--
Incomplete/invalid	1	1%	1	2%	4	8%
Not upheld – detailed investigations	3	4%	2	4%	3	6%
Upheld – detailed investigations	19	25%	7	17%	7	14%
Total	74	--	41	--	50	--

Remedies from the LGSCO's 7 upheld decisions	How many
Apology, Provide training and/or guidance	1
Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble	1
Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Provide training and/or guidance, Procedure or policy change/review	1
Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Financial Redress: Quantifiable Loss, Provide services to person affected	1
Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Provide services/information to others affected	1
Provide services to person affected	1
Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, New appeal/review or reconsidered decision	1
Total	7

Further details from the LGSCO's annual performance data report are provided at Annex 1 and additional highlights are shown below, as the data calculations the LGSCO chooses to publish, do not tell the full performance narrative.

- 70% of all detailed investigation were upheld. This compares to an average of 80% in similar authorities. However, as the LGSCO calculates this using only the total number of cases where their decision was to either upheld or not upheld, if calculated using the total number of cases where they have decided, that figure falls to 14% upheld.
- In 100% of cases the LGSCO was satisfied that the council had successfully implemented their recommendations. This compares to an average of 100% in similar authorities.

Alongside their annual review, the LGSCO publishes complaints data at local authority level, which can be found on their website at:

[your council's performance](#)

The data and reports for the council can be found at:

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/city-of-york-council/statistics>

Between 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, the LGSCO dealt with 50 complaints. Of these:

- 16 were not for the LGSCO or not ready for them to investigate.
- 24 complaints were assessed and closed.
- 10 complaints were investigated.

7 of the 10 complaints investigated by the LGSCO were upheld and are reported on the LGSCO's website as '70% of cases upheld'. This compares to an average of 80% in similar authorities in this reporting period.

This is an improvement compared to the previous year (2023/2024) where there were 78% of cases upheld.

However, if the upheld cases were calculated using the number of cases they dealt with – which is 50 in 2024/2025, the upheld cases would be 14%.

Of the 7 upheld complaints, there were no cases where the council had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the LGSCO. This compares to an average of 10% in similar authorities. For the previous year, the council had no cases compared to an average of 13% in similar authorities.

The LGSCO recorded compliance outcomes in 6 of the 7 upheld cases and for all 6, they were satisfied with the actions taken. This means the council has a 100% compliance rate with recommendations made by the LGSCO and compares to an average of 100% in similar authorities. Also, this is the same % performance for the council as the previous year. For the one upheld case there were no outcomes for the council to take, as they had already been taken during the LGSCO's investigation.

In a change to the LGSCO's approach, they were only writing again to organisations before 16 July 2025, where there is exceptional practice or where they have concerns about an organisation's complaint handling; this means not all organisations will get an 'additional' letter. I can confirm the council did not receive such an additional letter.

Housing Ombudsman Service Decided Cases

There were 3 cases determined by the HOS with 5 different subject areas of complaint (A case can have more than one category).

	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024	2024 - 2025
Determinations (cases)	4	3	3
Findings	6	10	5
Maladministration Findings	2	7	3
Orders made	2	12	9
Recommendations	5	3	2
CHFOs (Complaint handling failure orders)	0	0	0
Compensation	£200.00	£5800.00	£1,150
Maladministration rate	33%	88%	60%

This shows that whilst there were the same number of cases the HOS made a “determination” on compared to 2023- 2024, there were 50% less “findings” which are points of fault and fewer orders made for the council to put right in 2024-2025.

Findings by category	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024	2024 - 2025
Severe maladministration	0	2	0
Maladministration	0	5	2
Service failure	2	0	1
Mediation	0	0	0
Redress	0	0	0
No maladministration	4	1	2
Outside jurisdiction	0	2	0
Withdrawn	0	0	0
TOTAL	6	10	5

The subcategory figures for 2024 -2025 are:

Subcategories	2022 – 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Delay in escalating or responding to a complaint	0	2	0
Noise	2	0	0
Responsive repairs – general	1	0	
Responsive repairs – leaks/damp/mould	0	2	1
Decants (temp or permanent)	0	1	0
Transfer application	1	0	
Information held on file	0	1	0
Other poor handling of complaint	1	1	1
Engagement on the complaint	1	0	1
Reimbursement of costs incurred by resident	0	1	0
Gas inspections and safety	0	0	1
Personal (e.g. harassment /discrimination)	0	0	1

The maladministration rate is calculated by the number of findings of severe maladministration, maladministration and service failure expressed as a

percentage of the total number of findings and they do not count the outside of jurisdiction or withdrawn figures.

The total compensation paid in 2024 - 2025 of £1,150 related to the below categories:

- Property condition - £850.00
- Complaints handling - £300.00

The total compensation paid in 2023 – 2024 was £200.00 related to the below categories:

- Property condition - £3400.00
- Moving to a property - £1500.00
- Complaints handling - £900.00

The council completed its annual online self-assessment for Year 2 (2025/2026) of the HOS complaint handling code, covering part of the period addressed in this annual report. The submission was made via the HOS online portal and was completed ahead of the 30 September 2025 deadline. It is publicly available on the Council's website at:

[Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment – City of York Council](#)

Following the previous year's submission, the HOS made several recommendations to improve the council's corporate complaints procedure. All recommendations have been fully implemented within the timescales set by the Ombudsman.

The HOS typically publishes its annual landlord performance report in late September or October. The report covering the period for this annual report is now available on their website at:

[Landlord-Report-City-of-York-Council \(2\).pdf](#)

3 What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about the actions, decisions, or apparent failings of a local authority's social services provision, and/or the level or nature of a council service or policy, which requires a response. If it is possible to resolve the complaint immediately this does not need to be logged through the complaint procedure.

A complaint is not a request for a service that is made for the first time. For example, if a customer complains that a streetlight is not working, we will treat it as a service request that we aim to fulfil by repairing it within the service level

agreement. If we then fail to repair it within that timescale, and the customer is still unhappy, it should then be defined and treated as a complaint.

4 Effectiveness of the Procedures

All staff and managers are proactively encouraged to participate in regular training and awareness raising, about the complaints and feedback procedures and learning lessons from complaint themes. There were 20 separate training and awareness sessions for staff covering the adult, children, and corporate procedures during the period for this report.

This refresher training is important to ensure that key messages are understood by staff including:

- When and how to make people aware of the complaints and feedback procedure.
- The importance of positive messages being recorded to provide a balanced picture of services.
- Learning from complaints. Some of the key learning points include the need to:
 - Ensure people are asked if there are any support needs, they want us to be aware of and that this is clearly recorded.
 - That procedures include a process for senior managers to be able to consider any exception circumstances, so that decisions are not made in a blanket way.
 - That records are accurate and up to date, including what was considered in the decision-making process, rather than just the outcome of decisions.
 - That people are kept up to date, particularly when there may be unexpected and unavoidable delays.
 - That people are clearly told what can and cannot be achieved, with clear explanations and where relevant sign posting to other sources of support or information.
 - The importance of being able to respond in a timely way to complaints and provide proportionate remedies to resolve complaints, without the need for people to escalate this to an Ombudsman.

These sessions could be attended in person or virtually and were provided at times and venues to suit the different working patterns of staff.

In addition to this, guidance is provided to assist managers in adult and children's services with completing thorough investigations and comprehensive responses including on a case-by-case basis. The CGT have continued to collaborate with the providers of independent investigators, who have knowledge and experience of complaints across several authorities to ensure our practice and guidance is

effective and appropriate to fulfil our obligations and ensure best practice in complaints handling.

We continued a process of responding to complaints without the need for an investigation in this reporting period. This is for cases where it is considered an investigation is not necessary to identify the reasonable and proportionate outcome required to resolve the complaint in an effective and proportionate way.

Managers are given a timescale and asked to complete the action required, where this is not achieved, a more detailed investigation will take place. Customers were also invited to contact the CGT, if they did not get a response within the agreed timescale, or if anything remained outstanding.

When managers in adult and children's services provide a response to a complaint, they are asked to record what will be done to resolve it, what lessons have been learnt and what action will be taken to improve services and avoid problems being repeated, which is also in place for corporate complaints. The CGT proactively monitored the completion of both action plans and lessons learned.

A summary of the information received regarding the lessons learnt and action taken is included in this report at sections 23, 39 and 48.

5 Themes

The main themes this year continued to include the quality and timeliness of communication. Several complaints are logged as “lack of action,” which is where information had not been provided, or calls and requests for contact were not returned.

6 Cost of delivering the complaints procedure including the corporate procedure and total payments:

There are ongoing costs to deliver an efficient and effective complaints service. These costs should be seen against the inherent costs of not providing this service such as

- customer dissatisfaction escalating
- an increase in the number of and amounts awarded as financial remedies being recommended by the Ombudsmen.
- increased risk of judicial reviews
- non-compliance with legislation
- increased risk of reputational damage

The total actual spends for the full service including the Information Governance provision, salary and on-costs was £410,086.51 compared to £421,717.00 in the previous year.

The financial remedies payments made as part of the three complaints procedures are provided at sections 2, 36 and 49 in this report.

The council must provide investigating officers and independent people for social care complaints where required and the costs including the providers core costs, in this reporting period was £33,329. This is a small decrease from last year's cost of £34,783.59 which was an increase from the costs the year before of £28,872.96.

Whilst there has been a small decrease in this reporting period from last year, it is within an expected range and does fluctuate from year to year.

The total costs of payments made to individuals to remedy complaints are below and the individual case costs are shown in the later sections of this report. The total is significantly lower than last year which was £9763.00.

Children's social care complaints	£600.00
Adult social care complaints	£1,250.00
Corporate complaints	£1,725.00
TOTAL	£3575.00

Children Social Care Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report April 2024 – March 2025

7 Context

The following information relates to complaints made during the twelve months between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 for children under the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

Ongoing work with managers is conducted to ensure the below messages continue to be understood:

- the importance of responding appropriately to concerns.
- improving customer experience
- reducing the need for avoidable complaints
- ensuring complaints are dealt with fully, without the need for them to be escalated to a higher stage unnecessarily.

We are pleased to report that in this reporting period, there were no cases of complaints where a response was not provided.

A number of complaints were responded to outside timescales however this can be due to the complexity of the case and the need to ensure a comprehensive investigation and response, and work is ongoing to understand and reduce delays where possible.

All timescales contained within this report are for working days.

In addition, the numbers of compliments are also recorded, and these are:

Compliments received

17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
17	22	22	59	21	35	36	72

We are pleased the emphasis about the importance of recording compliments in the awareness training, has resulted in a significant increase in the numbers being reported in this period. We remain aware there will be more compliments received than are shown in the table above.

Examples of some of the compliments received:

- Listened and really supported me while trying to keep me happy and excited for my future while offering also support to my parent, really appreciate you and the team.

