

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2: 2021/22

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report to the Performance Committee the quarterly analysis of closed complaints in in Quarter 2: 2021/22.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Performance Committee:

1. Note the corporate and service complaint performance against the standards outlined in the council's complaint handling procedure.
2. Continue to monitor complaint performance and request additional information from services as required.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I.	Council Values	Focusing on customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable
II.	Policy and Legal	The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010
III.	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV.	Impact on performance and performance indicators	Will provide a robust approach to monitoring complaints performance information covering all council services
V.	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Indicators support various outcomes in the SOA
VI.	Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)	From existing resources
VII.	Consideration at PDSP/Executive Committee required	None
VIII.	Details of consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) developed and published a model Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) in 28 March 2012. The model CHP was to ensure a standardised approach in dealing with customer complaints across the local authority sector.

The SPSO began a review of the model CHP in 2019/20.

The SPSO finalised the revised model CHP in 2020/21 which updated and refreshed the procedure. All Local Authorities were required to implement the revised CHP by 2021.

The SPSO definition of a complaint in the model CHP is:

‘An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the local authority’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the local authority.’

The SPSO outlined four elements of the model CHP that that should not be amended to ensure a standardised approach across all local authorities. These are:

- The definition of a complaint
- The number of stages
- Timescales at each stage
- The requirement to record, report and publicise complaints information

D.2 Corporate Complaint Performance

Table 1 breaks down Quarter 2 complaints by complaint category over a 5 year period.

Table 1 Quarter 2 complaint category covering period 2017/18 – 2021/22

Complaint Category	Q2 2017/18	Q2 2018/19	Q2 2019/20	Q2 2020/21	Q2 2021/22
Standard of Service	400	473	328	352	418
Policy Related	86	102	138	116	123
Employee Attitude	80	92	67	94	84
Poor Communication	86	72	67	176	95
Waiting Time	47	51	32	29	81
Missed Appointments	12	7	8	4	11
Total Complaints	711	797	640	771	812

The current service level of complaint performance varies across the council and is linked to the complexity and quantity of complaints received. Operational Services and Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS) are the main complaint generators by service, accounting for 83.6% (679) of all recorded complaints (812) in Quarter 2: 2021/22.

Further information on the main complaint categories is set out below:

- Standard of Service

The majority of Standard of Service complaints have been generated by Operational Services (209) and HCBS (140) which account for 83.5% of all recorded complaints in the category. The equivalent quarter in 2020/21, Operational Services (181) and HCBS (96) had a combined total of 277 complaints categorised as Standard of Service.

Of the 209 Operational Services Standard of Service complaints, Waste Services received a total of 148 complaints. The majority of the complaints (99) were linked to bin collection issues.

- Policy

A total of 123 Policy related complaints were received by the council. This is an increase of 7 from the equivalent quarter in the previous year (116). Operational Services (64) and HCBS (37) account for 82.1% of all Policy complaints. Within Operational Services, Waste Services received 45 complaints which is a decrease of 2 when compared to the equivalent quarter in the previous year.

- Waiting Time

The main Waiting Time complaints generators are HCBS (58) which accounted for 71.6% of all Waiting Time complaints (81). There was an increase of 52 Waiting Time complaints when compared to the equivalent quarter in the previous year.

- Poor Communication

In Q2 2021/22, 71.6% (68) of all Poor Communication complaints were generated HCBS. The equivalent quarter in the previous year HCBS received 28 complaints. Building Services and Housing Need accounted for 21 and 19 Poor Communication complaints respectively.

- Employee Attitude

Employee Attitude complaints have been driven by Operational Services (38) and HCBS (34) which account for 85.7% (72) of all recorded complaints in this category. The equivalent quarter in 2020/21, Operational Services (41) and HCBS (20) had a combined total 61 complaints categorised as Employee Attitude related.

Appendix 1 to the report provides the council wide performance against the SPSO defined measures covering the period Quarter 2: 2021/22 (July 2021 to September 2021).

D.3 Summary of Service Complaint Performance

The Complaint Steering Board identified 4 high level indicators that provided a summary of complaint handling performance.

The 4 indicators are:

1. Total complaints received
2. Complaints closed within 5 working days
3. Complaints closed within 20 working days

4. Complaints part upheld/upheld

Table 2 provides a summary of service performance against these 4 key indicators.

