

# **Children's Services Directorate**

## **Annual Report on Compliments, Complaints and Representations**

**2022/23**



## Introduction

The Children's Act 1989 requires all local authorities with social services responsibilities to have a formal complaints procedure for Children's Social Care (CSC) complaints. [Getting the Best from Complaints](#) (statutory guidance issued by the DfE, 2006) provides guidance for local authorities on implementing the complaint process for social care complaints made in relation to Children's Services.

This Annual Report is produced in line with national guidance (relevant section provided in Appendix 1) and is designed to share information more widely with members of the public. For completeness, although not required by the statutory guidance, this report also includes corporate complaints pertaining to Children's Services.

Hampshire County Council (HCC) work in partnership with the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) and the statutory role of Complaints Manager is fulfilled by the same individual within both authorities. Corporate complaints are managed by the IWC's corporate services.

This report looks to follow the national guidance but to support with the flow of the report, headings have been shortened and combined where relevant.

The core data supporting this report can be found in Appendix 3, with this report providing context and analysis.

The report covers the IWC's Children's Services Directorate's formal feedback and representations for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The Report details the compliments and complaints formally recorded by the Children's Services Directorate's Complaints Team (CSCT) and IWC's corporate services. In addition to annual reporting, internal reporting takes place on a quarterly basis, with more regular monitoring reports for services issued on request. This regular monitoring of formal feedback enables ongoing improvement.

Key terms and their definitions to support in the reading of this report can be found under Appendix 2.

## 1. Executive Summary

1.1. The Annual Compliments, Complaints and Representations Report is a public document, providing a mechanism by which the Isle of Wight Council's Children's Services Directorate (the Directorate) can be kept informed about the operation and effectiveness of its complaints procedure and support learning from complaints. This document covers the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

1.2. The key findings with the report can be summarised as:

- A total of 114 representations were received by the CSCT in this reporting period. This is an increase of 37.4% (31) from 83 in the 2021/22 period.
- 48.2% (55) of representations were considered in accordance with the CSC statutory guidance. Of this total, 92.7% were managed as complaints.
- 13.2% (15) were considered in accordance with the corporate complaints process. Of this total, 100% were managed as complaints.
- With regards to CSC complaints, 'parents' continue to be the group most likely to make a complaint to Children's Services at 63%.
- The highest category for the reason (nature) why CSC complaints are made has changed and is now 'Quality of Service', totalling 19 (38%).
- The second and third reasons (natures) for CSC complaints are 'Conduct of Worker' and 'Poor Communication' with 17 (33%) and 5 (10%) respectively.
- Corporate complaints saw the number one reason (nature) of complaint remain related to 'Childs EHCP'.
- 100% of the actual outcomes achieved during the reporting period for CSC stage one complaints were either 'Apology & Explanation' 24 (47%) or 'Explanation' 27 (53%).
- 88% of all CSC complaints upheld had some form of remedial action completed, however there is an expectation this number should be 100%.
- During 2022/23, the average time taken to investigate and respond to new CSC Stage One complaints was 13 working days.
- For corporate Stage Two complaints, the average response time was 24 working days.

1.3. This report identifies a number of recommendations for CSCT, the wider directorate and/or corporate services within IWC to implement and monitor. They are as follows, with further details provided in section 12:

- Communication strategy update within the Children & Families Branch,
- All of the Children's Services Directorate to take a strengths-based approach to resolution of complaints,
- Chasing of actions agreed,
- Remedial action for complaints upheld,
- Reducing work categorised as 'ad-hoc',
- To further increase the use of the e-form,
- Increase timescale compliance,
- Policy on nepotism.

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## 2. Representations made to the local authority

- 2.1. A total of 114 representations were received by CSCT in this reporting period. This is an increase of 37.4% (31) from 83 in the 2021/22 period. The type of representations have been broken down in Table 1 below.
- 2.2. A representation is defined as a piece of correspondence, requiring an action by the CSCT. For example, to log and process a complaint, to signpost individuals to an alternative process or to reject a complaint, to name a few examples. Some representations can create significant amounts of work over several months, whilst others may require one short email, all instances are logged as one representation.
- 2.3. It is also important to acknowledge that social care contacts have risen from 14,167 in 2021/22 to 16,309 in 2022/23, an increase of 15%.
- 2.4. Whilst there was an increase of 37.4% in representations in 2022/23, it is important to also factor in an increase in demand for services.