- Really appreciate all your help and thank you for being so patient with us and really listening to us.
- Really creative and she just talks to me like she's a real person.
- Lovely manner on the phone, reassuring worker would find someone to speak to customer urgently.
- Thank you so much. It's a relief talking with you today. You actually listened and that meant a lot to me. Thank you for going above and beyond. We're grateful.
- We really do appreciate your efforts, and they do have a real impact. We're hoping that slowly getting to grips with AAC can make a real difference to the way we're able to communicate as a family.
- massive thank you for your help and support with putting a new plan in place.
- The differences and support has really made the difference to where family are today.
- Really listened & showed us real empathy and you got things sorted in the couple of days you covered.
- A big thank you to your beautiful team for all your efforts, hard work, overtime into every child and young person you look after! You guys are such a solid and supportive team.
- Thank you for how professional and easy you was to liaise. I wish all authority's had people like you in them then things would be straight forward and amicable thank you once again.
- Thank-you for fighting my corner. I was so scared when social services got involved as I love my children so much and I thought I was going to lose them when actually you've made me a stronger person and helped me more than you will ever know.
- Professional and easy to liaise with. I wish all authority's had people like this.
- Truly appreciate all the effort you have put into ensuring continued access to Short Breaks support.
- Incredibly approachable, allowing for a naturally open and trusting relationship to form.
- Supports our family and goes above and beyond to ensure we as foster carers can deliver support.
- Social worker has been fantastic throughout the whole time she has been assigned to us. She is very approachable and communicates well.
- Have struck a good relationship, and I love how respectfully and professionally work is completed.
- Grateful for the help and support that we received. The dedication and willingness to listen and assist have made such a positive impact.
- I honestly can't thank you enough for all the help and support you've given us, you've helped change our lives for the better. I will be forever grateful. Best social worker ever, don't forget it.

- Social worker was really understanding and very helpful. I felt comfortable talking to her and discussing strategies.
- I really appreciate all the help and visits you have done for me and my family and also being there at our difficult days which will not be forgotten!

The legislation makes it clear that people should be able to provide feedback and have this responded to, without this being seen as a complaint and so we also record and report concerns, suggestions, and requests. The figures for this reporting period alongside previous years are shown in the table below.

Numbers of concerns, suggestions, and requests

17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
26	20	33	29	19	7	8	3

8 Who can make a complaint

- Any child or young person (or a parent, or someone who has parental responsibility) who is being looked after by the local authority or is not looked after by them but is in need.
- Any local authority foster carer (including those caring for children placed through independent fostering agencies).
- Children leaving care.
- Special Guardians
- A child or young person (or parent) to whom a Special Guardian order is in place.
- Any person who has applied for an assessment under section 14F (3) or (4).
- Any child or young person who may be adopted, their parents and guardians.
- Persons wishing to adopt a child.
- Any other person whom arrangements for the provision of adoption services extend.
- Adopted persons, their parents, natural parents and former guardians and such other person as the local authority consider has sufficient interest in the child or young person's welfare to warrant their representations being considered by them.

Where a complaint is received from a representative on behalf of a child or young person, we will, where appropriate, confirm the child or young person is happy for this to happen, and that the complaint received reflects their views.

The manager for complaints and feedback (complaints manager) in consultation with relevant operational managers will decide whether the representative is suitable to act in this capacity and has sufficient interest in the child's welfare. If it is decided that a person is not suitable to act as a representative for a child or

young person, they will be informed of the decision in writing by the complaint manager. The complaint will then fall outside the statutory procedure however they will be able to raise the complaint through the 4Cs corporate complaints procedure.

Complaints may also be made by adults relating to a child or young person but are not being made on the child or young person's behalf. The complaints manager in consultation with operational managers will decide whether the person has sufficient interest in the child or young person's welfare for the complaint to be considered. The child or young person may also be consulted as part of this decision.

9 Grading of complaints

Complaints are graded following an assessment of issues including severity, complexity, risk to the customer and other customers, risk to the authority, history of similar complaints and likelihood of future similar complaints. Other considerations include, the outcomes wanted to resolve the complaint, who is best placed to consider and effectively respond to the complaint and the complainant's views of how the complaint should be dealt with.

Stage one is dealt with by line managers of the service area the complaint is about. This includes where the service is being provided on behalf of the council by an external contractor. The expectation is that the managers will have the knowledge and understanding of the issues and delegated responsibility to be able to resolve complaints at this stage quickly, without the need for an in-depth formal investigation.

The legislation requires stage one complaints to be responded to within 10 working days. This can be extended for a further 10 working days in some circumstances, for example where further time is needed to arrange an advocate, or where staff may be away from work. This can only be extended with the agreement of the complainant.

Stage two is implemented where the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of stage one, or where it is assessed as being appropriate to be considered and responded to at this stage, due to issues including the severity, complexity, or risk.

Stage two requires an investigation is conducted by either an internal manager who has not had any previous involvement in the complaint and has no line management responsibility for the area being complained about, or an external investigating officer. The Director of Children's Safeguarding adjudicates on the findings of the investigation.

The council must offer an advocate to assist children and young people in making a complaint and appoint an Independent Person to oversee the investigation process at this stage. Stage two complaints falling within the social services statutory complaints procedures should be dealt with in 25 days, although in certain cases this can be extended to 65 days.

Stage Three of the complaints process is the review panel. Where complainants wish to proceed with complaints about statutory social service functions, the council is required to establish a complaints review panel. The panel makes recommendations to the Corporate Director of Children and Education, who then decides and provides a written response on the complaint and any action to be taken.

Complaints review panels must be made up of three independent panellists. There are various timescales relating to stage three complaints. These are:

- setting up the panel within 30 working days.
- producing the panel's report within 5 working days of the panel; and
- producing the local authority's response within 15 days following receipt of the report.

A further option for complainants is the LGSCO who is empowered to investigate where a council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint. Whilst complainants can refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any time, the LGSCO normally refers the complaint back to the council, unless the council has been given sufficient opportunity to consider and respond to the complaint.

10 Activity

The CGT recorded 35 complaints under the children's social care procedure during this reporting period, compared with a total of 40 in the preceding year.

11 Total complaints made:

Of the 35 complaints dealt with:

- 24 were investigated at stage one of the social care procedures.
- 8 complaints in total heard at stage two with 4 of these being moved straight to stage 2, due to their complexity and or severity.
- 3 complaints were raised at stage 3.

In addition to the 35 complaints made under the statutory procedure, 2 complaints were made under the corporate procedure. These were both dealt with at grade 1 and both were not upheld, with 1 being responded to within 20 working days and the other over this timescale.

12 Comparison with the preceding year

The numbers of complaints being received are small and typically fluctuate each year and this is typical of social care complaints received across Yorkshire and Humberside. The figures show a decrease of 12.5% for this reporting period. The reasons for this are highlighted in the following tables.

It should be noted that high numbers of complaints should not be seen as a negative and can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain. The complaint procedure should however seek to learn lessons and

improve processes and practice to avoid complaints about the same issues being repeated.

13 Outcomes of complaints – total

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Upheld	3	7	8	6
Partly upheld	11	15	16	13
Not upheld	12	17	7	6
Not proved	0	0	1	0
Not pursued	5	4	5	4
No response	9	0	0	0
Resolved without investigation	0	0	1	5
Ongoing	2	3	2	1
Total	42	46	40	35

14 Response times

A key requirement of complaints procedures is to ensure that individuals are informed of the outcome of their complaints, in an appropriate time.

The timescales in working days for children's social care complaints as set out in the regulation are:

- 10 days at Stage 1 (with a further 10 days for more complex complaints or additional time if an advocate is required).
- 25 days at Stage 2 (with maximum extension to 65 days).
- 20 days for the complainant to request a Review Panel.
- 30 days to convene and hold the Review Panel at Stage 3.
- 5 days for the Panel to issue its findings: and
- 15 days for the local authority to respond to the findings.

Details of complaints by stage

15 Stage one complaints

There were 24 stage one complaints compared to 30 last year.

We are pleased to note that as expected, the numbers during this reporting period are slightly less than those in the preceding year.

Whilst it is not always a negative to receive larger numbers of complaints, as this can show the procedure is accessible, customers are supported to make complaints and provides invaluable feedback, this does indicate that service areas are able to resolve concerns effectively without the need for them to progress to complaints.

Stage one - theme of complaint

	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Attitude of staff	1	-	0	1
Disagree with Policy	1	1	0	1
Disagree with Assessment	5	3	4	1
Discrimination	-		0	0
Inappropriate Action	5	8	8	6
Lack of Action	11	19	7	9
Quality of Advice/ Communication	8	5	11	6
TOTAL	31	36	30	24

You will note the highest theme this year is about Lack of Action the quality of communication, although in some cases, the lack of action included lack of communication about action that was being taken.

Stage one - responding in time performance

	2021 - 2022	%*	2022 - 2023	%*	2023 - 2024	%*	2024 - 2025	%*
Within 10 days	11	35%	22	61%	13	43%	6	25%
Within 20 days	1	3%	8	22%	11	37%	7	29%
Over 20 days	16	52%	2	6%	2	7%	7	29%
Not Pursued	3	10%	4	11%	4	13%%	4	17%
TOTAL	31		36		30		24	

*% figures are rounded to the nearest whole number

Although there is an increase in the number of complaints responded to over 20 working days, we are pleased that the implied 83% satisfaction from only 17% escalating to stage 2 means that these delays were often relating to ensuring the complaint could be understood and responded to fully.

Stage one – outcomes

	2021 - 2022	%*	2022 - 2023	%*	2023 - 2024	%*	2024 – 2025	%*
Upheld	3	10%	7	19%	8	27%	3	13%
Partially Upheld	7	22%	10	28%	11	37%	7	29%
Not Upheld	9	29%	14	39%	5	17%	5	20%
Not Proven	0	--	0	0	1	3%	0	
Not Pursued	3	10%	4	11%	4	13%	4	17%
Resolved without investigation	--	--	--	--	1	3%	5	20%
No response	9	29%	0	-	0	--	0	0
Ongoing	--	--	1	3%	0	--	0	0
TOTAL	31	--	36	--	30	--	24	--

*% figures are rounded to the nearest whole number

16 Stage two complaints

There were 8 stage two complaints received and concluded in this reporting period the same number as last year.

It is important to remember, complaints at stage two are often complex, with several elements and there may also be the need to arrange advocates and appointments with both staff and complainants, particularly at adjudication.

Stage two - theme of Complaint

	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Attitude of staff	-	-	-	
Disagree with Policy	-	-	-	1
Disagree with Assessment	-	1	1	3
Discrimination	-	-	-	
Inappropriate Action	4	2	3	1
Lack of Action	3	3	2	2
Quality of Advice/ Communication	3	1	2	1
TOTAL	10	7	8	8

Stage two - responding in time performance

	2021 - 2022	%*	2022 – 2023	%*	2023 - 2024	%*	2024 – 2025	%*
Within 25days	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Within 65 days	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	13%
Over timescale	7	70%	7	100%	5	62%	6	75%
Not Pursued	1	10%		-	1	13%	0	-
Ongoing	2	20%	2	Over time-scale	2	25%	1	13%
TOTAL	10	--	9	--	8	--	8	--

Stage Two Outcomes

	2021 - 2022	%*	2022 – 2023	%*	2023 - 2024	%*	2024 – 2025	%*
Upheld	-	-	0	-	-	-	3	38%
Partially Upheld	4	40%	3	43%	3	37%	4	50%
Not Upheld	3	30%	2	29%	2	25%	0	-
Not Pursued	1	10%	0	-	1	13%	0	-
No response sent	-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-
Ongoing	2	20%	2	29%	2	25%	1	13
TOTAL	10		7		8		8	

Where there are complaints showing as ongoing work will continue to be undertaken by the CGT to ensure they are responded to as soon as practicable.

17 Stage three complaints

There were 3 children's stage three complaint, compared with 2 in the previous reporting period.

The process at stage three of the Children's Social Care Complaints Procedure is an independent review panel that will consider whether the investigation, findings, and recommendations at stage two, were thorough, logical, and fair. The Panel then provides a report to the Corporate Director of Children and Education with their conclusions and any recommendations considered appropriate. The Corporate Director would then respond confirming whether they agree with the conclusions and any recommendations made.

