

	Public Accounts Committee		
Title	Annual Complaints Report 2016-17		
Key decision	No	Item no	
Wards	All wards		
Contributors	Executive Director for Customer Services and Head of Public Services		
Class	Part 1	20 December 2017	

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides performance information on complaints dealt with by the Council and its housing partners at stages 1 and 2 of the Corporate Complaints procedure as well as complaints and enquiries to the Mayor, Councillors and MP's received during 2016/17. There were a total of 5,743 complaints and enquiries received in 2016/17. This represents a 33% increase when compared to 2015/16.
- 1.2 This report does not include complaints or enquiries about the provision of adult and children's social care, both of which are reported individually and publicised according to statutory guidance.
- 1.3 The Independent Adjudicator's (IA) report is attached at Appendix 1. The IA dealt with 82 complaints between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, of which she upheld or partly upheld 41% The IA responded to 80% within the 30-day response standard and identified a number of issues from the complaints and makes recommendations for improvement.
- 1.4 The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) report is attached at Appendix 2. In 2016/17, the LGO made decisions on a total of 38 cases, which is 5 more than last year – the figures are attached at Appendix 3.
- 1.5 The report summarises the progress made so far following the restructure of the Complaints and Casework function.

2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To provide information on complaints performance in 2016/17.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 3.1 Note the contents of the report.

4 Introduction

4.1 This report summarises how the Council and its housing partners performed when dealing with complaints and how it is using the feedback from complaints to improve services. The report does not cover statutory complaints received for adult and children's social care that are subject to separate reports.

4.2 Also included is a summary of the Independent Adjudicator's report and a summary of the LGO's Annual Review with the full reports attached as appendices.

5. Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, MP, Mayor and Councillor enquiries

5.1 The standard response times and responsibilities for responding to complaints at each stage are:

Stage 1 – 10 days by the Service Manager

Stage 2 – 20 days by the Head of Service or Executive Director

Stage 3 – 30 days by the Independent Adjudicator

MP/Mayor/Councillor – 10 days by the Head of Service or Executive Director

The new complaints process has been introduced for 2017/18.

5.2 The tables below show the number of complaints and enquiries dealt with by the Council in the last financial year. The tables are broken down by directorate and show the percentages dealt with in the standard response time. The statistics are for cases logged into iCasework between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017 compared with performance over the same period in 2015/2016.

Table 1 – total volume of complaints and enquires by directorate

Directorate	Total Complaints and Enquiries		
	2015/16	2016/17	Variance
Children and Young People	219	295	+35%
Community Services	254	280	+10%
Customer Services	2,414	3,633	+50%
Lewisham Homes	905	824	-9%
Resources & Regeneration	516	711	+38%
Total	4,308	5,743	+33%

Table 2 – stage 1 and stage 2 complaints by directorate with % responded on time

Directorate	Stage 1					Stage 2				
	2015/16	%	2016/17	%	Variance	2015/16	%	2016/17	%	Variance
CYP	80	81	134	77	+54	14	79	7	86	-7
Community Services	46	72	86	53	+40	4	75	2	0	-4
Customer Services	1,075	88	2,271	90	+1,196	100	58	63	80	-37
Lewisham Homes	451	90	339	96	-1,122	108	94	71	100	-37
Resources & Regeneration	135	63	299	75	+164	22	32	27	70	+5
Total	1,787	86	3,129	78	+1,342	248	73	170	67	-78

Table 3 - MP, Mayor and Members enquiries by directorate*

Directorate	MP			Mayor			Members		
	2015/16	2016/17	Variance	2015/16	2016/17	Variance	2015/16	2016/17	Variance
CYP	85 (82)	118 (24)	+33	8 (100)	1 (100)	-7	32 (88)	28 (32)	-4
Community Services	82 (35)	79 (48)	-3	44 (64)	17 (35)	-27	78(51)	69(52)	-9
Customer Services	767 (42)	808 (79)	+41	201 (52)	136 (82)	-65	271(60)	281 (81)	+10
Lewisham Homes	190 (44)	254 (79)	+64	29 (48)	47 (87)	+18	127 (87)	99 (96)	-28
Resources & Regeneration	121 (50)	136 (74)	+15	46 (44)	47 (73)	-4	192(71)	198 (89)	+6
Total	1,245 (45)	1,395 (61)	+150	328 (53)	243 (61)	-128	700 (68)	675 (70)	-25

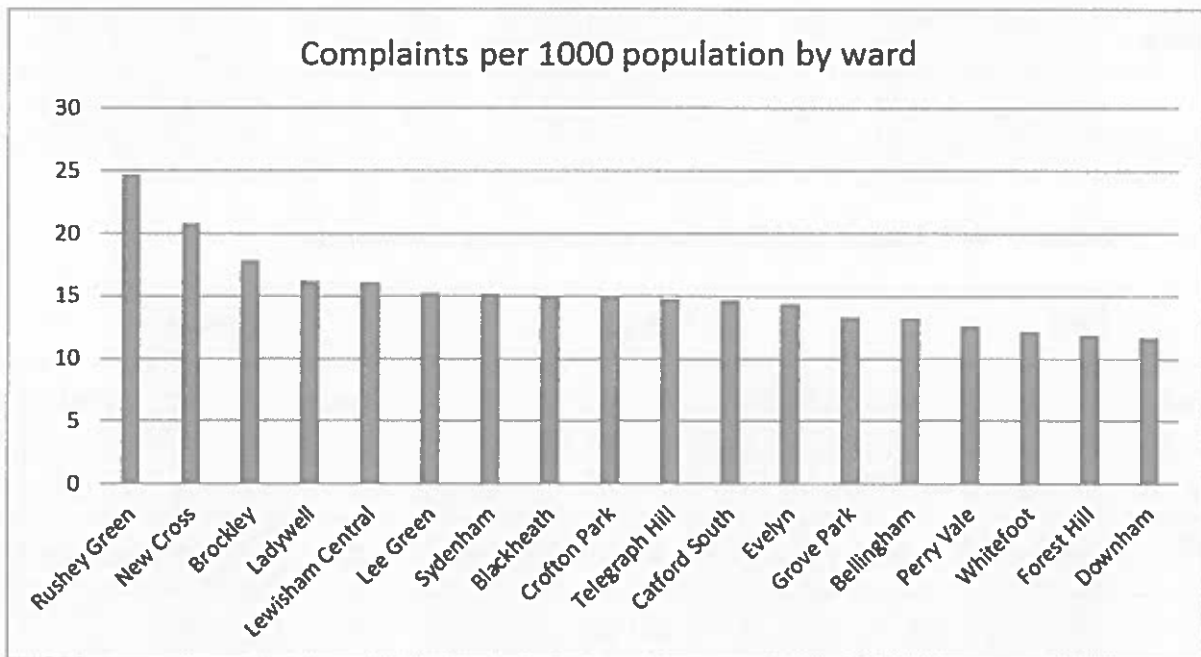
*figures in brackets denotes the percentage of cases dealt with within the specified targets

5.3 The total number of complaints and enquiries received in 2016/17 was 5,743 which was an increase of 1,435 cases (33%) on the previous year.