**Table 1: Type of Representation by Reporting Period**

Type of representation	Reporting Period			
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Complaint	35	20	29	28
Pre-complaint (to Statutory Stage 1 Complaint)	15	10	3	2
Case Concern (to Statutory Stage 1 Complaint)	1	0	0	0
Joint complaint	0	0	0	0
Refused	4	3	3	8
Withdrawn	0	1	0	0
Case Concern	0	2	3	9
<b>Total CSC representations</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47</b>
Complaint	15	16	-	-
Pre-complaint (to Corporate Stage 1 Complaint)	0	0	-	-
Pre-complaint (to Corporate Stage 2 Complaint)	0	0	-	-
Refused	0	0	-	-
Withdrawn	0	0	-	-
Corporate Stage 1	0	0	-	-
<b>Total corporate representations</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Area initiated complaint	0	0	0	0
Pre-complaint	11	10	11	5
Professional to Professional Complaint	0	2	1	0
HSCP	0	0	0	0

LGSCO	5	4	5	4
Local Response	0	0	2	2
Compliment	0	0	2	0
HantsDirect handoff	0	0	0	0
GDPR, FOI or SAR	0	7	3	4
Request for info	0	0	0	0
Ad Hoc	27	8	2	10
Call back requests	1	-	-	-
<b>Total other representations</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Total representations</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>72</b>

**Pre complaints** are initial queries which do not have all the mandatory information required for processing. In these circumstances the information is requested, and no response received so they remain logged as 'pre-complaints'.

**Case concerns** are pieces of feedback handled more informally and therefore not being logged as a formal complaint, but still requiring a response from the relevant service.

**LGSCO** are the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman related queries.

**Ad hoc** is a capture all category for anything outside of the before mentioned categories, such as safeguarding, school matters and queries relating to other Local Authorities.

- 2.5. 48.2% (55) of representations were considered in accordance with the CSC statutory guidance, compared to 43.4% in 2021/22. Of this total, 92.7% were managed as complaints.
- 2.6. 13.2% (15) were considered in accordance with the corporate complaints process, compared to 19.3% in 2021/22. Of this total, 100% were managed as complaints.
- 2.7. 38.6% (44) of the representations relate to matters recorded as 'other representations'. The most significant element within that being 'ad-hoc' representations, which are a variety of queries such as safeguarding, school matters and topics relating to other Local Authorities. All matters that the CSCT are unable to meaningfully support with. These make up 61.4% (27) of that type of representation and 23.7% of all representations. In 2021/22, 'ad-hoc' equated for 25.8% of those recorded as 'other representations' and 9.6% of all representations.
- 2.8. No compliments were recorded in this period, which is the same as in the reporting period 2021/22.
- 2.9. This is the first reporting period where 'call back requests' have been an option for complainants, introduced as part of the new online complaints form, used by the public to submit complaints (the e-form). This was created by the CSCT and introduced in late 2022.
- 2.10. Call back requests were introduced following feedback from complainants that whilst they were dissatisfied, they did not want to have to formally complain to speak to somebody.

- 2.11. In 2022 a project was undertaken to transfer the online complaints form (e-form) to a more user friendly and flexible platform; Microsoft Forms (MS Forms). The significant benefits of doing so are detailed in section 9.
- 2.12. When completing the new e-form and after advising they wish to make a complaint, complainants are asked for their own and their child(ren)'s details. The form then asks if, rather than make a complaint, they would instead prefer a phone call from an appropriate colleague.
- 2.13. If 'yes' is selected the request is processed and no formal complaint is processed. If 'no' is selected the complainant can progress with the form and log their formal complaint.
- 2.14. Of the 27 entries made using the new e-form, 11 (40.7%) individuals opted for a 'call back request' in place of making a formal complaint.
- 2.15. As well as the significant work undertaken to improve the Council's complaint responses, this subtle adjustment to the e-form, following feedback from complainants, has prevented a significant number of complaints being logged.
- 2.16. Further analysis of this new option of communication is in section 9 of this report.

### **3. The number of complaints at each stage and any that were considered by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)**

#### **3.1. Referrals**

3.2. The number of referrals received via the LGSCO (3) during the reporting period stayed static compared to the previous period (3).

3.3. 100% of the referrals related to 'Education/Non-Social Care' complaints.

3.4. When the LGSCO find fault, the ombudsman makes recommendations to remedy the complaint and/or identify learning for the Council in terms of practise and processes.

3.5. The LGSCO Assessment Team will sometimes make enquiries in relation to the 'status' of a complaint to establish if it has gone through the Council's complaint process before deciding whether to investigate. These enquires sometimes result in the LGSCO deciding a complaint is 'premature' and it is returned to the Council for investigation and response.