Stage three - theme of complaint

	2021 -2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Attitude of staff	-	-	-	
Disagree with Policy	-	-	-	1
Disagree with Assessment	-	-	-	1
Discrimination		-	-	-
Inappropriate Action	1	1	1	1
Lack of Action		2		-
Quality of Advice/ Communication	-	-	1	-
TOTAL	1	3	2	3

Stage three - responding in time performance

	2021 - 2022	%*	2022 - 2023	%*	2023 - 2024	%*	2024 - 2025	%*
Within 15 days	-	-	0	-	1	50%	1	33%
Over 15 days	-	-	3	100%	1	50%	2	66%
Not Pursued	1	100%	0	-	-	-	0	-
TOTAL	1	--	3	--	2	--	3	--

Stage Three Outcomes

	2021 - 2022		2022 - 2023	%*	2023 - 2024	%*	2024 - 2025	%*
Upheld	-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-
Partially Upheld	-	-	2	66%	2	100%	2	66%
Not Upheld	-	-	1	33%	-	-	1	33%
Not Pursued	1	100%	0	-	-	-	0	-
No response sent	-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-
TOTAL	1	--	3	--	2	--	3	--

18 Percentage escalation

The following table indicates how many complaints in children's services were escalated through the stages. By measuring these figures as a percentage, we can gauge the implied customer satisfaction levels.

Percentage escalation

	Number	% Escalated to next stage	% Implied customer satisfaction
Stage 1 to Stage 2	4 of 24	17%	83%
Stage 2 to Stage 3	3 of 8	38%	62%

It is important to note that whilst only a small number of complaints have escalated in this reporting period, the implied customer satisfaction needs to be considered alongside the next reporting period, particularly as 1 complaint remains ongoing.

19 Equalities monitoring information

Following the guidance produced by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills, we must seek to identify who is making complaints to get a greater understanding of them. The following information was provided:

Gender

	2021 - 2022	2022 -2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Male	14	16	13	11
Female	27	28	26	24
Male & Female	1	2	1	0
Total	42	46	40	35

20 Who made the complaints

Most complaints continue to be made by parents of children about the service they received from children's services. However, 8 complaints were raised on behalf of a child, by an advocate.

To ensure that children are aware of and are supported to use the complaints and feedback procedure, the CGT worked closely with the Children's Rights team and where appropriate, other support and advocacy services and others making a complaint on behalf of a child or young person.

The council has a statutory obligation to offer advocacy support to any child or young person making a complaint and the Children's Rights team make people aware of the options available for raising comments, concerns, complaints, and compliments and provide advocacy support to assist with this where requested.

The CGT were also available were required to attend meetings with staff members, children, and young people, advocates, and foster carers to raise awareness of and understanding about how people can use the procedure.

An important aspect of ensuring that children are aware of the complaints and feedback procedure and how to access it, is ensuring that all staff receive

refresher training. This is so staff have a clear understanding of when and how children and young people should be made aware of the procedure and their role in continuing to try to resolve concerns throughout the complaints process.

Five complaints refresher training sessions were provided to staff and managers in children's services over the last year. However, it is important that the complaint team continue to deliver training direct to all members of staff in these areas, to ensure messages are delivered clearly and independently. Reminders continue to be sent to managers to ensure this can happen as a priority over the next reporting period.

It is however noted that normal practice would be for the complaints manager to attend regular managers meetings. This is to ensure there is a clear understanding of themes and lessons and that any issues relating to complaint handling can be quickly resolved. This has not happened in this reporting period and the CFC manager is collaborating with managers to resume these meetings for the coming reporting period.

21 Costs and payments

The council has an obligation to ensure independence in the children's social care complaints procedure. This includes a requirement for:

- A person independent of the council to oversee all complaints at stage two made by children and young people.
- To ensure the investigator at stage two has not had any involvement in the complaint or line management responsibility for the services being complained about.
- To have a panel of three independent people at stage three.

The costs for these services are shown in section 6 of this report.

In addition to this the council provides financial recompense if, after a complaint has been investigated or as part of an LGSCO's investigation, it is concluded that:

- the LGSCO would find that there has been maladministration by the council causing injustice to the complainant; and
- the LGSCO would recommend that financial recompense should therefore be paid to the complainant.

For injustice caused by the failure to ensure appropriate attendance at school, to send copies of minutes promptly, follow the council's own Practice Standards and had weak management oversight.	£600.00
Total	£600.00

22 Alternative dispute resolution

The Department for Education and Skills Guidance makes it clear that nothing in the procedure should preclude Alternative Dispute Resolution and if agreed by both the complainant and the CGOM, the council should explore this option.

Alternatives which may be considered by the CGOM include mediation, the opportunity to meet with senior managers, or the possibility of contributing to the review of policies and procedures.

23 Learning lessons/practice improvements

The council is always happy to consider appropriate ways of resolving a customer's complaint. Some of the types of action the council has undertaken to resolve complaints have been issuing apologies, meeting with customers to hear their concerns and suggestions for improvements and putting these improvements into place. This has been particularly relevant in the case of communicating effectively with customers and putting strategies into place to ensure that people are kept up to date. The council also offers a re-assessment of needs where possible, to ensure that nothing has been missed or that circumstances have not changed.

Complaints provide senior managers with useful information in respect of the way that services are delivered. The consideration of complaints has included the agreement to undertake the following actions, in addition to apologies and financial recompense:

- Reminders and updated guidance to staff.
- Improved communication, including creation of templates, to be prepared and ready for enquires.
- Development and provision of training and awareness sessions.
- Update records and ensure they contain appropriate detail and accuracy.
- Ensure reports include detail of all appropriate parties' views and reasons for outcome of assessment of them.
- Have clear written agreements about people's needs and how they will be supported, including any adjustments for contact and communication.

Adult Social Care Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report April 2024 – March 2025

24 Context

This report provides information about complaints made during the twelve months between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 for adults under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

In addition, the numbers of compliments are also recorded were:

	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023- 2024	2024 - 2025
Be Independent	1	0	0	
Commissioning & Contract Management	-	3	0	3
Community Provision	6	10	15	11
Assessment	-	0	0	0
Care Homes	-	0	0	0
Mental health Safeguarding & DOLS	18	12	5	10
Learning Disability	1	6	1	1
Older People	11	21	13	7

It is recognised there will be more compliments received than are shown in the table above. The importance of recognising, recording, and reporting compliments is being emphasised in the awareness training provided so that there is a completer and more balanced picture of customers' experiences of the services they receive.

It is therefore disappointing that despite several requests for invites to provide training and attend managers meetings, we were only able to provide 3 awareness refresher sessions in adult services in this reporting period and did not receive invites to regular managers meetings.

In addition to this normal practice would be for the complaints manager to attend regular managers meetings. This is to ensure there is a clear understanding of themes and lessons and that any issues relating to complaint handling can be quickly resolved. This has not happened in this reporting period and the CFC manager is collaborating with managers to resume these meetings for the coming reporting period.

The compliments received included:

- Staff member was a breath of fresh air and communication was great!
- Thank you for exceptional professional, supportive and sensitive service we have received.
- Staff member has been very kind and helpful and has gone over and above to help.
- Helped me get my parent moved to a safe, lovely, and caring place in York.
- Thank you for all your kindness the conversations were honest and you genuinely care.
- Grateful for support of parent, they were happier than they had been in years.
- Social worker was really calm and great worked so well with family member, making a stressful situation easier to navigate.
- Very polite, down to earth and a lovely person. We all felt very much at ease during a difficult time for us as a family.
- Kind considerate social worker, who has shown has a high standard of training and knowledge of dementia suffers.
- Worker is the most personable and helpful social worker we have worked with to date and in our opinion an excellent ambassador for your department.
- I was tremendously impressed with your attention to detail and your empathy. You are a credit to York Council.
- Impressed with worker professionalism, they are diamonds.
- The care provided has been really good and has eliminate all risks to wellbeing.

The legislation makes it clear that people should be able to provide feedback and have this responded to without this being seen as a complaint. Therefore concerns, comments and requests are also logged.

Number of Concerns, Comments and Requests received

	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Be Independent	-	-	-	-
Commissioning & Contract Management	-	-	-	1
Commissioning Provision	-	-	2	-
Joint Commissioning		-	-	-
Assessment	-		-	-
Care Homes	-	-	-	-
Community Provision	7	2	1	4
Mental health	9	4	3	4
Safeguarding & DOLS				
Learning Disability	1	6	1	-
Older People	5	3	6	4

25 Who can make a complaint

Someone who:

- The local authority has a power or duty to provide or secure the provision of a social service for him/her and
- His/her need for such a service has (by whatever means) come to the attention of the Authority.

This definition also applies to a person acting on behalf of someone who meets the above requirements.

A complaint can be made by a representative where the appropriate permission is received. A representative will also be able to make a complaint where the eligible person is not capable of making the complaint themselves, this includes when the eligible person is deceased.

The complaints manager will decide if a person is suitable to act as a representative. If it is decided they are not acting in the eligible person's best interests, they will be informed in writing of the reasons for this.

If a customer is not eligible under the terms of the Act, they are able to raise it through the council's 4Cs corporate complaints procedure.

26 Grading of complaints

The Department of Health designed the following tool to assess the seriousness of complaints and decide the relevant action:

Step 1: Decide how serious the issue is

Seriousness	Description
Low	Unsatisfactory service or experience not directly related to care. No impact or risk to provision of care. OR Unsatisfactory service or experience related to care, usually a single resolvable issue. Minimal impact and relative minimal risk to the provision of care or the service. No real risk of litigation.
Medium	Service or experience below reasonable expectations in several ways but not causing lasting problems. Has potential to impact on service provision. Some potential for litigation.
High	Significant issues regarding standards, quality of care and safeguarding of or denial of rights. Complaints with clear quality assurance or risk management issues that may cause lasting problems for the organisation and so require investigation. Possibility of litigation and adverse local publicity. OR

Seriousness	Description
	Serious issues that may cause long-term damage, such as grossly substandard care, professional misconduct, or death. Will require immediate and in-depth investigation. May involve serious safety issues. A high probability of litigation and strong possibility of adverse national publicity.

Step 2: Decide how likely the issue is to recur

Likelihood	Description
Rare	Isolated or 'one off' – slight or vague connection to service provision.
Unlikely	Rare – unusual but may have happened before.
Possible	Happens from time to time – not frequently or regularly.
Likely	Will probably occur several times a year.
Almost certain	Recurring and frequent, predictable.

Step 3: How to categorise the risk

Seriousness	Likelihood of recurrence				
	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Low	Low				
		Moderate			
Medium					
			High		
High				Extreme	

The CGT grades the complaints as:

- Low = Green - Can be resolved locally
- Medium = Amber - Response from a director or assistant director.
- High = Red - Response from a director or assistant director.

The C&F team contacts complainants to design a complaint plan and agree an appropriate response timescale. This is often done through an acknowledgment letter requesting the complainant to confirm the council's understanding of the complaint and the timescale for response.

Following the response, a complainant can ask the LGSCO to investigate if they remain dissatisfied.

27 Activity

The CGT recorded 35 complaints under the adult social care procedure during this reporting period compared with a total of 44 the preceding year.

In addition to this there were 3 complaints made under the corporate procedure. 1 at grade 1 which was resolved without the need for an investigation.

The other 2 were consider at grade 2 with one upheld and one not upheld. One was dealt within 20 working days and the other over 20 working days.

28 Comparison with the preceding year

The figures show a small decrease in the number of complaints received in this reporting period compared with the preceding year through the adult social care procedures. However, this is consistent with an expected small fluctuation each year.

