

<b>Mayor and Cabinet</b>			
<b>Title</b>	Annual Complaints Report 2017-18		
<b>Key decision</b>	No	<b>Item no</b>	
<b>Wards</b>	All wards		
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Customer Services and Head of Public Services		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	12 December 2018	

## **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 2017/18. There were a total of 6,992 complaints and enquiries received in 2017/18. This represents a 22% increase when compared to 2016/17.
- 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 105 complaints between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018, of which she upheld or partly upheld 26%. The IA responded to 91% 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 2017/18, the LGO made decisions on a total of 24 cases, which is 14 less than last year – the figures are attached at Appendix 3.

## **2 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To provide information on complaints performance in 2017/18.

## **3. Recommendation**

The Mayor and Cabinet 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. 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.
- 4.3 The report also goes to the Standards Committee and Public Accounts Select Committee.

**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 Corporate Complaints & Casework Team

Stage 3 – 30 days by the Independent Adjudicator

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

- 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 times. The statistics are for cases logged into iCasework between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 compared with performance over the same period in 2016/2017.

**Table 1 – total volume of complaints and enquires by directorate Total Complaints and Enquiries**

	<b>Total Complaints &amp; Enquiries</b>		
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>2016/2017</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>	<b>% increase/ decrease</b>
<b>Children and Young People</b>	295	257	<b>-13%</b>
<b>Community Services</b>	280	293	<b>+4%</b>
<b>Customer Services</b>	3,633	4,664	<b>+28%</b>
<b>Lewisham Homes</b>	824	935	<b>+13%</b>
<b>Resources &amp; Regeneration</b>	711	843	<b>+19%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,743</b>	<b>6,992</b>	<b>+22%</b>

**Table 2- Stage 1 and Stage 2 Complaints by directorate with % responded to on time.**

Directorate	Stage 1 Complaints					Stage 2 Complaints				
	2016/ 2017	%	2017/ 2018	%	Variance	2016/ 2017	%	2017/ 2018	%	Variance
Children and Young People	134	77	113	37	-21	7	86	12	49	+5
Community Services	86	53	54	51	-30	2	0	4	50	+2
Customer Services	2,271	90	3,122	90	+851	63	80	81	61	+18
Lewisham Homes	339	96	370	84	+31	71	100	77	90	+6
Resources & Regeneration	299	75	343	77	+44	27	70	31	28	+4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,129</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>3,983</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>+854</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>+35</b>

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

Directorate	MP			Mayor			Members			Chief Executive		
	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	Variance	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	Variance	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	Variance	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	Variance
Children and Young People	118 (24)	112 (36)	-6	1 (100)	8 (38)	7	28 (32)	7 (57)	-21	4 (0)	0 (N/A)	-4
Community Services	79 (48)	144 (60)	65	17 (35)	10 (60)	-7	69 (52)	67 (56)	-2	8 (13)	6 (67)	-2
Customer Services	808 (79)	877 (73)	69	136 (82)	201 (51)	65	281 (81)	298 (73)	17	37 (87)	45 (77)	8

<b>Lewisham Homes</b>	254 (79)	356 (91)	102	47 (87)	23 (78)	-24	99 (96)	81 (90)	-18	2 (100)	3 (67)	1
<b>Resources &amp; Regeneration</b>	136 (74)	168 (80)	32	47 (73)	29 (55)	-18	198 (89)	252 (87)	54	8 (78)	12 (75)	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,395 (61)</b>	<b>1,657 (68)</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>248 (75)</b>	<b>271 (56)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>675 (70)</b>	<b>705 (73)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>59 (72)</b>	<b>66 (76)</b>	<b>7</b>

\*figures in brackets denote the percentages dealt within the specified corporate targets.