Complaints and enquiries by ward

5.4 The distribution of complaints received by Ward is shown below. The highest number of complaints received per 1,000 population were from residents in the Rushey Green Ward followed by New Cross Ward. The lowest number of complaints were received from residents in the Downham Ward.

Chart 1 Distribution of Complaints by ward



Source: Annual complaints data, Lewisham Council. Mid-year population Estimates by Ward for 2015, Office for National Statistics

Table 4 – Distribution of complaints by Ward

Ward	Complaints per 1000 population
Rushey Green	21
New Cross	20
Brockley	19
Ladywell	17
Evelyn	16
Telegraph Hill	14
Blackheath	13
Lee Green	11
Sydenham	10
Bellingham	9
Lewisham Central	9
Perry Vale	8
Crofton Park	8
Forest Hill	7
Catford South	6
Grove Park	6
Whitefoot	5
Downham	5

2015-2016

Ward	Complaints per 1000 population
Rushey Green	25
New Cross	21
Brockley	18
Ladywell	16
Lewisham Central	16
Lee Green	15
Sydenham	15
Blackheath	15
Crofton Park	15
Telegraph Hill	15
Catford South	15
Evelyn	14
Grove Park	13
Bellingham	13
Perry Vale	13
Whitefoot	12
Forest Hill	12
Downham	12

2016-2017

5.5 The top three wards to receive the highest level of complaints and enquires were Rushey Green, New Cross and Brockley.

5.5.1 In Rushey Green, Highways (street works) was the top reason why customers complained followed by refuse and then housing (advice and reviews). In 2015/16 Highways was the top reason why customers complained, followed by Housing and Council Tax benefit (advice and reviews).

5.5.2 The second highest ward to receive complaints and enquiries was New Cross. The top reason why customers complained was Lewisham Homes (tenancy team), Housing (advice and reviews) and then Refuse.

5.5.3 The third highest ward to receive complaints and enquiries was Brockley with the top reason for complaints being Refuse, Housing (advice and reviews) and then Council Tax.

5.5.4 Downham received the lowest level of complaints and enquiries in both financial years.

5.6 Trends

5.6.1 On analysing the reasons for complaints, the top three issues identified for 2016-17 were as follows:

1. Highways
2. Housing Needs
3. Environment

5.6.2 This top 3 has changed from the previous year at which time Housing Benefit and Council Tax were in the top 3, along with Housing Needs and Highways.

The services with the top three issues have provided comments on what has generated complaints within their service area.

5.7 Highways

- 5.7.1 There has been an increase in complaints and queries about parking in 2016-17 in part due to the implementation of new CPZs, consultation on a proposed CPZ in Deptford South and its subsequent implementation, and on consultation and implementation of two batches of minor parking amendments Orders. These Orders contain multiple new or amended parking restrictions that cover the whole borough.
- 5.7.2 In addition, there has been significant correspondence in relation to large schemes, such as the new Streetscape scheme in Dartmouth Road.
- 5.7.3 There were many enquiries centred around the creation of and enforcement of the 20mph speed limit, and requests for traffic data that has been collected in the months following the implementation
- 5.7.4 Finally, there has been an extensive programme of road resurfacing this year and that has generated some correspondence, and complaints.
- 5.7.5 Highways are receiving increasing numbers of queries on the provision of electric vehicle charging points, and more requests from residents for measures to remove traffic, in particular HGVs from residential areas. This is set to continue during 2017-18.

5.8 Housing Needs.

- 5.8.1 Housing Needs, encompassing the Housing Options Centre and SHIP (Single Homeless Intervention and Prevention, Homesearch, etc) remains one of the top 3 areas generating the most complaints. The reasons have generally been the same as previous years-
- the decreasing amount of social housing, coupled with an increase in housing need resulting in all housing applicants waiting very long periods for an offer of housing
 - huge numbers of households in insecure temporary accommodation awaiting more permanent housing
 - the suitability and/or location of temporary accommodation
 - dissatisfaction with being placed out of Lewisham, or out of London as a whole due to the shortage of accommodation in borough
- 5.8.2 There has been a slight spike in the number of complaints and enquiries for the Allocations & Lettings Team relating to the online housing register application process (Homesearch). Customers find it hard to navigate the system to apply for the housing register. In addition, customers are finding Homesearch adverts difficult to understand, resulting in them not bidding for the most appropriate homes.
- 5.8.3 Housing Needs believe that the new Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) may potentially increase enquiries/complaints however, most of these will be dealt with under a statutory process. They anticipate that they will have a better idea of the impact of the HRA once it is live, at which time the department will adapt and review their ways of working around any issues that arise.

5.8.4 Another area that is also likely to cause complaints and enquiries is the increasing number of private sector offers being made in discharge of the Council's homeless duty. Applicants are disappointed when they do not receive an offer of social housing. Again, there is a statutory process to deal with suitability reviews but customers often approach their elected representative also to receive support with their case.

5.9 Environment

5.9.1 The main areas that generate complaints under Environment are waste services and cleansing (including, street sweeping abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping).

5.9.2 There has also been a slight increase in fly tipping complaints. Again, due to budget restraints, we cannot remove fly-tipping as quickly as we used to. The authority continues to pursue formal enforcement action and where appropriate, prosecutions are commenced against any individual or business carrying out fly tipping. However, officer resources are limited and therefore cases have to be prioritised. This can mean lower level fly-tips may not be investigated as quickly as we would like and in some cases a decision may have to be made that an investigation is unlikely to lead to evidence being located or that the case will not be in the public interest to take formal enforcement action on. In cases where any investigation is minimal, the Council will of course always remove the fly tipping if it is on an adopted highway for which it is responsible.

5.9.3 Although it falls outside the 2016-17 financial year, the service has received an increase in complaints about the waste service due to the major service change that was implemented at the beginning of October 2017. This was the introduction of fortnightly refuse collections and weekly food waste collections. Teething issues caused disruptions in collections across the borough, but these were/are being resolved as quickly as possible, and the number of complaints are now reducing.

5.10 Lewisham Homes

5.10.1 Lewisham Homes have reported the following for 2016-17:

- Complaints performance continued to improve during the year meeting the targets of 35 complaints or less per month and 90% responded to within the target time.
- Complaints about the repair service per month have halved from 26 in 2010/11 to 12 in 2016/17.
- Lewisham Homes overall performance has improved against the majority of its key performance indicators (20 out of 22), and that resident satisfaction has improved, particularly for homeowners.
- The decency level of the homes has increased from 41% in 2011 to 95% in March 2017.
- Lewisham Homes has spent £146m since 2011 delivering stock improvements and the Decent Homes programme. Despite no grant from the GLA this year, Lewisham Homes increased the decency level from 91% to 95% and will make all stock decent by April 2018.
- Work on kitchens, bathrooms and electrical rewire are now managed by the Lewisham Homes Repairs Service. They installed kitchens or bathrooms into 325 homes in 2016/17, the direct labour force who achieved 98% satisfaction from residents did a third.
- In 2016 Lewisham Homes achieved the Investors in People Gold Standard.