29 Outcomes of complaints:

	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Upheld	7	12	11	10
Partly upheld	13	13	7	4
Not upheld	17	11	11	8
Not proved	0	0	0	0
Not pursued	1	2	3	3
No response	4	1	7	1
Resolved without Investigation	0	0	5	4
Ongoing	0	1	0	0
Total	42	40	44	30

30 Response times

A key requirement of complaints procedures is the importance of informing service users of the outcome of their complaints, in an appropriate time.

The Department of Health guidance on deciding how long it should take to respond to a complaint states:

“If someone makes a complaint, your organisation has to acknowledge it within three working days. The person making the complaint will want to know what is being done – and when. However, accurately gauging how long an issue may take to resolve can be difficult, especially if it is a complex matter involving more than one person or organisation. To help judge how long a complaint might take to resolve, it is important to:

- *address the concerns raised as quickly as possible*
- *stay in regular contact with whoever has complained to update them on progress*
- *stick to any agreements you make – and, if for any reason you can't, explain why.*

It is good practice to review any case lasting more than six months, to ensure everything is being done to resolve it.”

We are please the number of complaints which did not receive a response has reduced significantly. However, the complaints and feedback team will continue collaborate with managers to ensure all complaints receive a response.

Details of complaints

31 Green complaints

There were 25 complaints graded as Green compared to 33 in the preceding year and were categorised as follows:

Com Provision = Community Provision
 Commiss = Commissioning
 MH/S/DOLS = Mental health Safeguarding & DOLS
 LD = Learning Disability
 OP = Older People

Green - theme of complaint

	Com Provision	MH/S/DOLS	LD	Commiss	OP	Total
Attitude of staff						
Disagree with Policy	-	-	-	-	2	2
Disagree with Assessment	2	1	1	-	1	5
Discrimination						
Inappropriate Action	1	-	-	1	1	3
Lack of Action	5	4	-	2	-	11
Quality of Advice/Communication	-	-	-	2	2	4
TOTAL	8	5	1	5	6	25

Green - response times

	Com Provision	MH/S/DOLS	LD	Commiss	OP	Total
Within 10 days	4	1	-	2	1	8
Within 25 days	2	3	1	1	2	9
Over 25 days	2	1	-	1	1	5
Not Pursued	-	-	-	1	2	3
TOTAL	8	5	1	5	6	25

It is important to remember that the legislation and guidance for adults does not prescribe actual timescales for responses. However, we do manage and monitor performance in this area using best practice across the different complaints' legislation and guidance. The above table highlights that we are responding to 80% of complaints within 25 working days at this grade.

It is noted that 1 complaint did not receive a response. This is something which will continue to be brought to the attention of senior managers to assist with improving this for future complaints.

Green = outcomes

	Com Provision	MH/S/ DOLS	LD	Commiss	OP	Total
Upheld	3	1	1	2	2	9
Partially Upheld	1	-	-	-	-	1
Not Upheld	2	1	-	2	2	7
No Response	1	-	-	-	-	1
Resolved Without Investigation	1	3	-	-	-	4
Not Pursued	-	-	-	1	2	3
TOTAL	8	5	1	5	6	25

32 Amber complaints

There were 5 complaints graded as Amber in adult services compared to 6 in the previous year.

Amber - theme of complaint

	Com Provision	MH/S/ DOLS	LD	Commiss	OP	Total
Attitude of staff	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disagree with Policy	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disagree with Assessment	-	-	-	1	-	1
Discrimination	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inappropriate Action	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lack of Action	1	-	-	-	-	1
Quality of Advice/ Communication	-	1	-	2	-	3
TOTAL	1	1	-	3	-	5

Amber - response times

	Com Provision	MH/S/ DOLS	LD	Commiss	OP	Total
Within 25days	-	-	-	1	-	1
Within 65 days	1	1	-	2	-	4
TOTAL	1	1	-	3	-	5

Amber Outcomes

	Com Provision	MH/S/ DOLS	LD	Commiss	OP	Total
Upheld	1	-	-	-	-	1
Partially Upheld	-	1	-	2	-	3
Not Upheld	-	-	-	1	-	1
TOTAL	1	1	-	3	-	5

33 Red Complaints

There were 0 complaints graded Red compared to 5 in the preceding year.

34 Equalities monitoring information

Following the guidance and best practice, it is important to understand who is making complaints and so we seek to identify who is making complaints. Only the following information was provided:

Gender

Male: 11
Female: 19

35 Who made the complaints

Customers themselves made most complaints directly, however there were some made by family members supporting people using adult social care services and a small number via an advocate.

Following receipt of a complaint, acknowledgements are sent to ensure a clear understanding of the complaint points and outcomes wanted, before beginning an investigation. This acknowledgement also invites people to let us know if they would like any support, including things like advocacy, provision of information in their preferred accessible format.

36 Payments

The council provides financial recompense if, after a complaint has been investigated or as part of an LGSCO's investigation, it is concluded that the LGSCO would find that there has been maladministration by the council causing injustice to the complainant with a recommendation that financial recompense should therefore be paid to the complainant.

Detail of payments made

LGSCO recommendation - For additional stress, anxiety and workload the council's inactions and failure to review and manage the care package properly caused over a number of years. With a significant delay in resolving the Direct Payments budget.	£1,000.00
LGSCO recommendation - To recognise his distress caused by the Council's failure to communicate effectively about the Direct payment.	£50.00
To recognise his time and trouble spent on complaining.	£50.00
LGSCO recommendation - For the frustration and distress caused by the delay in setting up a direct payment and poor communication.	£150
Total	£1,250.00

It is noted this is an increase from last year of £350.00 and all payments relate to issues around Direct Payments. Further action was also taken from an Ombudsman recommendation to:

Review the Direct Payment process and ensure the council provides a clear overview of the process, to include details on what information the council expects and approximate times for each part of the process.

37 Alternative dispute resolution

It is important to note that the complaints regulations and guidance for adult social care complaints are that a plan needs to be agreed between the complainant and the council about how the complaint will be dealt with and responded to, what outcomes are wanted and what can be realistically achieved.

Alternatives which may be considered include mediation, the opportunity to meet with senior managers, or the possibility of contributing to the review of policies and procedures.

38 Complaints dealt with by the local authority and NHS Bodies

The CFT works with contracted agencies and statutory agencies to identify the main themes concerned in a complaint. Informal agreements are in place to provide the customer with a co-ordinated response with the agency responsible for the provision of the main areas of complaint taking the lead with co-operation from the other agencies as required.

39 Learning lessons/practice improvements

The council is always happy to consider appropriate ways of resolving a customer's complaint including meeting with customers to hear their concerns and suggestions for improvements and putting these improvements into place.

The council also offers a re-assessment of needs where possible, to ensure that nothing has been missed or that circumstances have not changed.

Complaints provide senior managers with useful information in respect of the way that services are delivered, so that improvements can be made. The CFT collaborated with teams across the council to ensure learning from complaints continued to lead to improvements in services and that evidence of completed actions was provided. Some of the actions which have been recorded include the following, in addition to apologies, review of support and financial recompense:

- Review information provided about direct payments to give a clear overview and approximate times for each part of the process.
- Reminder to staff to discuss financial circumstances as part of any formal reviews of individual support plans and to report any change to Income Services.
- Developed and co-produced clear communication plans.
- Review the Direct Payment process and ensure the council provides a clear overview of the process, to include details on what information the council expects and approximate times for each part of the process.

40 Public Health

Complaints about services related to the functions of Public Health also fall under the legislation "Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009" and are therefore dealt with in the same way as those for adult social care services.

Compliments	1
Complaints	0
Comments & Concerns	0

It is possible all expressions of dissatisfaction about Public Health Services were able to be resolved before they became a complaint for the second year in a row. However, this is something which has been noted, and the CFC manager (CFCM) is meeting with managers in Public Health to provide awareness refresher training for staff, to ensure complaints and feedback is appropriately identified, recorded, and dealt with.

Corporate Services, Including Housing Services
Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvements Report
April 2024 – March 2025

41 Context

Where there is not a statutory complaints procedures, complaints about corporate services including housing services are dealt with through the council's corporate complaints policy and procedure which can be found at [Raise a comment, compliment, complaint or concern – City of York Council](#)

There were 1132 complaints in this reporting period compared with 1391 in the preceding year. This is a decrease of 265 or 19. This is consistent with an expected small fluctuation each year. However, it is considered a significant factor in this decrease is the change in the policy for green waste collections. This means crews will return for missed collections and bins lost or damaged during collection will be replaced free of charge, without a resident needing to make a complaint.

The number of comments logged were 332 compared to 642 in the preceding year.

It is noted there have been 11 complaints which did not receive a response in this reporting period, which although is a significant improvement from previous years, it is an increase on last year's performance.

We are continuing to work to ensure every complaint is responded to. Those that did not receive a response in this reporting period remain ongoing and work will continue to provide a response, even though this will now be out of time.

All timescales contained within this report are for working days. It is also noted that in this reporting period there has been a significant increase in responses being provided out of the agreed timescale.

The CGT worked to keep people up to date when responses were delayed, although it is recognised this was not always possible.

It should however also be noted alongside the teams work in this period to move towards implementing the LGSCO complaint handling code, which will need to be implemented in full by 1 April 2026. This meant that more corporate complaints were being considered at stage 1 and then 2, rather than a previous grading process for all corporate complaints, except those under the jurisdiction of the HOS.

Although the timescales for the handling of corporate complaints will be reduced from April 2026 to 10 working days and 20 working days, it is expected the additional resource available through the moving of the complaints service to the

Customer and Communities Directorate, will over time provide the ability to improve the complaints service further. Any improvement in timescales are however unlikely to be evident until the 2026 – 2027 reporting period.

In addition, to complaints, the numbers of compliments are also recorded, and these are shown below for the directorates as they were known during the reporting period.

Number of compliments received

Directorate	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025
Corporate Services	9	12	5	Governance	4
Customer & Communities	25	43	24	Housing and Communities	50
People	6	0	8	Education	9
Place	137	144	149	Environment, Transport & Planning	206
TOTAL	177	199	186		269

The compliments received included:

- Gorgeous New kitchen fitted by great team of workers who were all marvellous hard working, clean and so professional.
- Thank you for the hard work of the council for getting rewire and damp work done quickly.
- Thanks to everyone involved in putting my house in order went above and beyond making our temporary move as easy as possible for which I am extremely grateful.
- Staff member fair and consistent in her approach when managing some very challenging situations, she has gone above and beyond through the entire process when supporting my patient into a decant house while the work and repairs are carried out.
- Housing repairs kept me updated with timescales and what was going on. I received texts and phone calls explaining what was been done on certain days so that I knew what stage the work was at.
- A big thank you for the service they have received for an emergency leak.
- Safety rails on staircase did a fantastic job deserves credit for the work.
- Housing Management Officer (HMO) was great, showed lots of care an empathy.
- Thank you to the housing management officer who is lovely, helpful and approachable.
- Thank you for helping while I was at James House.