3.6. Similarly, after having sight of the Council's complaint responses, the LGSCO may conclude that they are unlikely to come to a materially different conclusion and therefore choose not to progress their investigations.

#### **3.7. Outcomes**

3.8. Within this reporting period, three cases were closed after initial enquiries. In the previous reporting period, there were no cases closed in this way.

3.9. The three other outcomes were:

- Upheld – LA to apologise, make payments to complainant for distress and training for staff;
- Upheld – LA to make payment to complainant; and
- No fault by the Local Authority.

3.10. The total number of outcomes may differ from the total number of referrals received as the LGSCO can log more than one type of referral or outcome for a single complaint.



#### **4. Which customer groups made the complaints**

- 4.1. With regards to CSC complaints, 'parents' continue to be the group most likely to make a complaint to Children's Services at 63%. In 2021/22, 'parents' made up 70% of all complaints.
- 4.2. Still in regard to CSC complaints, the two most popular methods for making a complaint, accounting for 92% of the total, continue to be by 'e-mail' and 'e-form' with 22 (53%) and 16 (39%) respectively. In 2021/22, 'email' and 'e-form' equated to 94% (67% and 27% respectively) of all complaints (excluding young persons as a subset).
- 4.3. The use of the e-form has increased from the previous reporting period from 27% to 39%. It should also be noted that 'call back requests' are made via the e-form but are not counted in this data. The implementation of call back requests is detailed in section 9.
- 4.4. Complaints made via the e-form are significantly more likely to include all the mandatory information necessary to enable investigation and therefore increases the likelihood of the complaint being processed more effectively. Therefore, efforts have been made to encourage use of the e-form and ensure both a smoother process for complainants and a reduced workload for CSCT.
- 4.5. Complaints made via letter remained static (at 2) and saw a minor reduction in percentage share from 6% in 2021/22 to 5% in 2022/23.
- 4.6. Data pertaining specifically to Young Peoples' complaints (as a subset) is included in Appendix 3.
- 4.7. A further breakdown of who made complaints and how they were submitted can be found in Table 5 within Appendix 3.

## 5. The types of complaints made

### 5.1. Children's Social Care (CSC) Complaints

5.2. The highest category for the reason (nature) why CSC complaints are made has changed and is now 'Quality of Service', totalling 19 (38%). This is an increase from zero recorded in the previous period.

5.3. The second and third reasons (natures) for CSC complaints are 'Conduct of Worker' and 'Poor Communication' with 17 (33%) and 5 (10%) respectively.

5.4. Whilst still in the top three reasons, 'Poor communication' has seen a positive decline from 19% to 10%.

5.5. The last reporting period saw 16% of complaints made regarding 'Insufficient support from CSD', however this period saw that reduce by 6, with 1 (2%) being logged in 2022/23. This is a direct result of CSCT's service improvement activity to fully understand complaints and acquire specific information at the point of the complaint being made. Previous reporting periods have seen complaints accepted without all the details being known and therefore logged as 'Insufficient Support from CSD'. By working in this way complaints are better understood and therefore responses can be more meaningful and bespoke. It also means reporting, and therefore the identification of lessons, is more specific and meaningful.

### 5.6. Corporate Complaints

5.7. Corporate complaints saw the number one reason (nature) of complaint remain related to 'Childs EHCP'. In the period 2021/22, the predominant reason (nature) was 'Provision in EHCP not being implemented' with 6 (37.5%), similarly in 2022/23 the number one reason was 'Child's EHCP' with 11 (73%).

5.8. All other complaints recorded one instance only, with two relating to SEN matters ('SEN panel member' and 'Lack of SEN school places') and the remaining two being one off occasions ('Holiday activity fund' and 'Household support voucher not valid').

5.9. The SEN service continues to receive the most corporate complaints with 87% of the total share. The total number of complaints about the SEN Service has increased, although only minimally year on year, from 10 to 13.

5.10. A further breakdown of the nature of complaints made and the services involved can be found in Tables 6 and 7 within Appendix 3.

## 6. The desired outcome of complaints

- 6.1. When making a complaint, complainants are asked to state what outcome they are seeking. This provides a useful indication to the responding manager about what potentially would resolve the complaint and also provides comparative data in relation to the actual outcome i.e., the outcome of the investigation.
- 6.2. For CSC stage one complaints, the predominant outcome sought remains as 'complaint issues investigated' with 13 (25.5%) in the period, a minimal increase of two from 2021/22 (11) however the percentage share remains consistent (25.6% in 2021/22). The next two highest identified categories are 'Not specified/Implied' with 12 (23.5%) and 'apology and explanation' with seven (13.7%).
- 6.3. For corporate complaints no sought after outcome recorded more than three instances. The top two, both recording three (20%), were 'EHCP to be finalised, provision to be put in place' and 'other'. In the previous reporting period, 'EHCP to be finalised, provision to be put in place' recorded one entry (6.3%) and 'other' none.
- 6.4. It is important to note that whilst 'EHCP to be finalised, provision to be put in place' saw a 200% increase year on year, this equates to a total of just two more complaints.
- 6.5. Complaints relating to EHCPs account for 26.7% (four) of the outcomes sought.