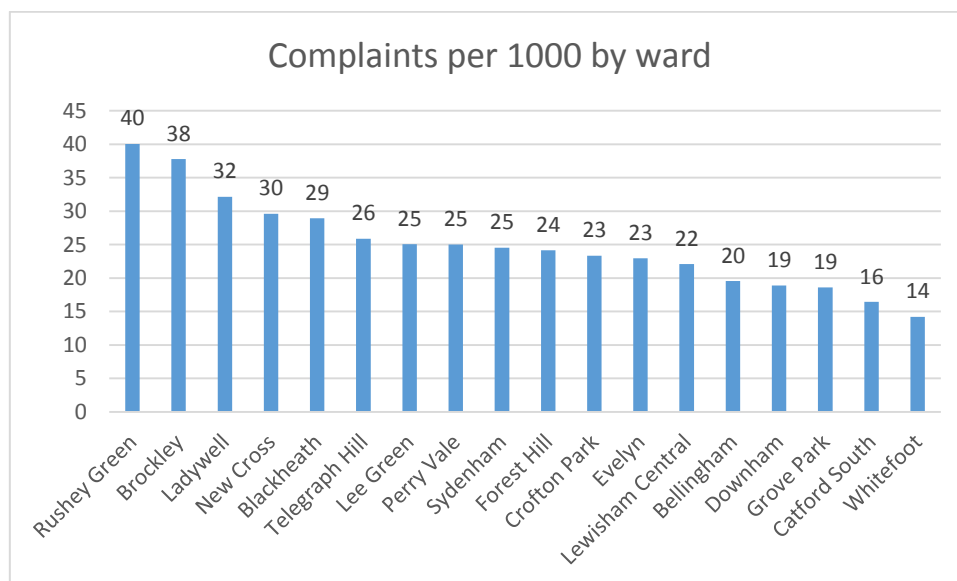
NB/ The figures in Table 2 and 3 do not include the 105 complaints handled by the Independent Adjudicator at Stage 3 (please see Section 6 of this report).

5.3 The total number of complaints and enquiries received in 2017/18 was 6,992, which was an increase of 1,249 (22%) on the previous year, and a continued increase from previous years as shown below.

- 2015/2016 – 4,308 complaints and enquiries received
- 2014/2015 – 4,335 complaints and enquiries received
- 2013/2014 – 4,430 complaints and enquiries received
- 2012/2013 – 4,772 complaints and enquiries received

#### 5.4 Complaints and enquiries by ward.

5.4.1 The distribution of complaints per 1,000 of the population received by Ward is shown below.



5.5 The three wards that received the highest level of complaints and enquires were Rushey Green, Brockley and Ladywell.

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). This is the same as 16/17.

5.5.2 Brockley was the ward which received the second highest number of complaints and enquiries per 1000. The top reasons why customers complained were Refuse, Leasehold Services, and Lewisham Homes (Tenancy team).

5.5.3 Ladywell was the ward which received the third highest number of complaints and enquiries per 1000 of the population. The top reasons why customers complained were Refuse, Lewisham Homes (Tenancy team), Leasehold Services.

5.5.4 Whitefoot received the lowest number of complaints per 1000 of the population.

## **5.6 Trends**

5.6.1 On analysing the reasons for complaints, the top three issues identified for 2017/18 were as follows:

1. Highways
2. Environment
3. Council Tax

5.6.2 This top 3 has changed from the previous year. Last year the top 3 reasons for complaints were Highways, followed by Housing Needs, and then Environment.

5.6.3 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 The Highways Department advise that there has been a growth in enquiries regarding electric vehicle charging, with enquires about personal vehicle charging and requests for charging points in residential areas being the main focus of enquiries.

5.7.2 Whilst the Deptford South CPZ is now in place and the Ladywell extension is imminent, parking enquiries continue to be a large part of the total. These range from CPZ requests to requests for yellow line restrictions for road safety.

5.7.3 The number of enquiries requesting the removal of rat-running traffic continues to rise as this becomes more and more part of the political debate, and with rising concerns about air quality.

5.7.4 Enquiries around adherence to the 20 mph speed limit and with regard to vehicle speeds generally continue. The Council is developing a priority list of roads to be treated.

5.7.5 There continues to be a lot of requests for cycle hangers and although these are being delivered, requests greatly outstrip supply.

5.7.6 New Streetscape schemes in Grove Park and in Sangley Road / Sandhurst Road have generated a significant number of enquiries, as is the up-coming Crofton scheme.

5.7.7 Drainage and pothole enquiries remain significant.

5.7.8 There are a growing number of enquiries relating to delayed utilities works.

## **5.8 Environment**

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

5.8.2 Environment advise that there has also been a slight increase in fly tipping complaints. Again, due to budget restraints, the Council cannot remove fly-tipping as quickly as it used to. The authority continues to pursue formal enforcement action where appropriate. Prosecutions are commenced against any individual or business carrying out fly tipping

where there is sufficient evidence to do so. However, officer resources are limited and so 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 still remove the fly tipping if it is on an adopted highway for which it is responsible.

5.8.3 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 resolved as quickly as possible, and the number of complaints is now reducing.