- Thanks for all the help given during my time being homeless, at the time I didn't know what to do but you helped me greatly.
- Thank you for the help in finding accommodation when a family member was homeless.
- Just to see how if the rails and things have been put in was brilliant. The staff member was absolutely lovely.
- Help and support from the Refugee Resettlement Team was so appreciated and really helped.
- Thank you for replacing the street sign.
- Very pleased with new LED downlighting street lights on our street. A big improvement.
- Appreciate the street light has been done and resolved.
- Well done on the complete resurfacing of the road outside Morrisons, James Street. Good job.
- Thanks for arranging the patch on blossom street.
- The traffic warden at Monk Bar is always so helpful and friendly.
- The chaps that cut the grass did a great job.
- Thanks to staff for quick action to address overgrown tree.
- Thanks for quick action from the crew to remove fallen tree branch.
- Thank you to grass mowing team.
- Just a note to say what a great job your men have done on the alley.
- Really good job the street cleaners are doing.
- I'd like to compliment the high standard of the work done to clean the alleyway. A very thorough job!
- Well done with Hull Road park beck its much better rewilded. Today I saw a kingfisher fly along the line of the beck, then it perched for a while. Beautiful.
- Staff from graffiti called this morning to have a look at the situation. Despite the issue being outside their normal remit they very kindly and professionally resolved the problem. We are extremely pleased with the service.
- Street/gully cleaning just been completed. Really good job from the team concerned.
- Thanks for the support, empathy and professionalism given to me by the Blue Badge Dept while I was recently completing my renewal application.
- The Falls Prevention team was "absolutely fantastic," and very, very happy with the service provided.
- Thank you to NEO for getting the noise reduced.
- The update restored our faith in the planning process and in local government.
- Huge thankyou for communicating with the non council bin service to get the bin collected at a more sensible time.
- The bin men who come to the village of wheldrake every other Monday do an absolutely outstanding job. I have experienced so much kindness and helpfulness from them.
- Thanks to the waste crew for helping clear rubbish strewn everywhere.

- Thanks to waste crew I was having a nightmare of a morning and ended up pulling my rear windscreen wiper off. Crew member came over and reattached it for me, saving me a job as I wouldn't have known how to do it. Such lovely guys he was working with too.
- Thanks to crews for stacking boxes after collection.
- Thank you for making the medical collection so easy.
- Thank you to the team who emptied our recycling boxes this morning. They worked hard, were very energetic about their tasks, left no spillage around, and we were impressed.
- Chaps at Towthorpe HWRC were really helpful.
- Thanks to the two guys working at Towthorpe Tip who helped me find my wedding ring.
- Lady at the tip was extremely helpful.
- Hazel Court staff were brilliant, really helpful and helped sort out which waste needed to go in which skip. They even helped taking items to the correct areas, making sure anything that could be recycled was.
- Hazel Court the staff were great and helped unload items.
- Parking team unbelievably helpful explaining the appeals process and making sure I had everything I needed to sort this issue out efficiently. I was never kept waiting on the phone more than a few minutes.

The good practice from the statutory processes is clear that people should be able to provide feedback and have this responded to without this being seen as a complaint. Therefore concerns, comments and requests are also recorded through the 4Cs corporate complaint policy and procedures, and these are shown below:

Number of Concerns, Comments and Requests

Directorate	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	Directorate	2024 - 2025
Corporate Services	58	28	24	Chief Operating Officer	1
Customer & Communities	203	104	60	Education	3
People	3	8	10	Environment, Transport & Planning	275
Place	1062	584	548	Finance	5
				Governance	12
				Housing and Communities	36
TOTAL	1326	724	642		332

42 Who can make a complaint

The council's 4Cs corporate complaint policy and procedures states we will accept complaints from

- a member of public or anyone acting on behalf of a customer with the proper authority and consent,

And using any of the following contact methods:

- in person
- by phone
- by letter
- by email
- through our website. www.york.gov.uk

43 Grading of complaints

The CGT assess the appropriate grade to investigate a complaint or to refer to the relevant Ombudsman, taking account of issues such as:

- risk to the customer and the authority
- severity of the risk
- whether the issues in question are a one off, are a reoccurrence and likelihood of reoccurrence.

44 Response times

It is considered good practice that a key requirement of a complaint procedure is the importance of informing service users of the outcome of their complaints in an appropriate time. The timescales set out in the 4Cs corporate complaint policy and procedures are:

- grade one - 20 working days (10 for housing complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman Service guidance)
- grade two - 30 working days (20 for housing complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman Service guidance)

In addition to the above all complaints under the 4Cs corporate complaint policy and procedures were investigated and responded to by the CGT which means these were conducted independently and impartially.

Details of complaints

45 Grade one complaints

Primary theme by directorate

2023 - 2024	Staff attitude	Disagree with assess - ment	Disagree with policy	Discrimination	Inappropriate action	Lack of action	Quality of advice, communication/work	TOTAL
Corporate Services	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	3
Customer & Communities	-	2	9	-	19	13	6	49
People	-	-	-	-	2	5	-	7
Place	-	14	73	-	43	229	27	386
Total	-	16	83	-	65	248	33	445

2024 - 2025	Staff attitude	Disagree with assess - ment	Disagree with policy	Discrimination	Inappropriate action	Lack of action	Quality of advice, communication/work	TOTAL
Chief Operating Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	-	2	-	-	1	9	-	12
Environment, Transport & Planning	1	21	129	-	32	321	20	524
Finance	-	9	7	-	14	27	7	64
Governance	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Housing & Communities	-	6	11	1	20	115	17	170
Total	1	38	147	1	67	473	45	772

Outcome by directorate

2023 - 2024	Upheld	Not upheld	Partly upheld	Not pursued	No response	%*	Not proven	Resolved Without Investigation	TOTAL
Corporate Services	2	-	-	1	-		-		3
Customer & Communities	10	27	6	3	1		1	1	49
People	-	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	7
Place	187	98	73	18	4		4	2	386
Total	199	128	83	22	5		5	3	445

2024 - 2025	Upheld	Not upheld	Partly upheld	Not pursued	No response	%*	Not proven	Resolved Without Investigation	TOTAL
Chief Operating Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	3	12
Environment, Transport & Planning	214	163	45	37	5	-	-	60	524
Finance	12	41	4	1	1	2%	1	4	64
Governance	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Housing & Communities	77	38	19	9	-	-	2	25	170
Total	308	247	68	47	6	-	3	93	772

%* are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

Responding in time performance by directorate

2023 - 2024	In time	%*	Out of time	%*	Not pursued	%*	TOTAL
Corporate Service	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	3
Customers & Communities	34	69%	14	29%	1	2%	49
People	3	43%	4	57%	-	-	7
Place	212	55%	156	40%	18	5%	386
Total	250	56%	175	39%	20	5%	445

2024 - 2025	In time	%*	Out of time	%*	Not pursued	%*	TOTAL
Chief Operating Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	8	67%	4	33%	-	-	12
Environment, Transport & Planning	170	32%	317	60%	37	7%	524
Finance	34	53%	29	45%	1	2%	64
Governance	2	100%	-	-	-	-	2
Housing & Communities	59	35%	102	60%	9	5%	170
Total	273	35%	452	59%	47	6%	772

%* are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

24 of the 29 out of time were completed within 30 working days.

46 Grade Two Complaints

Primary theme by directorate

2023 - 2024	Staff attitude	Disagree with assessment	Disagree with policy	Discrimination	Inappropriate action	Lack of action	Quality of advice, communication/work	TOTAL
Corporate Services	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Customer & Communities	-	1	7	-	5	4	-	17
People	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3
Place	-	26	601	1	141	140	15	924
Total	-	27	609	1	148	146	15	946

2024 - 2025	Staff attitude	Disagree with assessment	Disagree with policy	Discrimination	Inappropriate action	Lack of action	Quality of advice, communication/work	TOTAL
Chief Operating Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	-	2	-	-	2	2	-	6
Environment, Transport & Planning	-	13	95	-	10	167	8	293
Finance	-	4	4	-	1	3	2	14
Governance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housing & Communities	-	3	5	-	9	23	7	47
Total	-	22	104	-	22	195	17	360

Outcome by directorate

2023 - 2024	Upheld	Not upheld	Partly upheld	Not pursued	No response	%*	Not proven	Resolved Without Investigation	TOTAL
Corporate Services	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Customer & Communities	3	11	3	-	-	-	-	-	17
People	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Place	757	102	33	24	5		1	2	924
Total	761	116	36	25	5		1	2	946

2024 - 2025	Upheld	Not upheld	Partly upheld	Not pursued	No response	%*	Not proven	Resolved Without Investigation	TOTAL
Chief Operating Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	1	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	
Environment, Transport & Planning	206	49	16	7	7	2%	-	8	293
Finance	1	12	-	-	-	-	-	1	14
Governance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housing & Communities	17	20	3	2	-	-	-	5	47
Total	225	84	20	10	7		-	14	360

Responding in time performance by directorate

2023 – 2024	In time	%*	Out of time	%*	Not pursued	%*	TOTAL
Corporate Service	1	50%	-	-	1	50%%	2
Customers & Communities	10	59%	7	41%	-	-	17
People	-	-	3	100%	-	-	3
Place	816		83		25		924
Total	827		93		26		946

2024 - 2025	In time	%*	Out of time	%*	Not pursued	%*	TOTAL
Chief Operating Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	-	0%	5	83%	1	17%	6
Environment, Transport & Planning	165	56%	121	41%	7	2%	293
Finance	1	7%	13	93%	-	-	14
Governance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housing & Communities	6	13%	39	83%	2	4%	47
Total	172	48%	178	49%	10	3%	360

%* are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

47 Learning lessons/practice Improvements

The council is always happy to consider appropriate ways of resolving a customer's complaint including meeting with customers to hear their concerns and suggestions for improvements and putting these improvements into place.

Most complaints logged at grade 2 as a disagreement with policy, are again about the current policy of advising residents that the council will not pay for a replacement bin, when they report their bin has been damaged or gone missing after being collected.

It is however noted there is a significant reduction in the complaints being recorded at grade 2 disagreeing with policy. It is considered this is in part due to the change in policy for replacement and missed collections relating to green waste, part way through this reporting period.

However, the ongoing waste services policy means that when grey, household bins are reported damaged or lost, residents will continue to be told they must pay for a replacement. This means residents either must pay for a replacement or make a complaint to reach an appropriate resolution.

This creates additional time and trouble for members of the public, or costs for those who feel unable or unwilling to make a complaint. This is in addition to the additional work needed by council officers to respond to and resolve the complaints.

Complaints provide senior managers with useful information in respect of the way that services are delivered, so that improvements can be made. The CGT is collaborating with teams across the council to ensure learning from complaints is leading to improvements in services and that evidence of actions being completed are provided.

Some of the actions taken by services in addition to apologies and financial recompense are:

- Replacement waste containers, free of charge.
- Crew reminders and monitoring.
- Review of procedures.
- Repairs completed.
- Review of staff training and guidance.
- Agreements about frequency of updates.
- Refund of charges.
- Updated public information to ensure it is clear, accurate and up to date.
- Updated recording systems.

- Review of processes to ensure that complaints and repair issues are properly logged and responded to.
- Provide written information to residents.

As the council is committed to transparency and where there is no conflict or risk to the complainant's interest or could compromise their anonymity, we have included the summary details of the LGSCO findings at Annex 1.

48 Payments

The council provides financial recompense if, after a complaint has been investigated or as part of an LGSCO's or HOS investigation, it is concluded that the LGSCO or HOS would find that there has been maladministration by the council causing injustice to the complainant; and would recommend that financial recompense should therefore be paid to the complainant. The following table sets out the payments made during this reporting period which is reduction from the amount of £8638.00 last year.

