

**Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny 11 October 2021  
Management Committee**

**City of York Council – Annual Complaints Report 2020 to 2021**

**Summary**

1. This report provides Members with the annual reports covering April 2020 to March 2021 in respect of:
  - Adult’s social care
  - Children’s social care
  - Corporate complaints
  
2. It includes:
  - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Housing Ombudsman Services (HOS) investigations
  - Performance levels
  - Themes
  - Payments
  - Costs of delivering the service

**Points to note from the annual report are:**

3. From the LGSCO annual letter and published performance for the reporting year are:
  - 63% of all detailed investigation were upheld. This compares to an average of 63% in similar authorities. However when considered from all decided cases, it is 27% were upheld.
  - In 100% of cases the Ombudsman was satisfied that the authority had successfully implemented their recommendations. This compares to an average of 99% in similar authorities, and sees an improvement on the previous year.

- In 17% of upheld cases, the Ombudsman found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman. This compares to an average of 10% in similar authorities. In practice this means that although the Ombudsman found there had been fault, the authority had already acknowledged this and provided an appropriate remedy. The Corporate Governance Team (CGT) are currently reviewing the way it works with an aim to being able to increase the ability to identify and offer appropriate remedies where fault has occurred.
4. The main theme from the three complaints procedures are issues with the quality of communications. We are continuing our work with service areas to make sustained improvements through staff training and awareness sessions including how to improve customers' experiences and avoid unnecessary complaints or the escalation of complaints.
  5. For complaints under the children's social care procedure there was a reduced number of complaints received from 91 in the previous year to 55 complaints in 2020 to 2021. Also there was 1 complaint handled through the corporate complaints procedure for this service, compared to 12 in the previous year.
  6. For complaints under the adult's social care procedure there was a reduced number of complaints received from 53 in the previous year to 28 complaints in 2020 to 2021. Also there were 2 complaints handled through the corporate complaints procedure, compared to 4 in the previous year.
  7. For complaints at stage 1 under the corporate procedure, there was a reduced number of complaints from 1262 in the previous year to 502 complaints at stage 1 in 2020 to 2021. However there was also 600 more comments logged and it is believed this was due to the contingency arrangements put in place at the beginning of the Covid 19 Pandemic, where cases were being picked up, responded to and resolved by the CGT before they became a complaint. These contingency arrangements allowed the CGT to investigate and respond to comments and corporate complaints (ie not social care services) and reduce the cases where no response was sent. These arrangements were incorporated into the review of the corporate complaints policy and procedures and the implementation of the 4Cs (complaints, concerns, comments and

compliments) in April 2021 and it is expected the improvements will continue.

8. Improvements were also made in the % of responses in time across all three stages from the previous year.
9. The CGT is also responsible for the provision of information governance services and performance reports for those areas are included in regular reports to Audit and Governance Committee and in the Annual Monitoring Officer report and Annual Governance Statement.

### **Consultation**

10. Not relevant for the purpose of this report.

### **Options**

11. Not relevant for the purpose of this report.

### **Analysis**

12. Not relevant for the purpose of this report.

### **Council Plan**

13. The council's policies and procedures offers assurance to its customers, employees, contractors, partners and other stakeholders that complaints are dealt with in accordance with legislation and regulations and confidentiality, integrity and availability are appropriately protected.

### **Implications**

14. Relevant implications are set out in the body of the report.

### **Risk Management**

15. The council may face financial and reputational risks if complaints are not managed effectively. For example, the Ombudsmen can find maladministration with injustice against the council, including awarding compensation to individuals.

The failure to identify, manage and learn from complaints appropriately may diminish the council's overall effectiveness.

## Recommendations

16. CMT are asked:

- To note the performance improvements made from the previous year
- To note the ongoing work required to ensure the Council meets its responsibilities under the relevant legislation for adults and children social care complaints and the recently introduced revised corporate policy and procedures for complaints, concerns, comments and compliments (the 4Cs)

## Contact Details

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Author of Annual Report Cath Murray	Report Approved	✓	Date	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
<b>Wards Affected:</b>			All	✓
For further information please contact the author of the report				

## Annexes

Annex 1 – Annual Complaints Report April 2020 to March 2021

## Background Information

Not applicable