Table 2 Quarter 2: 2020/21 and Quarter 2 2021/22 service performance summary

Service	Total complaints		Complaints closed within 5 working days		Complaints closed within 20 working days		Complaints part upheld/ upheld	
	Q2 2020/21	Q2 2021/22	Q2 2020/21	Q2 2021/22	Q2 2020/21	Q2 2021/22	Q2 2020/21	Q2 2021/22
Corporate Services	4	-	0%	-	-	-	100%	-
Education Service	57	45	85%	76.5%	81.3%	45.5%	26.3%	26.7%
Exec Office	0	1	-	0	-	-	-	0%
Finance and Property Services	41	46	81.1%	87.8%	75%	33.3%	22%	28.3%
HCBS	230	346	84.6%	87.3%	89.4%	83.0%	34.3%	41%
Operational Services	397	333	77.1%	78.7%	95.5%	88.9%	30%	33%
PEDR	15	16	45.5%	90.0%	33.3%	40.0%	26.7%	43.7%
Social Policy	27	25	31.3%	70.0%	33.3%	73.3%	51.9%	36%
Total	771	812	77.7%	82.5%	82.2%	75.2%	31.6%	36.1%

Table 3 provides a service trend summary of closed complaints closed by quarter covering Q2 2020/21 to Q2 2021/22.

Table 3 Quarter 2 2020/21 and Quarter 2 2021/22 service trend summary

Service	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	Q4 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22
Corporate Services	4	3	3	2	-
Education Service	57	109	33	64	45
Exec Office	0	2	5	2	1
Finance and Property Services	41	32	37	42	46
HCBS	230	228	204	220	346
Operational Services	397	441	532	345	333
PEDR	15	12	9	16	16
Social Policy	27	27	33	26	25
Total	771	854	856	717	812

Appendix 1 contains the complaint analysis covering Q2: 2021/22 by Service.

Table 4 provides a service trend summary of upheld/ part upheld complaints as a percentage of complaints received by quarter covering Q2 2020/21 to Q2 2021/22.

Table 4 Q2 2020/21 to Q2 2021/22 Service upheld/ part-upheld complaint performance

Service	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	Q4 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22
Corporate Services	100%	33.3%	66.7%	50%	-
Education Service	26.3%	50.4%	27.3%	21.9%	26.7%
Exec Office	-	0%	20%	0%	0%
Finance and Property Services	22%	15.7%	29.7%	21.4%	28.3%
HCBS	34.3%	40.8%	40.7%	37.7%	41%
Operational Services	30%	20.6%	28%	25.8%	33%
PEDR	26.7%	25%	22.2%	6.3%	43.7%
Social Policy	51.9%	70.3%	54.3%	53.8%	36%
Total	31.6%	31.3%	32.1%	29.5%	36.1%

Appendix 2 provided a breakdown of Complaint Outcome by Reason and HOS.

Table 5 provides indicative ratios for the number of complaints against the specific customer groups for Education Services, Housing, Customer and Building Services and Operation Services.

Table 5: Ratio of complaints to customer group (for main generators of complaints)

Service	Base unit (Q2 2021/22)	Q2 complaint volume	Complaint ratio
Education Services	30,000 pupils	45	1 complaint for every 666 pupils
HCBS	14,031 council houses	346	1 complaint for every 41 council house
Operational Services	81,488 households	333	1 complaint for every 245 household

A target of 85% is currently set for the percentage of complaints which must be dealt with within timescale.

Across the council, 36.1% of all complaints received in Q2:2021/22 were upheld/ part upheld. Housing, Customer and Building Services received the highest number of complaints across the council at 346. This is an increase of 116 when compared to the equivalent quarter in 2020/21.

E. CONCLUSION

The council has shown an increase in complaints which was mainly related to Housing, Customer and Building Services complaint volume.

All services continue to be committed to regular customer complaint analysis which informs service development activity and the improvement agenda.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

SPSO publishes the Model Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) for the local government sector in Scotland.