Details of payments made

HSO Order – For delayed complaint stage 2 response	£50.00
HSO Order - in recognition of its handling of the resident's reports of water ingress, damp, and mould.	£850.00
In recognition of its poor complaint handling	£250.00
LGSCO action - in recognition of failure to investigate a building control issue and delay in responding to the complaint and failure to keep in contact.	£150.00
Complaint action – standard of modernisation work.	£100.00
Complaint action – to recompense for damage to clothing because of delays in completing repairs.	£75.00
Complaint action – in recognition of the inconvenience, time trouble and upset from delays in responding to the complaint.	£200.00
Complaint action – in recognition of the inconvenience from delays completing repairs.	£50.00
Total	£1,725.00

49 Alternative dispute resolution

Based on the good practice guidance in the statutory complaints' procedures, the council also considers whether there would be an appropriate alternative way of resolving complaints rather than completing an investigation.

Alternatives which may be considered include mediation, the opportunity to meet with senior managers, requests for service areas to action the outcomes being requested, where this is proportionate, or the possibility of contributing to the review of policies and procedures.

Cases received by the LGSCO

Category	Received
Benefits & Tax	17/06/2024
Education & Children's Services	05/04/2024
Housing	12/04/2024
Planning & Development	04/04/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	16/04/2024
Planning & Development	18/04/2024
Adult Care Services	12/04/2024
Adult Care Services	23/04/2024
Adult Care Services	18/06/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	20/06/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	26/06/2024
Highways & Transport	26/06/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	18/06/2024
Adult Care Services	15/07/2024
Adult Care Services	12/07/2024
Planning & Development	07/08/2024
Highways & Transport	30/07/2024
Adult Care Services	12/08/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	21/08/2024
Adult Care Services	27/08/2024
Highways & Transport	31/08/2024
Planning & Development	04/09/2024
Planning & Development	01/09/2024
Benefits & Tax	24/09/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	23/09/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	25/09/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	30/09/2024
Adult Care Services	01/10/2024
Housing	09/10/2024
Education & Childrens Services	03/10/2024
Planning & Development	22/10/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	24/10/2024
Housing	24/10/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	31/10/2024
Other	04/11/2024
Planning & Development	11/11/2024
Benefits & Tax	14/11/2024
Highways & Transport	07/01/2025
Highways & Transport	02/12/2024
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	13/01/2025
Housing	17/01/2025
Adult Care Services	21/01/2025
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	23/01/2025
Corporate & Other Services	10/02/2025
Housing	03/03/2025

Adult Care Services	05/03/2025
Adult Care Services	17/03/2025
Benefits & Tax	25/03/2025
Corporate & Other Services	20/03/2025
Corporate & Other Services	21/03/2025
Benefits & Tax	26/03/2025
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	27/03/2025
Benefits & Tax	27/03/2025

Cases decided by the LGSCO

Abbreviations

Mal – maladministration

Inj – injustice

PA – person affected (customer/complainant)

Rep – representative for the PA

Category	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy
Housing	29/04/2024	Not Upheld	no fault	
Adult Care Services	18/06/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology, Provide training and/or guidance
Education & Childrens Services	15/10/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble
Adult Care Services	27/06/2024	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Provide training and/or guidance, Procedure or policy change/review
Corporate & Other Services	11/04/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
Housing	05/06/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Benefits & Tax	18/06/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(a) tribunal Other	
Education & Childrens Services	16/05/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - referred to Organisation	
Education & Childrens Services	09/09/2024	Not Upheld	no fault	
Benefits & Tax	11/04/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Adult Care Services	18/04/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Other reason not to investigate	
Adult Care Services	12/02/2025	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Financial Redress: Quantifiable Loss,

Category	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy
				Provide services to person affected
Planning & Development	12/04/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Housing	17/06/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	At request of complainant	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	09/05/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Sch 5.5A/5.5B Social housing landlord	
Planning & Development	09/05/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	No worthwhile outcome achievable by investigation	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	16/04/2024	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised	
Planning & Development	05/06/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	S26(1) Not an admin function of authority	
Adult Care Services	22/05/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Adult Care Services	26/03/2025	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, provide services/information to others affected
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	20/06/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	26/06/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Highways & Transport	21/08/2024	Upheld	Injustice remedied during LGO consideration	Provide services to person affected
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	04/07/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(c) Court remedy	
Adult Care Services	08/11/2024	Not Upheld	At request of complainant	
Adult Care Services	12/07/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Planning & Development	07/08/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Highways & Transport	17/09/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Other Agency better placed	
Adult Care Services	04/02/2025	Closed after initial enquiries	Other reason not to investigate	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	21/08/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	

Category	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy
Adult Care Services	04/11/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Highways & Transport	15/10/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
Planning & Development	29/10/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
Planning & Development	11/03/2025	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology, Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, New appeal/review or reconsidered decision
Benefits & Tax	22/10/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	28/11/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - referred to Organisation	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	04/12/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	No worthwhile outcome achievable by investigation	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	06/11/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Adult Care Services	01/10/2024	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised	
Housing	09/10/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Planning & Development	18/12/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	24/10/2024	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Housing	24/10/2024	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised	
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	16/12/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
Other	04/11/2024	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised	
Benefits & Tax	09/12/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(a) tribunal Other	
Highways & Transport	21/02/2025	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
Housing	17/01/2025	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	

Category	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	23/01/2025	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	
Benefits & Tax	27/03/2025	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	

Compliance with Agreed Remedies

Category	Decided	Remedy	Remedy Target Date	Remedy Achieved Date	Satisfaction with Compliance
Education & Childrens Services	27/02/2024	Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble New appeal/review or reconsidered decision Provide training and/or guidance	23/04/2024	17/04/2024	Remedy complete and satisfied
Adult Care Services	17/06/2024	Apology Provide training and/or guidance	18/07/2024	16/07/2024	Remedy complete and satisfied
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	05/03/2024	Apology Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble Provide services to person affected Procedure or policy change/review	05/06/2024	17/06/2024	Remedy complete and satisfied
Education & Childrens Services	14/10/2024	Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble	12/11/2024	12/11/2024	Remedy complete and satisfied
Adult Care Services	26/06/2024	Apology Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble Provide training and/or guidance Procedure or policy change/review	27/09/2024	26/09/2024	Remedy complete and satisfied

Category	Decided	Remedy	Remedy Target Date	Remedy Achieved Date	Satisfaction with Compliance
Highways & Transport	20/08/2024	Provide services to person affected	21/08/2024	20/08/2024	Remedy completed late

City of York Council – Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report (April 2024 – March 2025): Statement by the Member Responsible for Complaints

Introduction

The Council, as a social housing landlord, owns and manages housing stock and delivers landlord services. In this capacity, the Council is the governing body with direct accountability for complaint handling performance and compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Service's (HOS) statutory complaint handling code.

The code requires landlords to:

- embed a positive complaint handling culture;
- undertake annual self-assessments; and
- publish compliance reports to demonstrate transparency and learning.

To ensure these obligations are met, governance responsibilities rest with the Council's elected members and senior leadership, who are responsible for promoting openness, accountability, and continuous improvement in housing services.

As part of the Council's governance framework, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee plays a critical role in holding the Council to account. In fulfilling this function, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee received the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for April 2024 to March 2025. This scrutiny and approach reflects the Council's commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in complaint handling, in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

Acknowledgement

The report was presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on Monday 10 November 2025, and it noted the following:

- the report provides a comprehensive overview of complaints performance, including volumes, response times, outcomes, and learning from complaints.
- service improvements identified through complaint learning have been implemented, with further actions planned to enhance customer experience.

The report also confirms that the council has undertaken a self-assessment of its complaint handling processes. This provides assurance that the council's approach is fully compliant with the HOS complaint handling code and reflects best practice in delivering fair, transparent, and effective complaint resolution. Completing the self-assessment demonstrates the council's ongoing commitment to accountability and continuous improvement, ensuring residents receive a high standard of service and that concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.

The report will also be presented to the next Executive meeting for their consideration and noting on behalf of the Council as the governing body.

Commitment to continuous improvement

The Council as the governing body recognises that complaints are a valuable source of insight and learning and supports the following commitments:

- maintaining a positive complaints culture, ensuring accessibility and fairness for all residents.
- monitoring performance regularly and using complaints data to inform service improvements.
- ensuring staff training, processes and systems remain aligned with the HOS complaint handling code, including the two-stage complaint process and published timescales.
- publishing this statement on the council's website, as required by the HOS complaint handling code.

Future actions

The Council as the governing body notes areas for further improvement highlighted in the report and endorses plans to:

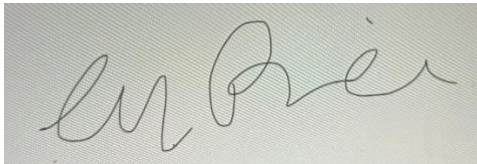
- strengthen communication with residents about complaint processes and outcomes.
- enhance root cause analysis to reduce recurring issues.
- continue to improve staff training and systems to increase complaint handling efficiency.

Conclusion

Ahead of the report being considered at the next Executive decision session for noting, I confirm approval of the Annual Complaints

Performance and Service Improvement Report and reaffirm our commitment to compliance with the HOS complaint handling code and to delivering improved outcomes for residents.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M Pavlovic', is written on a light-colored, textured background.

Councillor Michael Pavlovic
Member of Executive
Member Responsible for Complaints
Date: 17 November 2025

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Meeting:	Combined Executive Member Decision Session
Meeting date:	2 December 2025
Report of:	Director of Environment & Regulatory Services
Portfolio of:	Councillor Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning & Safer Communities

Decision Report: Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note

Subject of Report

1. To enable the council to publish guidance on caring for historic windows and considering changes.

Benefits and Challenges

2. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas.
3. Owners of any type of building have the challenge of maintaining them but for historic buildings owners they often also have to navigate more controls and requirements. So being able to easily find simple good guidance is important- to encourage desirable actions and minimise the time and expense of pursuing options that might not be supported.
4. The purpose of the proposed guidance is to briefly: better inform owners of how to care for windows; to categorise changes that will likely (or not) require permission; and to suggest some desirable approaches.
5. A key benefit of the recommended decision to publish council guidance is that it would support delivery of local and national policy objectives as briefly described in the *Policy Basis for Decision* section.

6. Another key benefit is that publishing this guidance creates resource efficiency for design and conservation team by minimising the volume of queries for this matter.

Policy Basis for Decision

7. Local policy:

- Publishing this guidance would assist Key Commitments of The Council Plan 2023-27 with examples as follows:
 - “Equalities & Human Rights”: Making it easier for everyone to access council guidance.
 - “Affordability”: Potentially reducing the cost of unnecessary planning applications; helping to effectively maintain significant owner assets to avoid unnecessary replacements; assisting the public to make appropriate adaptations to historic windows to reduce heating bills.
 - “Climate”: Assisting the public to make appropriate adaptations to historic windows to help combat climate change.
 - “Health”: Assisting the public to make improvements that potentially improve thermal comfort and air quality of rooms.
- York Local Plan 2017-2033: The proposal would support policies D1, D4, D5, D7, D11 & D12 on placemaking and heritage. It would also support policies CC2 (part C) on climate change.

8. National Policy:

- Where permissions are required: assisting compliance with *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, special controls in respect of buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.
- Where permissions are required: assisting considerations made in accordance with *The National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Financial Strategy Implications

9. There are no direct financial implications of the publication of this guidance.

Recommendation and Reasons

10. The Executive Member is asked to:

i: Agree to publish the “*Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note*” on the council’s web site.

Reasons: To assist the public and enable efficient delivery of council services.

ii: Agree to delegate to Head of Planning & Development Services the approval of any future review of this guidance, and subsequent editing and re-publication, necessary from time to time to ensure it is kept up to date.