5.10.2 Their Business Plan achievements in 2016/17 include:

- Developing more customer focused services and more choices for resident engagement, particularly online
- Continuing conversations with residents by personal contact to find out views on services (The Big Conversation)
- Improved engagement with leaseholders to help steer service improvements
- Investment of £360,000 in environmental improvements
- Introducing a new enhanced sheltered housing support for older residents

5.11 Brockley PFI

5.11.1 RB3 report that they have performed well throughout the year. There were 699 items of correspondence and all of them were responded to within the ten working days target

5.11.2 RB3 received 57 complaints during the 2016/17 year, which is an increase of 1% comparing with the last year. 58% of complaints were related to housing management issues and 42% were regarding repairs. All of them were responded to within the required ten working days target.

5.11.3 Out of 85 stage 1 complaints, 11 escalated to stage 2 (13%) and 3 complaints escalated to stage 3 (4%). Brockley feel this is a reflection of how well they have performed in terms of 'getting it right first time' when responding to complaints.

5.11.4 RB3 report that satisfaction levels for resident participation have increased from 88% in 2015/16 to 96% in 2016/17.

5.11.5 To enable residents to feedback their ideas and suggestions about RB3's services, the PFI developed an online customer experience survey in 2016-17. RB3 will continue to monitor satisfaction levels using this tool, along with feedback from complaints and enquiries.

6 Independent Adjudicator

6.1 The Independent Adjudicator (IA) deals with stage 3 complaints on behalf of the Council. The IA report for the Council is attached at Appendix 1. This section summarises the IA's report and the action being taken in response to the issues raised. The report covers the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

6.2 The IA received 82 complaints during the year, nine less than in 2015/16. This breaks down to 55 (67%) about the Council/Regenter (down by five from last year); and 27 (33%) about Lewisham Homes (down by 5 from last year).

6.3 The IA has prepared a separate annual report for Lewisham Homes that deals specifically with any issues relating to them. The IA will attend their management team to present the report and the Council will monitor any actions arising from it. The number of complaints about Lewisham Homes went down from 35 to 27. The IA upheld 41% of the complaints she investigated, up from 37% in 2015/16

6.5 The IA responded to 80% of cases within the 30-day standard.

6.6 Cases by directorate/partner

The table below sets out the number of Stage 3 complaints against each directorate and each partner (*withdrawn/out of jurisdiction complaints in brackets cases in brackets*).

Table 6 - Total number of stage three complaints against each directorate and each partner

Customer Services	Resources and Regeneration	Community Services	Children and Young People	Regenter	Lewisham Homes	TOTAL
28 (6)	11 (4)	1 (1)	10 (6)	5 (1)	2710	82

6.7 Compensation

Compensation was awarded in 18 cases. The total amount of compensation paid was £13,699.80, of which £2,250 was for Lewisham Homes.

Table 7 - Amount of Compensation

	Up to and including £100	£100-£500	More than £500	TOTAL	
2016/17		7	6		£13,699.80
2015/16	2	6	10	18	£26,523.40
2014/15	n/a	13	6	20*	£9,241
2013/14	4	8	4	16*	£6,542
2012/13	2	8	2	12	£4,259.75
2011/12	2	9	1	12	£3,614

6.8 **Key issues highlighted by the Independent Adjudicator**

Communication and complaint handling

- 6.8.1 The IA is now monitoring the time taken to respond to her requests for information, noting that any delay impacts on her own timescales, could bring the complaints process into disrepute, lead to an Ombudsman complaint and adds to the complainant's sense of grievance.
- 6.8.2 The IA has found that, on occasion, compensation is not mentioned when fault is acknowledged. The IA urges officers to think about compensation in these circumstances.

6.9 **The Council's response to the IA's comments**

- 6.9.1 The Council thanks the Independent Adjudicator for her comments. The Council's review of its current casework and complaint processes will address the issues raised by the IA.

7 Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter 2016/17

- 7.1 An annual review letter is produced by the LGO each year. This gives a summary of statistics relating to complaints made against local authorities over the year ending 31 March 2017. A copy of the LGO's annual letter is attached at Appendix 2.
- 7.2 The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions made about the authority during the period. In 2016/17 a total of 136 complaints and enquiries were received, 27 less than 2015/16. Of the total received only 38 'detailed enquiries' were carried out of which 26 were upheld.
- 7.3 The top 3 highest number of complaints were received about:
- Housing - 36 (37 in 2015/16)
 - Education and Children's Services – 28 (37 in 2015/16)
 - Benefits and Tax – 27 (39 in 2015/16)
- 7.4 The LGO now provide additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the amounts received. The LGO has also provided a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where LGO recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where the LGO concluded the authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process.
- 7.5 The LGO publish final decisions on all complaints on their website, as they consider this as an important step in increasing transparency and accountability. There was one published report regarding Housing Benefits made against the Council during the year ending 31 March 2017.
- 7.6 The Council views this as a useful exercise, which gives it the opportunity to reflect on the types of complaints made and consider where improvements might be made.

8 Achievements in 2016/17

- 8.1 The Council implemented the casework review creating a new corporate complaints and casework team. Despite the disruption during this time, the team have managed to answer complaints and casework and maintain very good performance statistics.
- 8.2 The Community Services casework team use the intelligence gained from adult social care complaints to align with that from professional quality alerts, feedback from CQC and commissioned providers to improve quality across the delivery of adult social care services.
- 8.3 Following the recent restructure of the complaints teams Community Services have successfully maintained performance with their statutory complaints.
- 8.4 The CYP complaints team have had some challenges to overcome with retention of experienced complaints staff. They have a new manager in place and are now addressing some of the issues related to recent poor performance.
- Service specific bulletins continue to be produced for senior manager's consideration and action. In managing trends and detailed complaints in this manner, it is hoped that the broader picture can be influenced by addressing the smaller, frequent issues found within individual services. For example Adoption, Looked After Children Leaving Care Service were provided with a

quarterly breakdown of complaints received and managers were asked to provide comments and highlight learning points to be considered by staff going into the next quarter.

- Audit forms are kept outlining upheld complaints, and recommendations arising. These forms are compiled and revisited periodically with senior management, to ensure implementation of recommendations.
- Organisational learning from the upheld and/or partially upheld complaints are fed back to staff by the Complaints Team through team meetings and bulletins distributed for the attention of all staff.

9 Complaints and Casework Review

9.1 As part of the Council's savings programme it agreed to a review of its approach to Complaints and Casework with a target saving of £50K. The overall objective of the review was to resolve complaints and casework at the first point of contact, improving the service to the customer and/or representative and reducing the costs of the service to the Council. The review was led by Ralph Wilkinson, the Head of Public Services, and focussed on:

- The process the Council followed to resolve complaints and casework
- The organisational structure used to deliver the process
- The system the Council used to administer complaints and casework

9.2 The new structure was put in place February 2017. It has taken approximately 6 months to train new staff and develop a fully functioning service

9.3 The new team faced a number of challenges

- The icasework system is out of date and in need of replacing
- There was a backlog of cases
- There were a number of outstanding investigations with the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)
- New staff were recruited who needed training
- Existing staff who were recruited into the new team needed to upskill to deal with enquires about services they were unfamiliar with

9.4 The past 6 months have been spent addressing the above challenges.

- Officers have settled into their new roles and are confident dealing with a wider range of enquires
- We have successfully managed the LGO investigations and built up a strong relationship with our investigators. We have invited our local LGO investigator to a meeting in December 2017 to further strengthen this relationship.
- The new complaints and casework system is being implemented. The project has started and we anticipate the system to be functioning by April 2018.
- Despite the recent challenges the team have managed to answer the majority of casework and complaints on time maintaining a very good level of performance

9.5 The team have been focussing on working together and building a mature team with shared knowledge of the Council's functions and the processes for effectively dealing with complaints and casework. As a result, we have delayed implementing the new process and timescales for complaints. As we move into the new year, and with the introduction of the new complaints system we will now be working with services to introduce the new process.