5.8.4 Environment report that there were also a few IT issues that meant the website didn't display the correct collection information which also contributed to the increase in complaints. There are still intermittent issues which are being investigated, so that the 'look up my collection day' facility is stabilised.

## **5.9 Council Tax**

5.9.1 The Council Tax section has seen a significant increase in complaints during 2017 for 2 main reasons; the implementation of a single person discount review and the migration to a new online platform for all online forms.

5.9.2 The service is legally required to review all single person discount applications periodically however, the frequency is not prescribed. In 2017 a review was undertaken for the first time in a few years using a third party data matching company. The service received a large volume of complaints from customers wanting to know why their entitlement was being reviewed and others challenging the wording of the letter on the basis of the content being too harsh. It was important for the service to explain the potential consequences of claiming a reduction to which they were no longer entitled.

5.9.3 There were also some issues with the data matching whereby some data was out of date, particularly that from electoral services. In future, any reviews will be conducted later in the year, after the electoral register data has been updated.

5.9.4 The contract with the online web form portal provider came to an end in October 2017 and the service migrated to a new service provider from November 2017. This involved a complete redesign of the entire online service, including twenty plus online forms and a change to the e-billing platform. There were teething problems with the stability of the new online platform and some customers expressed their dissatisfaction with the new form format and lack of ability to access their online account and data. The service is continuing to work with the software provider to improve all aspects of the online customer experience.

## **5.10 Lewisham Homes**

5.10.1.1 Lewisham Homes have reported the following for 2017/18:

- They met their target for responding to 90% of complaints on time

- The number of homes that meet the Decent Homes standard has increased from 41% in 2011 to 100%
- Their Repairs Team installed kitchens and bathrooms in over 300 homes within this year
- Complaints about repairs went down from 731 in 2014/15 to 462 in 2017/18
- They improved their telephone response rates, with responses to calls up from 80% to 95%
- Satisfaction with environmental services: cleaning inside blocks satisfaction has increased from 71% to 78%;
- Since taking over grounds maintenance in 2015 satisfaction has increased from 62% to 77%
- They have introduced a wider range of social activities to around 500 older residents living in sheltered housing schemes, including a weekly fall prevention class for frequent fallers and over 65s in one of their sheltered housing schemes.

#### 5.10.2 In 2017/18 Lewisham Homes' ambitions included:

- Increasing digital engagement with residents: 25% of their residents are now registered on the Lewisham Homes portal, an increase of 60% over the past year.
- Improving neighbourhoods through increased resident engagement: as a development on their 'Big Conversation' strategy, they are now rolling out a Smaller Conversations initiative to reach residents in hostels. They have also introduced a professional witnessing team who are on-call on Friday and Saturday nights as part of steps to reduce antisocial behaviour.
- Empowering residents: 35 residents completed the 'Improving Housing Services' course, which Lewisham Homes delivered in partnership with London Metropolitan University
- Lewisham Homes' Go On Lewisham initiative is helping residents go online; 98% of participants have said the sessions have improved their digital knowledge and skills.

## 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 summaries the IA's report and the action being taken in response to the issues raised. The report covers the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
- 6.2 The IA received 105 complaints during the year, 23 more than 2016/17. This breaks down to 74 (70%) about the Council/ Regenter (up by 19 from last year); and 31 (30%) about Lewisham Homes (up by 4 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 up from 27 to 31. The IA upheld 26% of the complaints, either in part or in full, down from 41% in 2016/17.
- 6.4 The IA responded to 91% of cases within the 30 day standard, this is an increase of 11% on the previous year.
- 6.5 21% of investigations were upheld, this is down from 41% in 2016/17.

## 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)

**Table 6 – Total number of Stage 3 complaints against each directorate and each partner**

Customer Services	Resources and Regeneration	Community Services	Children and Young People	Regenter	Lewisham Homes	TOTAL
55 (14)	14 (3)	2 (2)	1	2	31 (4)	105

## 6.7 Compensation

Compensation was awarded in 14 cases including those against Lewisham Homes. The total amount of compensation paid was £7,528.70, of which £3,649.85 was for Lewisham Homes.