## 6.6. The actual outcome of complaints

- 6.7. Having identified from the complainant the outcome they are seeking, the actual outcome achieved is recorded from the response letter.
- 6.8. 100% of the actual outcomes achieved during the reporting period for CSC stage one complaints were either 'Apology & Explanation' 24 (47%) or 'Explanation' 27 (53%). This is consistent with 2021/22, with the exception of two complaints recorded with an outcome of 'No investigation possible'.
- 6.9. The actual outcomes for corporate Stage Two complaints in 2022/23 saw none recorded more than twice, therefore making analysis from a total of 13 of little value.
- 6.10. Across both complaint processes, over 45.3% of complaints required just an 'explanation' and no apology or remedial action. Where services are able to explain process, or actions taken to resolve complaints, it is clear preventative opportunities exist and services should consider how they can

be more forthcoming with whatever information was initially unknown to the complainant.

- 6.11. Table 2 below shows the status of CSC complaints that completed stage one summarising what decision was concluded.

**Table 2: CSC Complaints received.**

Investigation Outcome	Number	Percentage
Not Upheld	25	50%
Partially Upheld	17	34%
Upheld	8	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 6.12. 88% of all CSC complaints upheld had some form of remedial action completed, however there is an expectation this number should be 100%. In all instances where remedial action was not completed, the outcome was recorded as 'explanation'. It is expected that as a minimum an apology is always appropriate when upholding a complaint. An action is listed in section 12.
- 6.13. A summary of the nature of complaints for CSC and the associated outcomes is listed in table 3.

**Table 3: CSC Complaints received.**

Nature of complaint	Investigation outcome	Percentage
Quality of service	Not upheld	55.6%
	Partially upheld	27.8%
	Upheld	16.7%
Conduct of worker	Not upheld	46.7%
	Partially upheld	46.7%
	Upheld	6.7%
Poor communication	Not upheld	50%
	Partially upheld	25%
	Upheld	25%

- 6.14. A further breakdown of the actual outcome of complaints made can be found in Table 9 within the Appendix 3.

## 7. Details about advocacy services provided under these arrangements

7.1. The Getting the Best from Complaints statutory guidance advises the following regarding advocacy;

*“If a child or young person wishes to make a complaint, local authorities are required to provide him with information about advocacy services and offer help to obtain an advocate...”*

7.2. There was one instance of a child/young person making a complaint in 2022/23. When communicating with a child/young person it is important that their right to advocacy is made clear and this is achieved with the sharing of a flyer, which includes advocacy information. On this occasion, the topic of advocacy was referred to in the body of the email, however due to an administrative error, the flyer was not shared. Further analysis of the complaint does not raise concerns, as it was resolved with a meaningful and clear outcome.