9.6 The new process is shown below:



9.7 We have already consulted with some Heads of Service and have identified that the best approach to successfully implementing the changes will be achieved by transitioning services individually as opposed to a 'big bang' approach. With this in mind, the plan is to start with a few services in the new year and gradually implement the changes

9.8 The aim of the formal stage was to carry out a more detailed investigation of a complaint that had previously been undertaken. This change has already been implemented and caseworkers in the corporate team are successfully investigating complaints at this stage.

9.9 The team are also improving learning from complaints. This will be further improved as part of the next stage of the development of the team and issues and patterns escalated as appropriate.

9.10 Most of the changes have taken place post March 2017 so next year's report will pick up on the new arrangements in more detail.

9.11 The move away from contacting the Council's services by telephone will be carefully managed and will support the channel shift to quicker and effective resolution of customer contact. As this transition is primarily happening post March 2017 next year's report will pick this up in more detail.

9.12 Conclusion

Whilst the rise in the number of complaints is disappointing they still only represent a very small proportion of the millions of transactions the Council has with people living, working and learning in the borough. There can be no doubt that the savings the Council has been forced to make as a result of the government's programme of austerity will have been a significant reason for the increase. The Council will continue to use the complaints process to assist in the development of services and get feedback on the impact of changes.

10 Legal Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications directly arising from this report aside from noting that it is recommended good practice from the Local Government's Ombudsman's Office to make full and specific reference to handling complaints within a management agreement entered into under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985.
- 10.2 Given the subject and nature of this report, it is relevant here to note that the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a new public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 10.3 In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.4 The duty continues to be a "have regard duty", and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.
- 10.5 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has recently issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled "Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of Practice". The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice-and-technical-guidance/>
- 10.6 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:
1. The essential guide to the public sector equality duty
 2. Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making
 3. Engagement and the equality duty
 4. Equality objectives and the equality duty
 5. Equality information and the equality duty
- 10.7 The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and whom they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information/resources are available at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/guidance-on-the-equality-duty/>

11 Financial Implications

- 11.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Council has no specific budgets for compensation payments so the costs are absorbed by the relevant service as awarded.
- 11.2 There has been no major impact on the level of complaints since 2010 following the savings programme. There has been a general upwards trend in the number of complaints and casework received but this is not directly attributed to the savings programme.

12 Crime and Disorder Implications

- 12.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

13 Equalities Implications

- 13.1 The iCasework system enables the Council to collect equalities monitoring information that is used to ensure the complaints process remains accessible and that no particular parts of the community suffer inequity in service delivery.
- 13.2 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty), replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. The new duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 13.3 In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 13.4 As was the case for the original separate duties, the new duty continues to be a "have regard duty", and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.
- 13.5 The Equality and Human Rights Commission issued guides in January 2011 providing an overview of the new equality duty, including the general equality duty, the specific duties and whom they apply to. The guides cover what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guides were based on the then draft specific duties so are no longer fully up-to-date, although regard may still be had to them until the revised guides are produced. The guides do not have legal standing unlike the statutory Code of Practice on the public sector equality duty. However that Code is not due to be published until April 2012. The guides can be

found at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/new-public-sector-equality-duty-guidance/>.

13.6 The Corporate Complaints team will continue to work with voluntary community groups to ensure no one is disadvantaged from using the complaints process.

14 Environmental Implications

14.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

15 Conclusion

15.1 The Council has been continually improving its complaints process in response to feedback and best practice. However, there is still a lot more to do to ensure customers receive excellent services. The outcomes from the casework and complaints review will ensure continuous improvement is achieved.

16 Background Documents and Report Author

16.1 There are no background documents to this report.

16.2 If you would like more information on this report please contact Georgina Chambers, Corporate Information Casework and Complaints manager on 020 8314 7956.

Review of Stage Three Complaints 2016-17 Lewisham Council and Regenter

Linzi Banks Independent Adjudicator
May 2017

The Independent Adjudicator (IA) deals with complaints at stage three of the Council's complaints process and provides a free, independent and impartial service. The IA considers complaints about the administrative actions of the Council and its partners, Lewisham Homes and Regenter. She cannot question what actions these organisations have taken simply because someone does not agree with them. But, if she finds something has gone wrong, such as poor service, service failure, delay or bad advice and that a person has suffered as a result, the IA aims to get it put right by recommending a suitable remedy.

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At a glance*

* Includes Lewisham Homes

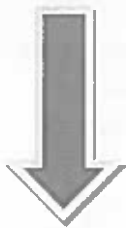
**82 complaints
received –
down from 91 in
2015/16**

**41% investigations upheld –
up from 37% in 2015/16**

24 recommendations to put things right

Significant changes on previous year (complaints received)

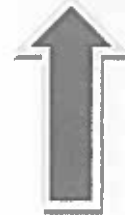
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Repairs



Planning



Introduction

This report publishes the complaint statistics of the Independent Adjudicator (IA) for the London Borough of Lewisham and its partner, Regenter, for the year ending 31 March 2017. In publishing the statistics, available in a data table at the end of this report, I aim to highlight lessons learned about the authorities' performance and their complaint handling arrangements, so that these might then be fed back into service improvement.

I have written a separate report about Lewisham Homes, though the figures for all authorities are included and attached, and some crossover issues are mentioned.

The headline messages from this year's statistics are:

- I received 82 complaints – down from 91 last year – and comprising 55 about the Council and Regenter (a decrease of one) and 27 about Lewisham Homes (a decrease of eight).
- I upheld 41% of the complaints I investigated, up from 37% in 2015/16.

- The area most complained about was Customer Services (28 complaints).
- The biggest increase in complaints was in Resources and Regeneration (up from five to 11).

I know, however, that the numbers alone do not tell everything about the attitude towards complaints and how they are responded to.

Arguably, of more importance, is to understand the impact those complaints have on people, and to learn the lessons from those complaints to improve the experience for others.

In line with my previous practice, I publish information about the recommendations I make to put things right when people have suffered. I made 24 separate recommendations to remedy injustice. These recommendations include actions for the authorities to take to remedy injustice for individuals, and to prevent injustice for others by improving practice.

My investigations can also provide the authorities with the reassurance that they

have carried out a fair investigation of a complaint, and satisfactorily offered to put things right, before the person decided to come to me.