**Table 7 – Amount of Compensation**

	Up to and including £100	£100 - £500	More than £500	Total	
2017/18	2	9	3	14	£7,528.70
2016/17	n/a	7	6	13	£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 IA**

- 6.8.1 The Council and Regenter generally met the IA's five day timescale for responding to enquiries, although there were exceptions and the IA had to chase. In a number of cases, the IA was not told that the proposed remedy had been implemented.
- 6.8.2 The IA reports these two problems every year. She is of the opinion that they occur because of the pressures under which officers are working, and not because of any breakdown in complaint handling, or because complaints are not taken seriously.
- 6.8.3 Timely replies to enquiries, the timely implementation of remedies and letting the IA know that recommendations have been put into action, are essential. They spare the IA and the complainant the need to chase and possibly avoid a complaint to the Ombudsman.

## 7 **Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter 2017/18**

- 7.1 An annual review letter is produced by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) each year. This gives a summary of statistics relating to complaints made against local authorities over the year ending 31 March 2018. A copy of the LGO's annual letter is attached at Appendix 2. The LGO's annual letter refers to difficulties in obtaining



responses to complaints. However, since the new team has been established this has been addressed and performance has improved.

7.2 The tables in the appendix present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions made about the authority during the period. In 2017/18 a total of 146 complaints and enquiries were received, an increase of 10 on 2016/17. Of the total received only 24 “detailed enquiries” were carried out, of which 16 were upheld.

7.3 The top three highest number of complaints were received about:

- Housing – 41 (36 in 2016/17)
- Benefits and Tax – 26 (27 in 2016/17)
- Education and Children’s Services – 21 (28 in 2016/17)

7.4 There was one public report issued during the year regarding the Children and Young People’s Service. The LGO’s annual review letter was also critical about CYP’s compliance with LGO recommendations to resolve complaints. The Executive Management Team (EMT) has responded to the LGO’s concerns in relation to complaint administration in particular areas. EMT has agreed to review a monthly complaints, casework, FOI, and SAR performance report to oversee all aspects of the process.

7.5 The CYP Casework Team have also taken steps to improve the way that complaints are handled, and additional resources have been recruited to deal with requests from complainants to move their complaints to a higher level, increasing the chance of achieving a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

7.6 The LGO provide additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just amounts received. The LGO also provides a breakdown of “decisions made” to show how they were remedied i.e. “Advice Given”, “Referred back for Local Resolution” etc. Included in this are “Complaints Remedied” which are made up of complaints remedied by the LGO or “Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement”.

7.7 The LGO continue to publish their annual data on their website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim is to promote transparency and accountability.

7.8 The Council views this as a useful exercise, which affords the opportunity to reflect on the types of complaints made and consider where improvement might be made.

## **8 Achievements in 2017/18**

8.1 As detailed in the previous year’s report, the Council implemented the casework review creating a new Corporate Complaints and Casework Team in February 2017. The new team has continued to ensure that performance remained at a satisfactory level, despite facing some challenges with staff changes, and increased volumes. Volumes increased in the majority of areas and with most case types that the team deal with. There was an increase with all Casework but particularly MP enquiries, with 262 more received compared to the year before. Despite the high numbers, performance was either similar to the previous year, or it improved. For example, 65 more MP enquiries were received for Community Services, but performance went from 48% to 60% (the team are implementing further measures to improve this figure). There was an increase of 32 Resources & Regeneration MP enquiries, but performance went from 74% to 80%.

- 8.2 Data for CYP (Children and Young People) shows that there has been a drop in the number of cases logged against their directorate, despite a rise in all other Council directorates. There were 257 cases logged against this directorate in 2017/18 compared to 295 in 2016/17.
- 8.3 There was a noticeable drop in Stage 3 complaints for CYP, with the IA only investigating one complaint in 2017/18, a big drop from the 8 cases investigated by the IA the previous year.
- 8.4 The CYP Casework Team have dealt with fewer Local Government Ombudsman complaints during 2017/18. A total of 21 complaints were received by the LGO relating to children's services and education (28 in 2016/17). This is continued decrease from 2015/16 when 37 complaints were received.

## **9 Complaints and Casework Review- iCasework.**

- 9.1 As detailed in the 2016/17 report, the Council decided to implement a new system to administer complaints and casework. The old system was outdated and had begun to degrade, and had become unreliable for staff and Members to use.
- 9.2 During the latter part of 2017/18, the Complaints and Casework Team worked alongside the Digital Team and other stakeholders to implement an updated iCasework system. This involved extensive work with the system provider to ensure that the new system would be fully functional and ready for staff to use at the beginning of the 2018/19 financial year.
- 9.3 Prior to implementation, key complaints staff were invited to training with the system provider and asked to contribute to how the system was set up.
- 9.4 The new system was successfully implemented on 16 April 2018, and includes a portal for Members to use when submitting casework, allowing them to track their enquiries and maintain accurate records of constituent's cases.
- 9.5 A key benefit of the new system is its reporting feature. Reporting on the old system was complicated and time consuming, but the new system has the ability to provide accurate reports on volumes and performance in a fraction of the time. The team is now able to produce monthly and quarterly reports for senior management, and there is a plan to provide Members with regular reports on their casework.