1. [The Local Authority Model Complaints Procedure \(model CHP\) Guide to Implementation](#)
2. [WLC Complaints Handling Procedure](#)

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 Corporate and Service Complaint Performance Q2:2021-22

Appendix 2 Complaint Outcome by Reason and HOS

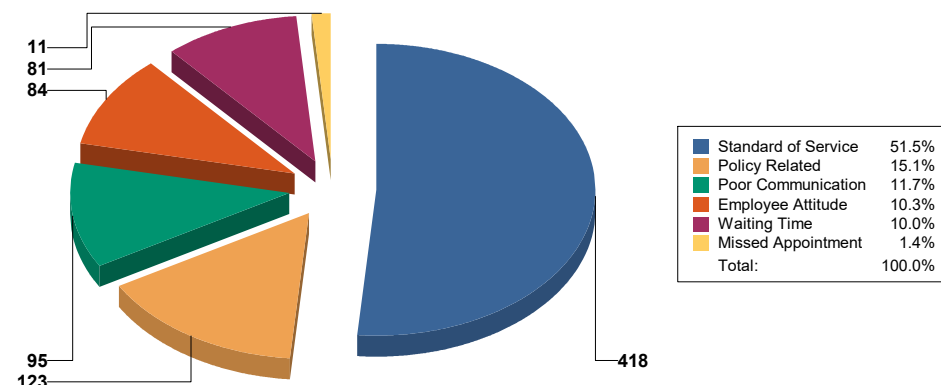
Contact Person: Joe Murray

E mail: joe.murray@westlothian.gov.uk Phone 01506 281893

Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive
15 November 2021

This report summarises complaints closed within the period above along with an indicator showing the number received. All timescales are based on working days and therefore excludes Saturday, Sunday and public holidays in the calculations.

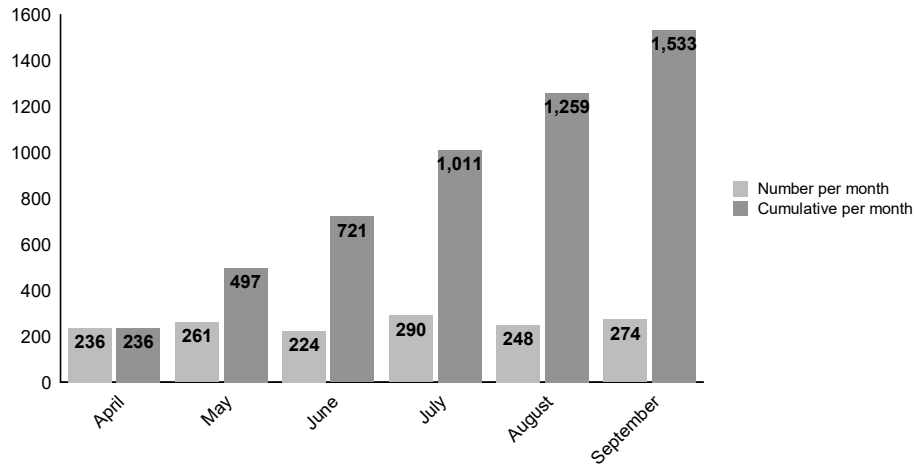
	SPSO Performance Indicator	Number	%
1	Total number of complaints received	799	
2	Total number of complaints closed	812	
3	Complaints closed at Stage 1	687	84.6%
	Complaints closed at Stage 2	105	12.9%
	Complaints closed at Stage 2 after escalation	20	2.5%
4	Complaints UPHELD at Stage 1	154	22.4%
	Complaints NOT UPHELD at Stage 1	439	63.9%
	Complaints PART UPHELD at Stage 1	94	13.7%
	Complaints RESOLUTION at Stage 1	0	0.0%
	Complaints UPHELD at Stage 2	12	11.4%
	Complaints NOT UPHELD at Stage 2	71	67.6%
	Complaints PART UPHELD at Stage 2	22	21.0%
	Complaints RESOLUTION at Stage 2	0	0.0%
	Escalated complaints UPHELD at Stage 2	6	30.0%
	Escalated complaints NOT UPHELD at Stage 2	9	45.0%
	Escalated complaints PART UPHELD at Stage 2	5	25.0%
	Escalated complaints RESOLUTION at Stage 2	0	0.0%
5	Average working days to respond to a Stage 1 complaint	4.0	Days: 2766
	Average working days to respond to a Stage 2 complaint	15.8	Days: 1664
	Average working days to respond to a Stage 2 after escalation	9.4	Days: 188
6	Complaints closed at Stage 1 within 5 working days	567	82.5%
	Complaints closed at Stage 2 within 20 working days	79	75.2%
	Complaints closed at Stage 2 within 20 working days after escalation	18	90.0%
7	Complaints closed at Stage 1 where an extension has been authorised	2	0.3%
	Complaints closed at Stage 2 where an extension has been authorised	1	1.0%