The IA is the final stage of the authorities' complaints process – the person affected must have gone through the other stages before coming to me for an independent review of the case. So, in relation to the many thousands of exchanges happening daily between the authorities and the people in their areas, the number of stage three complaints is a tiny proportion of those exchanges, and, indeed, of the number of complaints received (% of the xxx complaints and enquiries about the Council and its partners in 2016/17); however, each one represents a problem that was not put right locally, or an experience that drove the person to pursue their complaint with me. Attached to this report is a Digest of Cases giving examples of such problems and experiences.

Making a difference: remedying injustice

Experience suggests that the most effective and timely way to resolve a complaint is for it to be put right at the local level before the issue escalates to me.

However, my casework shows that a number of complaints are not resolved satisfactorily locally, leaving people to ask me for an independent review. I carried out 41 detailed investigations, and upheld 37% of these (15 in number).

I found fault in two planning complaints, two refuse/fly tipping complaints and two special educational needs (SEN) complaints. I upheld one complaint each in council tax, repairs, housing allocations, temporary accommodation, home improvement grants, building control, abandoned vehicles, adoption and the childminder register.

I class a complaint as upheld or partly upheld when I find some fault in the way the Council or Regenter has acted. This

includes complaints where these authorities have acknowledged fault in their local investigation and offered to take action to put it right, but the person still wanted an independent review by me.

Types of remedy

If I decide the Council or Regenter have acted with fault, and the fault caused an injustice, I will make recommendations to put things right to remedy the fault. My recommendations are designed to place people back in the position they were in before the fault happened.

So, for example, this year, I proposed that the Council's Building Control Officers should investigate, and take action on, an unauthorised conversion of one flat into two that was causing the complainant a nuisance; that Planning Officers should expedite enforcement action on an illegal women's hostel affecting the complainant's amenity, providing the complainant with plan of action, a tentative timescale for taking that action, and regular updates; and that

SEN Officers should ensure, as a matter of urgency, the return of a child to full time provision as soon as possible, noting that two years had been missed as a result of Council failings.

In many complaints, I will also recommend an apology if this has not already been given.

If the injustice cannot be remedied through a specific action, I may recommend a financial payment.

So, in one SEN complaint, I proposed the payment of £1000 where the impact of the Council's failings in responding to the child's special educational needs was particularly severe on the family; in another, I suggested £300; and, in an adoption case, where the Council had failed to explain clearly to the complainants their rights as potential adopters and the rights of the identified

child's foster carer, I felt that £9589.80 was due to cover costs that the complainants had unnecessarily incurred in getting ready for the adoption.

Improving services

I always consider whether the issues uncovered in an investigation may affect other local people in a similar manner, and whether I can make practical recommendations to avoid that happening. So, for example, this year, I recommended that the Council should:

- Tighten up its procedures for dealing with prior approval applications.
- Review and improve its procedures for dealing with home improvement grants.
- Take steps to ensure that its list of childminders on its website is always up to date.
- Amend its notice to remove and destroy a vehicle.

Complaint numbers and commentary

- Complaints about the Council and Regenter that were in my jurisdiction have gone down again this year from 42 to 37.
- The number of complaints about Resources and Regeneration went up by two (from five to seven), as did complaints about Regenter (from two to four).
- Children and Young People (CYP) complaints fell from eight to four.
- Customer Service complaints fell from 26 to 22.
- There were no complaints about Community Services that fell within my remit.

Though any increases are regrettable, I am not unduly concerned as the numbers are tiny, and they will invariably fluctuate from year to year. What I will say, however, is that I am most pleased with the decrease in CYP complaints – down from eight to four - and especially those about SEN (two).

The upheld rate for complaints has gone up this year – from 35 to 37 per cent - but I find no particular cause for this other than that it suggests that, rightly, the more complex cases are coming to me; the cases where there are serious failings; and the cases where those failings have had a significant impact on the complainant.

However, I bring the following to the attention of the Council and Regenter:

- In some complaints, there was no stage one or stage two response.
- In other complaints, these authorities had missed what I considered was obvious maladministration.
- In a number of complaints, I think that officers should have proposed a remedy, but they didn't.

All of the above justified my involvement, I believe, and, crucially, they justified an adverse finding. I hope to see a decrease in such findings, and, indeed, a decrease in the number of stage three complaints, with the introduction of the Council's new

complaints process and its much more robust approach.

Even before this approach was adopted, however, the number of stage three complaints fell again this year as I report. This is welcome given the significant changes in many Council services, mentioning, for example, the stricter priorities for responding to flytipping; and the introduction of a paid green waste service. That these changes might have resulted in complaints but did not is a positive sign, in my view.

Also, the decrease can be partly explained, I think, because, despite not proposing remedies in some complaints, officers did suggest them in others without any prompting by me, and I was, consequently, persuaded that there was no case for me to investigate.

So, for example, in a council tax complaint, officers gave an apology and offered to review what had gone wrong; and, in a complaint about a home improvement grant, the Council removed the charging order from the

complainant's property
and waived fees of £226.

In my view, these were
eminently responsive
remedies to the injustice
suffered.

Complaint handling: General

- The Council and Regenter generally met the five days timescale for responding to my enquiries, although there were exceptions and I was forced to chase.
- The replies to my enquiries were generally thorough, but in some instances, they lacked a chronology, or they lacked detail, or they were poorly written (as was the stage one and stage two response), and I felt that a meeting with officers was necessary to secure the information that I required to reach a view.
- In a number of cases, there was delay in implementing my proposed remedy, and this added to the complainant's sense of grievance (leading to an Ombudsman complaint on one occasion); it caused me time and trouble in chasing; and I was forced to seek the help of senior officers.

CYP

Last year, I reported serious concerns about CYP, not only in the way it handled complaints, but also in the way it dealt with SEN. I had continuing concerns this year:

- In a complaint about a care assessment, referred to me by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO), I asked the service area why it had not been dealt with under the statutory process: this was something that the LGO asked too. In my view, the issues should have been investigated under that process: they were not for me or for the Corporate Complaints procedure.
- In a second complaint about a care assessment, I explained that the service area needed to be clear why the complainant wanted a stage three investigation before referring it to me; and that they could not simply skip stage three as they proposed, and refer the matter directly to the LGO, even if this was what the complainant wanted.

- In a third complaint about a care assessment, where there were inaccuracies in a report on the complainant's children and the assessments were poor, I felt that some matters should have been considered by Information Governance, and others should have been taken under the Children Act.
- In a complaint about education admissions, and referred to me by officers, I advised the service area that this type of complaint was not for me, but for the Office of the Schools Adjudicator and the LGO (who would also take the case if an appeal had been heard). I was concerned that the service area seemed not to know this.

In response to these issues, and to the concerns that I had identified previously in my annual review of 2015/16 including poor and late replies to my enquiries (which were continuing), senior managers asked to meet me. I was reassured that they were committed to better complaint reporting; better

complaint handling; a desire to understand where a complaint might sit – with Corporate Complaints or under the statutory process; and the continued reduction in SEN complaints, noting a willingness to settle such complaints and to suggest imaginative remedies.

eventual willingness to remedy the complaint (along with Lewisham Homes).