## **10 Complaints and Casework Review- the new team.**

- 10.1 The 2016/17 report detailed a number of challenges that the newly formed Complaints and Casework Team faced, after the new structure was implemented in February 2017. These challenges were:
- The icasework system being out of date and in need of replacing
  - a backlog of cases
  - 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

- 10.2 The implementation of an updated iCasework addressed the system issues. The team cleared all backlogs of complaints and casework as well as addressing all of the outstanding Ombudsman cases.
- 10.3 The team also met with the local LGO investigator in December 2017 (now the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) with a view to strengthen this relationship. This was successful and there is now a strong professional working relationship with the LGO's office, with a dedicated officer ensuring that responses to all enquiries made are responded to in a timely manner.
- 10.4 One of the most significant changes made as a result of the Complaints and Casework Review, was that Senior Resolutions Officers became responsible for the investigation and response to Stage 2 complaints. Despite some initial teething problems with performance, this function is now running successfully, with a dedicated officer in the team handling most of the stage 2 complaints, and nearly all responses sent within the 20 working day timeframe.
- 10.5 An indicator of this change being a success is the fact that only 21% of complaints escalated to stage 3 were upheld in 2017/18 compared to 41% in 2016/17. This indicates that the Council is getting it right at an earlier stage.
- 10.6 In order to expand the team's awareness of the services they may have been previously unfamiliar with, a number of measures were undertaken including meeting with staff in those services, and liaising with contacts who have a better knowledge of the services and who does what. There is now a good level of knowledge of all Council functions within the team, which has resulted in good quality of responses to casework and complaints.

## **11 Conclusion of Review**

- 11.1 The last 2 financial years have seen a significant increase in the number of complaints to the Council and the volume of casework. The volumes have increased from 4,308 in 2015/16 to 6,992 in 2017/18, which is a 62% increase.
- 11.2 The directorates which experienced the largest increase within the Council were Customer Services and Resources and Regeneration. As in previous years, we believe a key factor is the government's programme of austerity and the savings the Council has been forced to make as a result of this.
- 11.3 Despite the increase in volume, the number of complaints being escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 has not increased, and the percentage of Stage 2 complaints going to Stage 3 has reduced slightly, compared to the overall figures, which is positive.
- 11.4 The Council will continue to use the feedback it receives from complaints to improve services and address service users main areas of concern. It should also be noted that the number of complaints and casework received still only represent a very small proportion of the millions of transactions the Council has with people living, working and learning in the borough.

## **12 Legal Implications**

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 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.
- 12.4 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.
- 12.5 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/>
- 12.6 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
- 12.7 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:

### **13 Financial Implications**

- 13.1 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.

### **14 Crime and Disorder Implications**

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

### **15 Equalities Implications**

- 15.1 The iCasework system enables the Council to collect equalities monitoring information. However, it is not a requirement for customers to disclose these details. As a result, in the main, equalities data is only available in a small percentage of cases.
- 15.2 In terms of ethnicity, data was only provided in only 2% of cases. This 2% suggests the majority of complainants are White British.
- 15.3 In regard to gender, the data recorded confirms that 42% of complainants were female, 26% were male. In the remaining 32% of cases, this information was not given or recorded.
- 15.4 In over 99% of cases, the customer did not confirm either way whether or not they consider themselves to have a disability. In less than 1% of cases the customer confirmed that they were disabled.
- 15.5 Religion data was not given, or not recorded in 100% of cases.
- 15.6 The customer's sexuality was also not given, or not recorded in 100% of cases.
- 15.7 As the above equalities data is not statistically significant, the service will work to promote the completion of this section, so future data is more informative.

### **16 Environmental Implications**

- 16.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

### **17 Background Documents and Report Author**

- 17.1 There are no background documents to this report.
- 17.2 If you would like more information on this report please contact Hanna Gibson, Complaints & Casework Manager on 020 8314 6097 or Georgina Chambers, Corporate Information Casework and Complaints manager on 020 8314 7956.