Number of Complaints by Reason


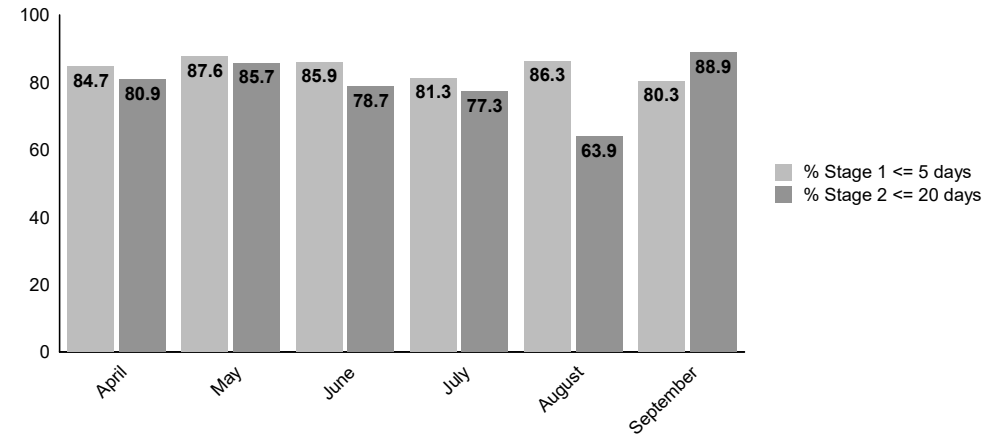
NB: The totals below include complaints resolved at Stage 1 and Stage 2 as well as complaints closed at Stage 1 then re-opened and handled as Stage 2 (escalated).

Percentage of all complaints closed within timeline:	81.8% (664)
Percentage of all complaints UPHELD:	21.2% (172)
Percentage of all complaints NOT UPHELD:	63.9% (519)
Percentage of all complaints PART UPHELD:	14.9% (121)
Percentage of all complaints RESOLUTION:	0.0% (0)
Percentage with another or no outcome selected:	0.0% (0)

Complaints Closed 2021/22
Number and cumulative per month



% Complaints closed within Timeline
% Stage 1 within 5 & Stage 2 within 20 working days by month



Stage 2 figures include complaints escalated from Stage 1 having been closed then re-opened

% of Total complaints Upheld & Part Upheld by month 2021/22

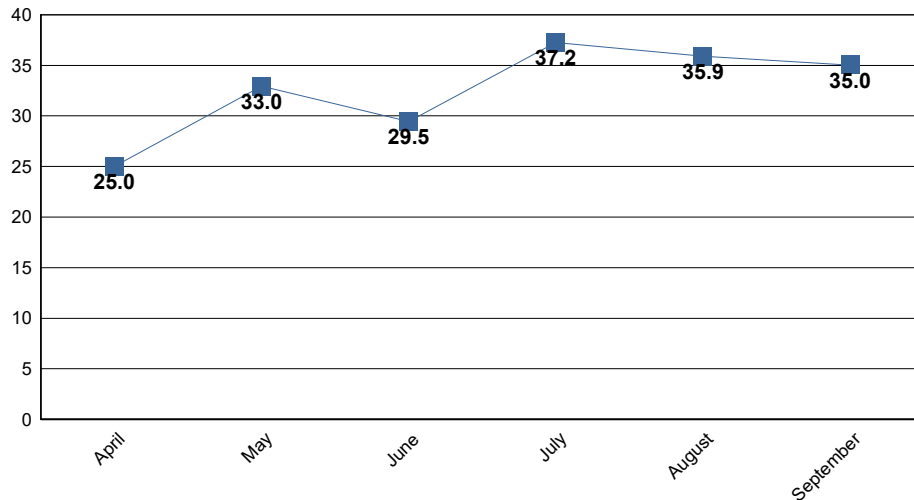


Table showing % of complaints closed within SLA at Stage 1 and Stage 2 cumulative by month 2020/21

Month	% Stage 1 Closed within 5 Days per month (cumulative)	% Stage 2 Closed within 20 Days per month (cumulative)
April	84.7%	80.9%
May	86.3%	82.9%
June	86.1%	81.4%
July	84.7%	80.3%
August	85.0%	77.5%
September	84.2%	79.5%

NB - the Stage 2 cumulative figure includes escalated complaints (closed at Stage 1 then reopened as Stage 2).