Temporary accommodation

In a complaint about temporary accommodation – a function that passed from the Council to Lewisham Homes in September 2016 – I found that valuable opportunities at stages one and two of the process had been missed by the Council to spot what had gone wrong and provide redress. More importantly, there were serious failings in responding to my enquiries, including delay; not providing sufficient information; the relevant officers failing to turn up to a meeting I had arranged to secure that information, so that I was forced to hold a second meeting; and, initially, a denial by the Council that it had any role whatsoever. I am highly critical of this, but I am pleased to report, that the Council showed an

My performance and comments

I have:

- Responded to 80% of all complaints about the Council and Regenter within 30 days, missing the target of 90% because, in eight cases, complaint handling by officers was poor; or the responses from these authorities were deficient; or further enquiries and meetings with officers were necessary; or the Council's computer system was down; or officers had asked me to hold despatch of my final decision letter. I hope that such issues will not reoccur this year.
- Had no decisions overturned on complaints referred to the LGO or Housing Ombudsman (HO).
- Met the Housing Ombudsman's representative to explain my role, as well as to understand the workings of the HO and the remedies they use.
- Met even more complainants than in previous years.
- Urged officers to spot opportunities to

remedy a complaint and to discuss such remedies with me, or seek guidance from publications issued by the LGO and Housing Ombudsman.

- Encouraged well written complaint replies and apologies.
- Continued with my quarterly digest of cases to inform officers of the kinds of complaints I uphold, the remedies I suggest and the lessons that can be learned.
- Continued with my regular newsletter for senior managers to highlight any concerns and suggested service improvements.
- Met officers from Lewisham Homes to discuss complaint handling as well as my role: providing an interim complaint report for officers to consider; and offering training on dealing with complaints, good letter writing and remedies.
- Responded to the increasing pressures that officers face in their day to day work, and especially in responding to my enquiries, by trying to reach a view on the information available already, or asking for

simple facts, or organising a meeting where this is quicker and easier.

I have referred above to the Council's new complaints process. I hope that it will lead to more robust complaint handling throughout the authority, including spotting opportunities for remedies, and a reduction in the number of complaints that are escalated. I also hope to see timely and thorough complaint responses. I hope to see too the prompt implementation of my remedies, with regular updates to me and to the complainant.

I welcome this opportunity to give the Council and Regenter my reflections about the complaints I have dealt with over the past year. I hope that they find the information and assessment provided useful when seeking improvements to their services.

I would like to thank Rachael Phillips (Corporate Complaints Officer) and officers generally, for the help and support they have given me this year.

REVIEW OF STAGE THREE COMPLAINTS 2016 – 2017 - LEWISHAM COUNCIL AND REGENERATOR

Appendix 1

Total cases received/open and determined: 1/4/16 – 31/3/17

TOTAL CASES RECEIVED 1/4/16 – 31/3/17	NO. OF CASES CARRIED OVER FROM 2015/16	NO. OF CASES DETERMINED	NO. OF CASES WITHDRAWN/ OUTSIDE JURISDICTION	NO. OF CASES OPEN AS OF 31/3/17
*82	8	59	28	3

*Includes Lewisham Homes

Number of cases determined

TOTAL CASES DETERMINED	UPHELD IN FULL	UPHELD IN PART	NOT UPHELD
*59	11 (19%)	13 (22%)	35 (59%)

*Includes Lewisham Homes

Time taken by the IA to resolve : target 90% of cases to be resolved within 30 days

30 days and below	31 - 50 days	More than 50 days
47* (80%)	**10 (17%)	**2 (3%)

*Includes Lewisham Homes

**These complaints were particularly complex and required significant investigation. In six of them, complaint handling was poor, the responses from the Council and/or Lewisham Homes were deficient, and further enquiries were necessary sometimes more than once: in two, the IA was unable to despatch her decision letter on time because either the Council's computer system was down, or she had been asked to hold the letter pending an officer discussion with her.

Number of cases received: a comparison

The Council and Regenter	Lewisham Homes	Total cases received
55 (67%)	27 (33%)	*82

*Includes 28 complaints that were withdrawn or considered to be outside the IA's jurisdiction

Cases received by Council directorate/partner

Total number of stage three complaints against each directorate and each partner with the number of withdrawn/out of jurisdiction complaints in brackets (28)

Customer Services	Resources and Regeneration	Community Services	Children and Young People	Regenter	Lewisham Homes	TOTAL
28 (6)	11 (4)	1 (1)	10 (6)	5 (1)	27 (10)	82

Cases determined by subject

Number of complaints determined by subject – does not include those that were withdrawn/considered to be out of jurisdiction: number upheld in full or in part in brackets

	All Council/Partners*	Council and Regenter	Lewisham Homes
Council Tax	9 (1)	9 (1)	
Repairs	7 (4)	1 (1)	6 (3)
Planning	6 (2)	6 (2)	
Leaseholders	5 (1)	3	2 (1)

Housing management	3 (1)		3 (1)
Housing allocations	3 (1)	3 (1)	
ASB	3 (1)		3 (1)
Refuse collection/flytipping	3 (2)	3 (2)	
SEN	2 (2)	2 (2)	
Benefits	2	2	
No Recourse to Public Funds	2	2	
Trees	2	2	
Temporary accommodation	2 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)
Housing Improvement Grants	1 (1)	1 (1)	
Major Works	1 (1)		1 (1)
Building Control	1 (1)	1 (1)	
Parking permits	1 (1)		1 (1)
Abandoned vehicle	1 (1)	1 (1)	
Blue Badge	1	1	
Golf club closure	1	1	
Garages	1		1
Adoption	1 (1)	1 (1)	
Childminder register	1 (1)	1 (1)	
Total for all Council	59 (24)	41 (15)	18 (9)

**Some complaints raised more than one issue but were categorised according to the main issue*

Compensation awarded in nine cases including those against Lewisham Homes*

Up to and including £100	£101 - £500	£501 and above	TOTAL - COUNCIL/RB3	TOTAL INC LH
	£860	£10589.80	£11449.80	£13699.80**

**Lewisham Homes - four cases - £2250*

***In a further three cases – one about Lewisham Homes, one about the Council and a joint complaint against both authorities, the IA proposed compensation, but she was unable to determine the amount pending action by one or both of the authorities that would help her establish the level of injustice suffered and a fair and reasonable remedy in response.*

20 July 2017

By email

Barry Quirk
Chief Executive
London Borough of Lewisham

Dear Barry Quirk

Annual Review letter 2017

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2017. The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received about your authority and the decisions we made during the period. I hope this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

The reporting year saw the retirement of Dr Jane Martin after completing her seven year tenure as Local Government Ombudsman. I was delighted to be appointed to the role of Ombudsman in January and look forward to working with you and colleagues across the local government sector in my new role.

You may notice the inclusion of the '*Social Care Ombudsman*' in our name and logo. You will be aware that since 2010 we have operated with jurisdiction over all registered adult social care providers, able to investigate complaints about care funded and arranged privately. The change is in response to frequent feedback from care providers who tell us that our current name is a real barrier to recognition within the social care sector. We hope this change will help to give this part of our jurisdiction the profile it deserves.