Reasons: To ensure guidance is kept up to date with national policy and enable efficient delivery of council services.

Background

11. Proposed changes to historic windows are a common type of local planning authority enquiry and application.
12. There can also be confusion over what is or is not required and what the council’s likely approach will be when assessing these applications.
13. There is a clear demand to make this process easier and effective for residents. This guidance will hopefully assist. Whilst a specific Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is not prioritised at this stage, this guidance will be linked to the production of SPDs, where relevant, such as those being produced for Housing and Climate Change.

Consultation Analysis

14. This is a simple report and the proposed guidance is brief and it has not been considered necessary to undertake a public consultation.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

15. The simple nature of this Decision Report means there is not a range of options to analyse here.

16.

Organisational Impact and Implications

17. The implications are as follows:

- a) Finance: There are no additional costs associated with the recommendations set out in the report.
- b) Legal: No implications.
- c) Environment and climate Action: Repairs and upgrades to windows potentially reduce heat loss and conserve resources.
- d) Human Resources (HR): No implications.
- e) Procurement: No implications.
- f) Health & Wellbeing: Repairs and upgrades to windows potentially improve thermal comfort and air quality.
- g) Affordability: Publication of free guidance potentially reduces unnecessary costs.
- h) Equalities and Human Rights: Publication of free guidance makes access to information more equitable.
- i) Data Protection and Privacy: No implications.
- j) Communications: No implications.
- k) Economy: No implications.

Risks and Mitigations

18. There are no known risks.

Wards Impacted

19. All wards are impacted by the decisions and recommendations contained within the report.

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

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Date:	20/11/2025

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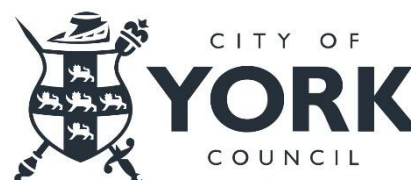
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Date:	20/11/2025

Background papers

Annex 1: Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note, December 2025

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Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note, December 2025



Aims of this note

1. This note is a very brief overview for the general public for those seeking good practice guidance when caring for historic windows and considering change. For detailed guidance a selection of references and links are provided at the end.
2. When referring to “historic windows” this normally means aged timber windows of traditional design and construction, that contribute to the building’s special interest, but it can include more recent authentic replacement timber windows that also contribute in this way. It can also include early steel framed windows.
3. “Historic glazing” refers to glass produced before modern float glass. This usually pre dates the 1950s and signs of this glass include mild visual distortions.

Overview

4. *“The loss of traditional windows from our older buildings poses one of the major threats to our heritage. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas. They are an integral part of the design of older buildings and can be important artefacts in their own right, often made with great skill and ingenuity with materials of a higher quality than are generally available today. The distinctive appearance of historic hand-made glass is not easily imitated in modern glazing.”* (Historic England: Traditional Windows, Their care, Repair & Upgrading. Feb 2017)
5. Therefore loss of historic windows needs careful consideration and may not be supported. Section 3 gives brief guidance for different types of work.

6. Regular care and maintenance reduces the need for costly interventions at a later date. A well maintained window with good draft proofing will also perform better for thermal comfort.
7. Try to be objective about thermal performance and carbon reduction, so decisions can be based on facts and not assumptions or incomplete company marketing perspectives. For instance adding internal secondary glazing can reduce heat loss comparable to some new double glazing. As another example, the embodied energy of uPVC windows and the need to replace these units over time, can have worse carbon impacts compared to retaining single glazed timber windows in good condition when introducing other window upgrades. Historic England's *Know Your home, Know Your Carbon* is a good guide on this subject.
8. Changes to windows can impact on condensation and damp throughout the building. Glazing should be the coldest part of an external wall, so if replacing windows improves their thermal efficiency and reduces airflow in damp buildings, then condensation can be transferred to other parts of the building, potentially hidden within walls, and this can lead to rapid decay of historic fabric. So proposals for windows might need to be considered together with other building changes to avoid problems.
9. Different types of change to windows have different degrees of carbon benefits and different degrees of impact, and so an optimal balance between these factors should be sought. This usually means retaining existing fabric and minimising interventions, where possible.
10. For certainty on permissions and detailed advice on adapting windows please consult with the local planning authority (LPA), particularly for listed buildings. We recommend using a preapplication advice service, or listed building consent application, if appropriate.

Types of work

11. Painting windows

- Impact: Low
- Permissions: Where not a listed building in a conservation area this will not normally require permission. Where a listed building, houses or commercial buildings this will also not normally require permission, particularly if using the same colour or muted tones. Painting shopfronts will not normally require permission and more flexibility is generally considered for colour choice.

12. Repairing windows on a listed building:

- Impact: Low
- Permissions: Replacement of small timber elements such as a rotted sill with quality new timber, matched profiles, and a good standard of work will not require permission. Repair of broken/cracked glass will not require permission when replaced with similar glass ie single glazing replaced with single glazing. Draught proofing does not usually require permission.
- Comment: Often windows look in worse condition than they actually are. Repairs should seek minimal intervention.

13. Adding internal secondary glazing, listed building

- Impact: Low
- Permissions: A good design choice and frame position are important. Conversely, bad choices can cause unacceptable harm. For a clear recommendation on permissions, seek advice from the LPA.
- Comment: Secondary glazing is usually a preferred method of improving thermal/sound/comfort performance of single glazed windows because if well designed, it will only have limited impacts on historic fabric. It can also achieve comparable performance to replacement new double glazed timber windows with correct design choice (including Low-E glass type). If subdivision of secondary glazing is needed, the proportions/frames should align with the external windows e.g glazing bars should line through etc. There are rare exceptions where internal secondary glazing is not recommended: For

instance, there might be unacceptable impacts on internal shutters or historic joinery.

14. Replacement of existing glazing with slimline or vacuum double glazing whilst keeping existing frames, listed building

- Impact: Medium
- Permissions: Will require listed building consent unless replacing panes within a clearly modern window.
- Comment: When permission is required this proposal is usually acceptable if the following circumstances apply: (1) windows are not leaded lights; (2) windows don't contain historic glass; (3) window frames can accommodate any additional rebate necessary to install replacement glazing in the same outer face position. These types of units are thicker and heavier and should not compromise the long term stability of existing frames, including a consideration of the need for future intervention and replacement.

15. Replacement of existing windows with double glazed windows, listed building

- Impact: High
- Permissions: Is highly likely to require listed building consent.
- Comment: When permission is required, an application will consider the contribution existing windows have on the building's special interest. For instance, if the windows are recent and don't contribute to a building's special interest then their replacement in double glazing with an appropriate design can be neutral or positive. Alternatively, windows that contribute to a building's special interest are important to retain rather than replace, and replacement will not usually be supported.
- Comment: Where a replacement is agreed in principle then design, detail and materials will be important. For instance, expect uPVC not to be an acceptable material for windows in a listed building.

16. Replacement of existing historic windows with double or triple glazed windows, not a listed building but in a conservation area

- Impact: Medium
- Permissions: The need for permissions vary. As a guide, they are generally more permissive than those for listed buildings. Most unlisted houses have permitted development rights to replace windows if considered by the planning authority (not the owner) to be a like-for-like replacement. Checking with the LPA what like-for-like means in detail is recommended as it is subject to interpretation. Regardless of standard permitted development rules, some houses might be in an area that have certain rights removed by an Article 4 direction. Also, permitted development rights afforded to houses do not apply to other building types like flats or commercial buildings.
- Comment: Good practice guidance for maintaining historic windows in listed buildings is also useful to inform proposals for historic windows in unlisted buildings, regardless of the need for permissions.
- Comment: When permission is required, replacements are usually supported, subject to good design. One guiding consideration will be the impact the proposal has on the special interest of the conservation area. For instance, if traditional timber windows contribute to the special interest of the area and are the dominant window type, then a replacement window should also be a traditional design type. This usually means a window of timber construction (uPVC is usually unable to replicate the design detail and glazing bar proportion of traditional timber windows). Double or triple glazing will usually be supported.

Further information

17. The following are a selection of guides containing more detailed information on the general care of historic windows
18. Historic England:
 - ["Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency"](#), July 2024 (HEAN 18)

- [“Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading”](#), Feb 2017
 - [“Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: Draught-proofing windows and doors”](#), April 2016
 - [“Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: Insulating dormer windows”](#), April 2016
 - [“Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: Secondary glazing for windows”](#), April 2016
19. Historic Environment Scotland
- [“Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Windows”](#), Feb 2020
20. Department for Communities, Northern Ireland
- [“Guidance for Historic Windows”](#), June 2024



Meeting:	Executive Decision-Making Session
Meeting date:	2 December 2025
Report of:	Garry Taylor Director of City Development
Portfolio of:	Cllr Katie Lomas Executive Member for Finance, Performance, Major Projects, Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion

Decision Report: Advertising/Bus Shelter Contract

Subject of Report

1. The Council has had a concession contract in place for a concessionaire to provide and maintain bus shelters with either no advertising, paper adverts or Free-Standing Units (**FSUs**) since 15 July 1999. This contract ended on 31 December 2024.
2. Following the expiry of the 1999 concession contract, the incumbent supplier was required to remove and repossess the illuminated information panels and the columns and the advertising bus shelters (referred to as the “**Equipment**” in the 1999 concession contract) and the non-advertising bus shelters (referred to as the “**Other Equipment**” in the 1999 concession contract) and to make good the sites in readiness for the Council’s new supplier within a reasonable period of time after the expiry of the previous contract on 31 December 2024.
3. The Council therefore entered into a Service Level Agreement (“**SLA**”) with the incumbent supplier on 10 January 2025. It set out the terms under which the parties agreed for the incumbent supplier to repossess and remove all items of Equipment and Other Equipment and make good the sites in readiness for the Council’s new supplier. It was agreed that the SLA would be for twelve-months, expiring on 31 December 2025. This would allow

for a compliant procurement process to be completed for the new concession contract, as well as allow for the smooth transition from the incumbent supplier to the Council's new supplier.

4. Since the Executive's approval in May 2024, officers have worked through the risks identified to the Executive. Despite the best efforts of all parties involved, however, a further extension of the SLA is required, to allow for the installation plan to be completed. A longstop date of 31 October 2026 has been negotiated with both the incumbent and the new supplier.
5. This report seeks approval to enter a new SLA with the incumbent supplier for a further 10-months, commencing on 1 January 2026 and expiring on 31 October 2026, to ensure ongoing maintenance of the shelters and a smooth removal and installation of the new shelters. This will minimise the impact on residents.

Benefits and Challenges

6. An independent market appraisal to understand the value of place-based advertising across the city concluded that the end of the bus shelter advertising concession contract (dated 15 July 1999) on 31 December 2024 provided an opportunity for York to reshape the specification, to maximise the opportunity to the Council, whilst recognising the market shift from paper to digital.
7. The Executive approved initiating the competitive procurement process on 9 May 2024. This led ultimately to the appointment of a new supplier, with an installation plan to be negotiated between the incumbent and new supplier.
8. The Council entered into an SLA with the incumbent supplier on 10 January 2025. This was in line with the original concession contract. It set out the terms under which the parties agreed for the incumbent supplier to repossess and remove all items of Equipment and Other Equipment and make good the Sites in readiness for the Council's new supplier.
9. It was agreed that the SLA would be for a 12-months, expiring on 31 December 2025.
10. The Executive were originally made aware of the installation risks in May 2024, at the time of approving the initiation of the

procurement process. These risks and associated challenges remain. Installation initially stalled as negotiations continued with planning, highways and conservation teams to support a shift from paper to digital whilst retaining the unique character of the city.