Summary of Secondary Categorisation (Service reason for complaint)

	Total	STAGE 1				STAGE 2				Escalated			
		Upheld	Part Upheld	Not Upheld	Resolution	Upheld	Part Upheld	Not Upheld	Resolution	Upheld	Part Upheld	Not Upheld	Resolution
Education	45	7	4	23			1	10					
Additional Support Needs	1							1					
Bullying - Pupil - Pupil	7			2				5					
Child Protection	2			2									
Communication	2		2										
Composite Classes	1							1					
Facilities	1			1									
Head Teacher	3	1					1	1					
Head Teacher & Staff	4			3				1					
Health & Safety	2			2									
Neighbours	1			1									
Nursery Placement	12	6	1	5									
Pupil Placement	8		1	6				1					
Standard of Service General	1			1									
Executive Office	1			1									
Operational Services	1			1									
Finance & Property Services	46	10	2	29			1	2			2		
Claim/information processed incorrectly	6	1	1	4									
Delay in completion of property repairs	1	1											
Delay in processing claim/information	12	5	1	5							1		
Employee attitude general	4			4									
Incorrect or conflicting advice	1	1											
Policy related general	4			3				1					
Poor communication general	2			1							1		
Recovery of debt	8			8									
Standard of service general	7	2		3			1	1					
Waiting time general	1			1									
HC&BS	346	65	45	166		9	12	32		6	5	6	
Awaiting materials	2	1		1									
Call not answered	3			2								1	
Customer standards not met	31		3	19		1	2	4		1	1		

Damages to property	12	3	3	3	1	1	Performance Committee 15 November 2021
Driving/ parking issues	4	1	1	2		1	Appendix 1 Item 5
Employee attitude general	23	6	3	11	1	1	
Failed to reply	1	1					
Incorrect or conflicting advice	6	2	1	3			
Lack of communication	13	3	4	4	1	1	
Missed appointment general	10	2	1	5	1	1	
No action / Ineffective action taken	12		4	4	2	2	
Policy related general	33	1	2	22	2	6	
Poor communication general	44	12	2	23	2	3	2
Procedure not followed	6	2	2	1	1		
Staff conduct/ attitude	6	3	1	1	1		
Standard of property/accommodation	10		2	5	3		
Standard of service general	47	9	5	20	2	1	7
Standard of workmanship	14	6	1	3	3	1	2
System Issue	1			1			
Telephony Issue	3			3			
Third party supplier	2	1				1	
Unprofessional conduct	1			1			
Unreasonable delays	2		1		1		
Unresolved repair after visit	9		2	5	1	1	
Untidy work	2	1	1				
Waiting time general	49	11	6	27	2	1	2
Operational Services	333	64	41	210	1	4	13
Access Issues	6	1	1	4			
Accessibility Issues	1		1				
Assisted Bin Collections	25	4	5	15	1		
Billing & Charges	1			1			
Bin Capacity/ Size	2		1	1			
Bin Collection Issues Domestic	104	21	12	66	2	3	
Bin Collection Issues Trade	1			1			
Bin Contamination Issues	12	1		11			
Bin Deliveries/ Requests	16	4	4	8			
Bin/ Bulky Presentation Issues	12		1	10	1		
Bin/Pick-Ups/Returns/Spillages	18	5	2	10	1		