Complaint statistics

Last year, we provided for the first time statistics on how the complaints we upheld against your authority were remedied. This year's letter, again, includes a breakdown of upheld complaints to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the person came to us.

We have chosen not to include a 'compliance rate' this year; this indicated a council's compliance with our recommendations to remedy a fault. From April 2016, we established a new mechanism for ensuring the recommendations we make to councils are implemented, where they are agreed to. This has meant the recommendations we make are more specific, and will often include a time-frame for completion. We will then follow up with a council and seek evidence that recommendations have been implemented. As a result of this new process, we plan to report a more sophisticated suite of information about compliance and service improvement in the future.

This is likely to be just one of several changes we will make to our annual letters and the way we present our data to you in the future. We surveyed councils earlier in the year to find out, amongst other things, how they use the data in annual letters and what data is the most useful; thank you to those officers who responded. The feedback will inform new work to

provide you, your officers and elected members, and members of the public, with more meaningful data that allows for more effective scrutiny and easier comparison with other councils. We will keep in touch with you as this work progresses.

I want to emphasise that the statistics in this letter comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

During the year we issued one public report against your Council. This arose from a previous complaint where the Council had failed to properly deal with a request for an appeal against a benefits decision. The Council agreed to remedy the complaint by dealing with the appeal. However the Council did not do so and instead sent bailiffs to the complainant's home seeking payment of one alleged debt and sent confusing correspondence about another alleged debt. This resulted in a new complaint to my office. We issued a public report because of the seriousness of the Council failing to provide a remedy it had freely agreed to, compounded by its sending bailiffs. We were able to close the case when the Council provided evidence the recommendations had been complied with in full.

Unfortunately, there have been examples of poor complaint handling by your Council in the investigations we conducted this year, which is disappointing. In one instance, the Council maintained during our investigation that it was not at fault for failing to accept a homelessness application and for placing the complainant in a room smaller than the legal minimum for statutory overcrowding. Fault was accepted only after my Investigator spoke to a manager and sent a draft decision. As the facts were clear, this could have been done much sooner. Though the Council agreed a remedy, the complainant had to return to us two months later as the apology and financial payments had not been made. This is particularly concerning given it mirrors issues identified in the case we publicly reported, referred to above.

In other examples, my investigators have been required to contact your Council several times to get responses. There have also been instances of incomplete responses and two complaints gave cause for concern about the Council's handling of complaints under the statutory children's complaints procedure.

More positively, I am pleased to note the Council has responded constructively and promptly to our proposals to remedy two complaints about school transport. I hope to see more examples of this good practice during this year.

The statutory duty to report Ombudsman findings and recommendations

As you will no doubt be aware, there is duty under section 5(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for your Monitoring Officer to prepare a formal report to the council where it appears that the authority, or any part of it, has acted or is likely to act in such a manner as to constitute maladministration or service failure, and where the LGO has conducted an investigation in relation to the matter.

This requirement applies to all Ombudsman complaint decisions, not just those that result in a public report. It is therefore a significant statutory duty that is triggered in most authorities every year following findings of fault by my office. I have received several enquiries from

authorities to ask how I expect this duty to be discharged. I thought it would therefore be useful for me to take this opportunity to comment on this responsibility.

I am conscious that authorities have adopted different approaches to respond proportionately to the issues raised in different Ombudsman investigations in a way that best reflects their own local circumstances. I am comfortable with, and supportive of, a flexible approach to how this duty is discharged. I do not seek to impose a proscriptive approach, as long as the Parliamentary intent is fulfilled in some meaningful way and the authority's performance in relation to Ombudsman investigations is properly communicated to elected members.

As a general guide I would suggest:

- Where my office has made findings of maladministration/fault in regard to routine mistakes and service failures, and the authority has agreed to remedy the complaint by implementing the recommendations made following an investigation, I feel that the duty is satisfactorily discharged if the Monitoring Officer makes a periodic report to the council summarising the findings on all upheld complaints over a specific period. In a small authority this may be adequately addressed through an annual report on complaints to members, for example.
- Where an investigation has wider implications for council policy or exposes a more significant finding of maladministration, perhaps because of the scale of the fault or injustice, or the number of people affected, I would expect the Monitoring Officer to consider whether the implications of that investigation should be individually reported to members.
- In the unlikely event that an authority is minded not to comply with my recommendations following a finding of maladministration, I would always expect the Monitoring Officer to report this to members under section five of the Act. This is an exceptional and unusual course of action for any authority to take and should be considered at the highest tier of the authority.

The duties set out above in relation to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are in addition to, not instead of, the pre-existing duties placed on all authorities in relation to Ombudsman reports under The Local Government Act 1974. Under those provisions, whenever my office issues a formal, public report to your authority you are obliged to lay that report before the council for consideration and respond within three months setting out the action that you have taken, or propose to take, in response to the report.

I know that most local authorities are familiar with these arrangements, but I happy to discuss this further with you or your Monitoring Officer if there is any doubt about how to discharge these duties in future.

Manual for Councils

We greatly value our relationships with council Complaints Officers, our single contact points at each authority. To support them in their roles, we have published a Manual for Councils, setting out in detail what we do and how we investigate the complaints we receive. When we surveyed Complaints Officers, we were pleased to hear that 73% reported they have found the manual useful.

The manual is a practical resource and reference point for all council staff, not just those working directly with us, and I encourage you to share it widely within your organisation. The manual can be found on our website www.lgo.org.uk/link-officers

Complaint handling training

Our training programme is one of the ways we use the outcomes of complaints to promote wider service improvements and learning. We delivered an ambitious programme of 75 courses during the year, training over 800 council staff and more 400 care provider staff. Post-course surveys showed a 92% increase in delegates' confidence in dealing with complaints. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Michael King
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for England
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local Authority Report: London Borough of Lewisham
For the Period Ending: 31/03/2017

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
16	27	5	28	6	11	36	5	1	135

Decisions made

		Detailed Investigations			Complaints Remedied	
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate
7	4	60	31	12	26	68%
Notes Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations. The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.				by LGO		Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement
				23		1
				Total		140