11. Further, a small number of shelter removals by the incumbent supplier took place during summer 2025. The removal of these shelters led to some concerns from residents, noting the detrimental impact on vulnerable groups who would be exposed to adverse weather. These removals demonstrated the likely impact on residents of a full-scale unmanaged removal process and has reinforced the value of a managed and measured removal and installation plan.

Policy Basis for Decision

12. Entering into a new SLA with an expiry date of 31 October 2026 will allow the incumbent to continue to maintain and provide the existing bus shelters and will ensure residents are not disadvantaged by their removal.
13. The delivery of the new shelters, and subsequent installation, is staggered to allow for a managed and measured process, meaning residents are not disadvantaged and continue to benefit from the existing bus shelters.
14. The basis for the new contract, and the policy benefits it will bring, are set out in the May 2024 Executive report.

Financial Strategy Implications

15. The financial strategy assumes a total of £500k additional income for the Council from bus shelter advertising per annum. In 2025/26 there will be no additional income, and this has been assumed in current financial monitors. In future years, starting in late 2026/27, £500k could be achieved per annum but will be dependent on the level of digital advertising installed.
16. It is recognised that there will be further budget pressures in 2026/27, and this will be reported through the regular budget

monitoring reports during the year. The budget pressure will need to be managed across the department.

17. The proposed further SLA will introduce an additional pressure, as a monthly fee of £15,000 to cover servicing and maintenance of the existing bus shelters applies.
18. The terms of the new SLA, from 1 January 2025 to 31 October 2026 are generally the same as the previous year, although unlike the original SLA there is no 'sliding scale' of monthly payments.
19. The delays to the installation plan have introduced a pressure on the financial strategy that could be offset over the duration of the new supplier's contract.

Recommendation and Reasons

Recommendations

20. The Executive Member is recommended to:
 - a. Approve the new SLA with the incumbent supplier for a period of 10 months commencing on 1 January 2026 and expiring at 23:59:59 GMT on 31 October 2026, to allow the installation plan to be completed.
 - b. Delegate authority to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Head of Procurement to negotiate and conclude the proposed SLA in accordance with the terms and conditions of the current concession contract with the incumbent supplier and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules under Appendix 11 of the Council's Constitution (the "**Council's CPRs**").
 - c. Delegate authority to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Head of Procurement to negotiate and conclude any further required modifications and/or further extensions to the SLA, if deemed necessary to ensure the successful completion of the installation plan in accordance with the terms and conditions of the current concession contract with the incumbent supplier (**PROVIDED THAT** any modifications and/or further

extensions to the SLA are subject to consultation with the Executive Member before completion).

Reasons

21. The concession contract with the incumbent supplier dated 15 July 1999 expired on 31 December 2024, and the previous 12-month SLA with the incumbent supplier expires on 31 December 2025. Following Executive Member approval, the current contract mechanism of an SLA will be replicated to cover the completion of the installation plan.
22. The proposed extension to the current SLA is in line with the original concession contract and can be varied subject to agreement with the incumbent provider (please refer to the **Legal Implications** and **Procurement Implications** below).

Background

23. On 9 May 2024, Executive approved in principle to extend arrangements with the incumbent supplier by a further 12-months from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, to allow for the completion of the formal competitive exercise for the new concession contract and was also allowed for the incumbent to remove the Equipment and Other Equipment to begin preparing sites for the new supplier.
24. As the communications function sat, at that time, under the Director of Governance, authority was delegated to the Director of Governance in consultation with the Head of Procurement to negotiate and conclude the SLA in accordance with the terms and conditions of the current concession contract with the incumbent supplier and the Council's CPRs.
25. The competitive exercise for the new concession contract concluded, the outcome being that the incumbent will not enter into a new concession contract with the Council.
26. The incumbent suppliers contract expired on 31 December 2024. However, clause 21 of the contract (which survives expiry and termination), requires that following expiry of the incumbent contract, the incumbent supplier is required to repossess and remove all the Equipment and Other Equipment and make good the sites upon which they were located within a reasonable period

of time following expiry of the contract. If they fail to do so, the Council may remove and store such Equipment and Other Equipment, reinstate the relevant sites, and recover reasonable costs for doing so from the incumbent supplier.

27. With the above provisions of the incumbent contract in mind, acknowledging the need for a smooth transition from incumbent supplier to the Council's new supplier, and to allow sufficient time for both suppliers to arrange any necessary permits and consents required to carry out this work, the Council and the incumbent supplier agreed to enter into an SLA for a removal programme with a longstop date of 31 December 2025. As part of that SLA, the Council agreed to pay the incumbent supplier a monthly fee of £15,000 + VAT to cover the cleaning and maintenance of the bus shelter estate during the transition to the new supplier; this fee was scheduled to reduce to £10,000 + VAT once 50% of the Equipment and Other Equipment had been removed.
28. The Executive were made aware that on expiry of the current contract on 31 December 2024, the incumbent could technically remove all Equipment and Other Equipment belonging to them, including all the bus shelters. This has the potential to cause significant disruption to the service whilst new shelters with a new provider are installed. The original SLA was arranged to allow for a smooth transition, although the risk of service disruption remained.
29. Dependent on the efficiency of the mobilisation from the new supplier, the incumbent supplier's fee was estimated to range between £90,000 - £150,000. The total fee was dependent on the completion of the bus shelter removal programme by the original longstop date of 31 December 2025.
30. The installation plan has unfortunately been delayed for multiple reasons. This includes the complexity of planning concerns within the historical setting of York, embargo over Christmas period for highways works, and groundwork audits of bus shelters initially installed in the late 1990s.
31. There is now an urgent requirement to replicate the current SLA with incumbent supplier, to ensure bus shelters remain in situ and are maintained and cleaned, pending the completion of the installation plan. The installation plan is underway and is now expected to be delivered prior to 31 October 2026. The fee reduction from the previous SLA however will not be included in

the new SLA. The incumbent supplier has argued, and Council officers acknowledge and accept, that the reasons for this are:

- a. the increases in incumbent supplier's costs associated with changes to minimum wage and national insurance costs, costs of vehicles, travel, incidents of vandalism over the last 12 months.
- b. paper-based advertising becoming much less popular over the last 12 months, meaning the incumbent supplier has been unable to maintain their perceived level of income.
- c. as the installation programme has now slowed, to allow the Council's newly appointed supplier to install shelters as soon as possible after incumbent supplier removes the Equipment and Other Equipment, thereby limiting disruption and inconvenience to the public, this has increased the length of time the incumbent supplier needs to continue maintaining their existing assets, in this changing advertising environment.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

32. There are two options presented today:

1. Accept the recommendation above and progress with the new SLA to the incumbent supplier for a period of 10-months to allow completion of the installation plan, which is underway.
2. Reject the recommendation at the risk residents are no longer able to benefit from the provision of maintained bus shelters.

Organisational Impact and Implications

33. **Financial**

The new concession contract will provide the Council with an annual revenue comprised a minimum guarantee and profit share. Due to complexity in progressing the installation plan, a budget pressure has been introduced to the current financial strategy for 2025/26 and 2026/27. This will have to be managed across the departments' other

budgets. Additional income from the new bus shelter contract now expected from later in 2026/27. These will be offset by the anticipated income over the duration of the contract period.

The bus shelter contract mitigates additional Council expenditure by providing the bus shelters and bus shelter maintenance (see financial risks).

34. **Human Resources**

No additional resources are required to undertake this process.

35. **Legal**

Powers: The Council has power under the general power of competence under section 1(1) of Localism Act 2011 to raise income through outdoor advertising. By virtue of section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000, any function of the Council is the responsibility of the Executive unless there is a contrary intention expressed in legislation. There is nothing in the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 or the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, that indicate that a proposed concession contract (or any modification thereto) is not to be a matter for Executive.

Specific Legislation: Further to section 4 of Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, the Council can provide and maintain bus shelters on highways it is the highway authority for, and on land it owns abutting such highways, and may also enter into and carry into effect any agreement with any other party with respect to the provision and maintenance of shelters. The Council is able to allow a bus shelter provider to advertise on the highway, pursuant to the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. Outdoor advertising is also subject to a legal control system predominantly contained in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 consents would need to be in place. Where a local authority seeks planning consent from itself there is a mechanism in place to maintain probity.

36. **Procurement**

Any modification to the SLA should be made further to a written agreement between the Council and the incumbent supplier. Legal Services and Commercial Procurement must be consulted with regards to the drafting on any such variation or extension to the current SLA to

ensure compliance with the relevant law and compliance with the Council's CPRs.

37. Health and Wellbeing

The installation plan has created delays to the delivery of the new contract and as a result, the HFSS policy implementation will be delayed.

38. Environment and Climate action

The installation plan has created delays to the delivery of the new contract and as a result, the environment and climate action benefits from the new supplier implementation will be delayed.

39. Affordability

No affordability impacts are expected as bus shelters are provided to residents free of charge. The cost to the Council is covered in the financial implications sector.

40. Equalities and Human Rights

The installation plan has created delays to the delivery of the new contract and as a result, the accessibility benefits from the new supplier implementation will be delayed.

41. Data Protection and Privacy

The DPIA screening questions were completed for this report and as there is no personal data being processed for the options set out in this report, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA. This will be reviewed where required following the decision on this report.

42. Communications

A communications plan has been developed to support the Installation Plan which will take a staged approach across the city.

43. Economy

No impact.

Risks and Mitigations

44. The opportunities for income uplift through advertising revenue are significant, which goes some way towards mitigating the risks outlined below.

Market acceptance risk: The out-of-home advertising market is no longer developing 100% paper advertising, given the increasing move to digital which now represents 75% of revenue. As such, there is a risk that if digital advertising is not supported, the new supplier will renegotiate the terms of the contract that mitigate the costs of this extension, as the new contract will no longer be commercially viable.

Financial risk: Financial risks relate to a) additional financial pressure on current year's budget as a consequence of delaying the competitive tender continue b) failure to realise the opportunities for increased income as set out in the Executive report in May 2024; and c) If the extended agreement does not go forward, this could expose the Council to having to develop and maintain its own bus shelter estate at an initial fee of around £1.4m in Capex (asset, foundations, installation, power connection) as well as an ongoing annual operational costs of around £250k-£300k, taking into account electricity costs, business rates and associated cleaning and maintenance costs.

Installation risks relate to whether as a planning authority, and constraints imposed by conservation areas, the ability to switch from paper to digital is possible, with the risk that revenue is compromised leading to either delays in installation or a renegotiation by the new supplier.

Reputation Although the digital advertising units have been tested and are designed to be no more obtrusive than existing bus shelter advertising units, residents might not support them and will make representations through Planning. Resident engagement will take place once the installation plan has been completed. In addition, the test of a small number of bus shelters that were removed in August, has demonstrated the considerable scrutiny and

reputational impact of shelters being removed without replacements ready and in plan.

Wards Impacted

All.

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

Author

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Service Area:	City Development	City Development
Telephone:		
Report approved:	Yes	
Date:	21.11.25	

Background papers

[Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 18 April 2024, 5.30 pm](#) item 115

[Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 9 May 2024, 5.30 pm](#) item 131

Contract awarded to Clear Channel <https://uk.eu-supply.com/ctm/CMLight/Contract/Details/68419>

The decision to approve an extension for JCDecaux Ltd
1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s181347/Officer%20Decision.pdf>

Decision call-ins

[Agenda for Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee \(Calling In\) on Mon...](#) item 5

[Agenda for Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny
Management Committee \(Calling In\) on Tue...](#) item 19