Bulky Uplift Missed	3			3				Performance Committee 15 November 2021
Collection Dates/ Routes	6	1	1	4				Appendix 1 Item 5
Complaint Handling Procedure	1			1				
Council Policy & Legislation	7			7				
Damage to Property	5	1	2	1		1		
Discrimination	1			1				
Environmental Concerns	4			3		1		
Expectations Not Met	14	5	1	6		2		
External 3rd Party	4			4				
Food Recycling	1		1					
Glass Recycling	3	2		1				
Grass Left on Paths	4	3	1					
Grass Not Cut/ Missed	2	1		1				
Health & Safety	1	1						
HWRC - Recycling Centre Issues	3			3				
HWRC OpeningTimePolicy Changes	8			8				
Lack of Communication	7	2		4		1		
Lack of Consultation	1			1				
Parking Issues	1			1				
Poor Customer Service	2	1		1				
Poor or Agressive Driving	1		1					
Road Works	6		1	5				
Road/ Path Defects	6	1		5				
Service Standards	20	3	1	14		1	1	
Staff Conduct / Attitude	18	6	5	5	1	1		
Staff Supervision	3	1		2				
Standard of Workmanship	2			2				
Unreasonable Delays	1					1		
Planning Econ Dev Regen	16	4	1	5	2	3		1
Failed to attend	1	1						
Lack of communication	1			1				
Missed appointment general	1			1				
Pest Control- standard of service	4	2	1	1				
Policy related general	5			1		1	2	1
Poor communication general	2					1	1	

Standard of service general	1	1						Performance Committee 15 November 2021
Unreasonable delays	1	1						Appendix 1 Item 5
Social Policy	25	4	1	5	2	2	11	
Customer standards not met	2	2						
Employee attitude general	2	1			1			
Lack of communication	1				1			
Non-residential Financial Contributions	5	1			1 3			
Policy related general	1				1			
Poor communication general	2				1 1			
Standard of service general	9	1	1	2	1 4			
Unprofessional conduct	2	1			1			
Waiting time general	1	1						

Open Complaints by Service

The table below provides the number of complaints open by Service and month/financial year created (to the end of the reporting period). Note that month and financial year is taken from the Stage 1 or Stage 2 task creation date.

NB - if a complaint is closed and reopened then this will show as open under the original month/financial year it was created in the system.

	Total	2020/2021 March	2021/2022 August	September
Total	12	1	1	10
Corporate Services	1			1
Education	1			1
Executive Office	1		1	
Housing Customer & Building Services	4			4
Operational Services	2	1		1
Planning Economic Development & Regenerati	1			1
Social Policy	2			2

Appendix 2 Upheld/ Part Upheld/ Not Upheld by Reason and Head of Service Q2 2021/22

Complaint Reason	HOS	Not Upheld	Part Upheld	Upheld	Total
Employee Attitude	Education	3	1	0	4
	Finance & Property Services	4	0	0	4
	Housing Customer & Building Services	18	8	8	34
	Operational Services	13	9	16	38
	Social Policy	4	0	0	4
Employee Attitude Total		42	18	24	84
Missed Appointment	Housing Customer & Building Services	3	1	5	9
	Planning Economic Development & Regeneration	1	0	1	2
Missed Appointment Total		4	1	6	11
Policy Related	Education	4	0	0	4
	Finance & Property Services	7	0	0	7
	Housing Customer & Building Services	29	7	1	37
	Operational Services	57	4	3	64
	Planning Economic Development & Regeneration	4	1	0	5
	Social Policy	5	0	1	6
Policy Related Total		106	12	5	123
Poor Communication	Education	4	0	1	5
	Finance & Property Services	2	0	1	3
	Housing Customer & Building Services	38	9	21	68
	Operational Services	11	1	1	13
	Planning Economic Development & Regeneration	2	1	0	3
	Social Policy	1	1	1	3
Poor Communication Total		58	12	25	95
Standard of Service	Education	20	4	1	25
	Executive Office	1	0	0	1
	Finance & Property Services	18	3	6	27
	Housing Customer & Building Services	79	29	32	140
	Operational Services	136	29	44	209
	Planning Economic Development & Regeneration	2	1	2	5
	Social Policy	6	2	3	11
Standard of Service Total		262	68	88	418
Waiting Time	Education	2	0	5	7
	Finance & Property Services	2	0	3	5
	Housing Customer & Building Services	37	8	13	58
	Operational Services	6	2	1	9
	Planning Economic Development & Regeneration	0	0	1	1
	Social Policy	0	0	1	1
Waiting Time Total		47	10	24	81
Total		519	121	172	812
Total % breakdown		64%	15%	21%	100%