	Bellingham	Blackheath	Brockley	Catford South	Crofton Park	Downham	Evelyn	Forest Hill	Grove Park	Ladywell	Lee Green	Lewisham Central	New Cross	Perry Vale	Rushey Green	Sydenham	Telegraph Hill	Whitefoot	Grand Total
Refuse	46	48	54	58	79	52	29	70	56	64	57	76	35	56	50	60	37	30	957
Advice and Reviews	31	7	38	28	12	26	28	16	31	16	21	40	37	10	45	32	27	34	479
Housing and Council Tax Benefits	28	4	23	32	16	16	24	8	17	7	11	31	31	21	10	23	11	19	332
Council Tax	15	11	27	15	10	11	25	15	15	20	13	29	25	9	26	15	21	23	325
LH - Tenancy - Tenancy Team	7	15	17	1	4	2	37	2	7	1	11	9	44	10	10	16	29		222
Highways - Street Works	3	9	5	2	2	6	2	4	3	5	10	8	4	5	74	2	4	2	150
LH - Repairs - Responsive Repairs	3	14	15		4		28	5	1	2	5	7	28	8	5	6	13	1	145
Highways - Traffic Management Act	6	7	6	8	5	6	1	10	5	13	12	15	11	5	9	7	6	3	135
Street Services	8	7	4	11	8	12	5	5	9	3	9	10	11	5	6	1	10	7	131
Corporate Complaints	3	4	10	7	6	4	9	5	8	8	9	7	8	2	12	10	6	4	122
Green Space	9	6	5	6	11	5	1	1	6	6	3	2	5	7	7	4	11	8	103
Policy	4	8	6	5	8	1	5	4	3	4	7	5	4	4	12	6	8	3	97
Parking	2	8		3	4	1	2	5	4	4	4	13	7	2	11	3	3		76
LH - Service Improvement - Customer Relations Team	2	9	5				7	2	1		4	2	9	4		11	5		61
Casework Team (Customer Services)	3	3	5	3	3	1			2	8		3	5	3	5	2	2	3	51
Recycling	2	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	6	2	5		1	5	2	7	1	2	51
Rehousing Development	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	3	3		1	6	2	3	5	1	5	4	49
Environmental Enforcement	3	3	4	7	2	3	3	1	1		2		3	2	9		3		46
Private Sector Housing		1		10	2	5	2		1	2	3	1	5	2	3	1	2	4	44
Other service areas	2	3	3		3	6	2	1	2		3	4	3		2	3	1	5	43
Anti-social Behaviour	6	2	1	2	1	3	1			2	1	3	5		11		1	1	40
Education Access	1		2	1	2	1	5		2	3	1		3	3	2	1	2	4	33
Single Homeless Intervention and Prevention	1	2	5	1	1	1	2	2		3	5	1			2	1	1	3	31

	Bellingham	Blackheath	Brockley	Catford South	Crofton Park	Downham	Evelyn	Forest Hill	Grove Park	Ladywell	Lee Green	Lewisham Central	New Cross	Perry Vale	Rushey Green	Sydenham	Telegraph Hill	Whitefoot	Grand Total
Housing - Tenancy			14		1					13									28
Integrated neighbourhoods	1	1			3	1			2	4	2	2	1	1	5		1	3	27
LH - Major Works - Capital Programming		2	1		1			3		1	3	2	3	1	2	2	4		25
Children with disabilities	1	1		4	1	1	1	1	3		2		1		2	1	1	4	24
Library and Information Services	3	1		2		2	1	1			4		1	4	2	1		1	23
Complaints Team (CYP)	1	1		4		2	2		1		2	1		1	1	5	1		22
CSC Telephony		1	2	1	2	1	1	1		3		2	1	2	1	1		3	22
Development Control		2	1							6		4	1		7	1			22
LH - Tenancy - ASB			2	1	1		6				1		3	3	1	1	3		22
Property - Repairs			14							8									22
Housing - Customer services			10		4					5						2			21
LH - Repairs - Technical Team		2			1		2	1			1	1	3	6			4		21
LH - Tenancy - Occupancy	2	4					2				1	1	2	1	2	1	4		20
Highways - Transport Works	1		2	2	2		1			1	3	1	2	1	3		1		18
LH - Leasehold Services			2				4	1			3		1	1	1	3	2		18

	Bellingham	Blackheath	Brockley	Catford South	Crofton Park	Downham	Evelyn	Forest Hill	Grove Park	Ladywell	Lee Green	Lewisham Central	New Cross	Perry Vale	Rushey Green	Sydenham	Telegraph Hill	Whitefoot	Grand Total
LH - Estate Services - Caretaking		1					1	4	1				3	3	2	1	1		17
MITIE			2										12		1		2		17
Housing Strategy		1		1						1			4		4	1	1	2	16
LH - MNE - Gas		4	2				3				1	1		1		2	2		16
Casework Team (Regeneration)			1	2	1		2		1		3	1		1	1	1			14
Executive Director's Office	1	2	2		2	1	1			1	1	1		1				1	14
Private Sector Leasing	2		2	3				1			1	1	1	2				1	14
Concessionary Awards Team	3	2	1	1			1					2				1	1	1	13
Customer Relations Team (Community Services)					1		2				4		4	1					12
Electoral Services			2	1	1	1		1				1	1			1		3	12
Lewisham Enforcement Services			1	1				1				3	1	1	1	2		1	12
Corporate Communication		1			1	1		2	1	1	1	1		1					11
Sport and Leisure		1		1	2			1			3				2			1	11
Street Lighting		2			2	1		2		2	1				1				11

	Bellingham	Blackheath	Brockley	Catford South	Crofton Park	Downham	Evelyn	Forest Hill	Grove Park	Ladywell	Lee Green	Lewisham Central	New Cross	Perry Vale	Rushey Green	Sydenham	Telegraph Hill	Whitefoot	Grand Total
Insurance and Risk				2	2				1			2			1	2			10
LH - Estate Services - Grounds Maintenance		2	2				1						4				1		10
No Recourse	1				1	1				1		1			1		2	2	10
Business Regulatory Services	1			1	2	2						1				1	1		9
Community Safety			1		1										4	1			9
LH - Major Works - Construction Delivery		1					2						4	1		1			9
LH - MINE - Other											3		1	1			3		9
Breyer											2	3				2			8
Housing - Income										3									8
Lewisham Homes (DH)		3					1				1		2				1		8
Student and Pupil Services					2				2									1	8
Customer Relations Team			4							3									7
Family Support and Intervention						1		1		1		1					2		7

	Bellingham	Blackheath	Brockley	Catford South	Crofton Park	Downham	Evelyn	Forest Hill	Grove Park	Ladywell	Lee Green	Lewisham Central	New Cross	Perry Vale	Rushey Green	Sydenham	Telegraph Hill	Whitefoot	Grand Total
Highways - Maintenance Utilities							1						2	2	2				7
LH - Repairs - Contact Centre	2			1								1		2		1			7
LH - Repairs - Voids		1	1				1	1								3			7
AWLD Social work			1			1				1		1	1				1		6
Fleet					1	1						1					1	2	6
Health Intelligence			2									1			2	1			6
LH - Income Team - Patch 1		1									1	1	1			1	2		6
Referral and assessment			1												2		1		6
School Improvement							1				1		1		3				6
Asset Strategy & Development		1		1				1		1					1				5
Economic Development			1				1					1	1				1		5
Housing - Caretaking			3							2									5
LH - Customer Services		1	1				1									1	1		5
Looked after children			1			1	1						1		1				5

	Bellingham	Blackheath	Brockley	Catford South	Crofton Park	Downham	Evelyn	Forest Hill	Grove Park	Ladywell	Lee Green	Lewisham Central	New Cross	Perry Vale	Rushey Green	Sydenham	Telegraph Hill	Whitefoot	Grand Total
Revenues and Accounting							1												1
Road Safety												1							1
Social Care and Health												1							1
Technology Solutions Team									1										1
Urban Design, Conservation and Heritage								1											1
Youth Service										1									1
Grand Total	212	225	331	234	234	187	269	191	202	241	246	319	352	208	388	258	260	190	4547