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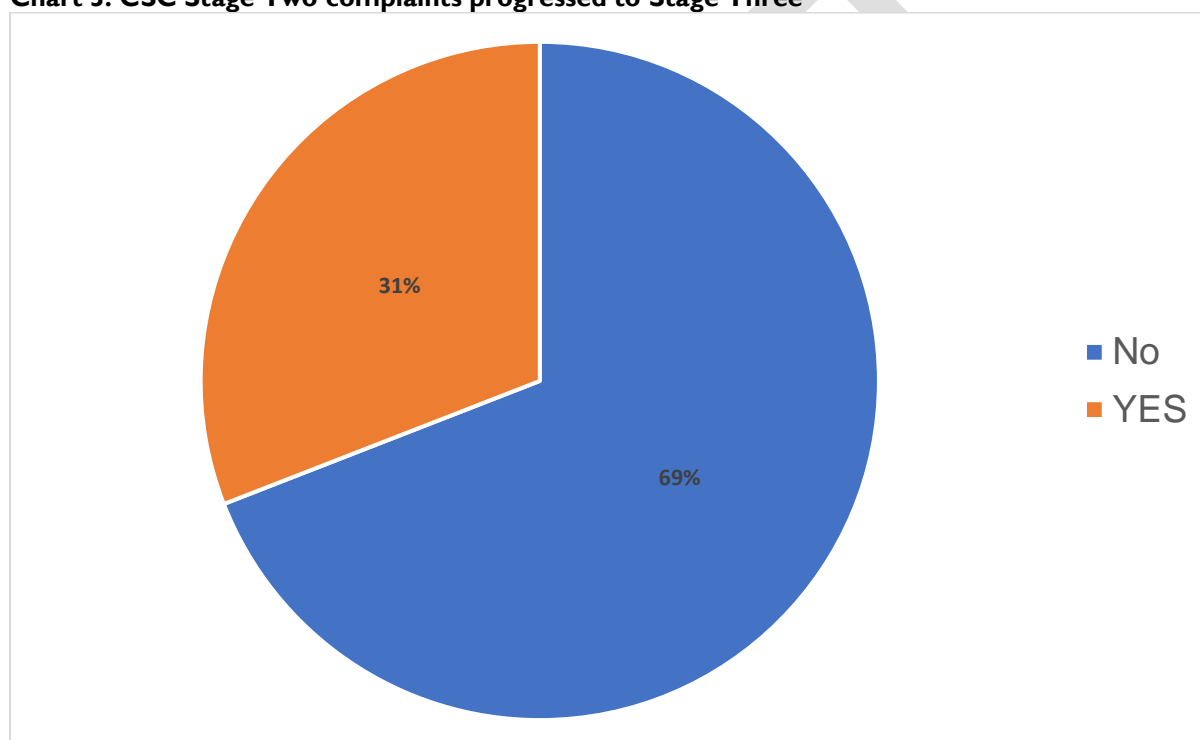
## **8. Compliance with timescales, and complaints resolved within extended timescale as agreed**

- 8.1. During 2022/23, the average time taken to investigate and respond to new CSC Stage One complaints was 13 working days. This is an increase of 1 working day on average compared to the previous reporting period.
- 8.2. The average working days taken to respond to CSC stage one complaints remains well within the permissible 20 working days. Further analysis has concluded that the new change of handling complaints with an initial meeting/phone call and then a written response is the cause for an increase. The logistical reality of finding an agreeable time to speak with complainants means there is a delay, when compared to previous years when only written responses were provided. However, the success of this way of working significantly outweighs the slight increase of 1 working day to respond, particularly as it's well within the permissible time limit.
- 8.3. However, it is worth noting that whilst 20 days is permissible according to the statutory guidance, the same guidance does suggest that the target should be 10 working days. On all occasions, CSCT asked the service to respond within the 10 working days before chasing a response. Therefore, work can still be done to reduce response times.
- 8.4. The CSCT used to process complaints within three working days but have improved their processes to see that reduce to one working day in the vast majority of cases. This has helped to also ensure most complaints are within timescales and that complainants receive acknowledgement swiftly.
- 8.5. 40% of CSC complaints were responded to within 10 working days at stage one, this is in line with the 41% recorded in 2021/22. 44% were responded to between 10-20 working days, compared to 59% in 2021/22 and 7% exceeded the maximum 20 working day limit. This total was zero in 2021/22.
- 8.6. For corporate Stage Two complaints, the average was 24 working days, which reflects a significant decrease (10 working days) from 34 working days recorded in 2021/22. This is an excellent achievement, to reduce the response time by as much as this, however work needs to continue to improve on 24 working days and ensure swift responses to Corporate Stage Two complaints.
- 8.7. 13% of corporate complaints were responded to within 10 working days at Stage Two (equal to 2021/22); 27% between 10-20 working days (56% in 2021/22) and 60% exceeded the maximum 20 working day limit (31% in 2021/22).
- 8.8. For CSC Stage Two complaints, 7 (46%) complaints exceeded the maximum 65 working day timescales.
- 8.9. CSC Stage Three review panel meetings were few and far between in previous periods due to the delay in progressing Stage Two cases, with only five taking

place between April 2019 and March 2022 across Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council. However, in 2022/23, 27 Stage Three Review Panel Meetings took place, with four in relation to the Isle of Wight Council.

- 8.10. As Chart 3 illustrates, 31% of Stage Two CSC complaints have progressed to Stage Three. CSCT predicts that a factor in this number being as high as it is, is due to the complainants' dissatisfaction at the delay to Stage Twos previously mentioned. As Stage Two complaints are now being allocated within the Ombudsman's expectations, it is anticipated this number will significantly reduce.
- 8.11. For the Isle of Wight specifically, the total percentage of complaints escalating to Stage Three is 21%.

**Chart 3: CSC Stage Two complaints progressed to Stage Three**



Data for Hampshire County Council & Isle of Wight Council

## 9. Learning and service improvement

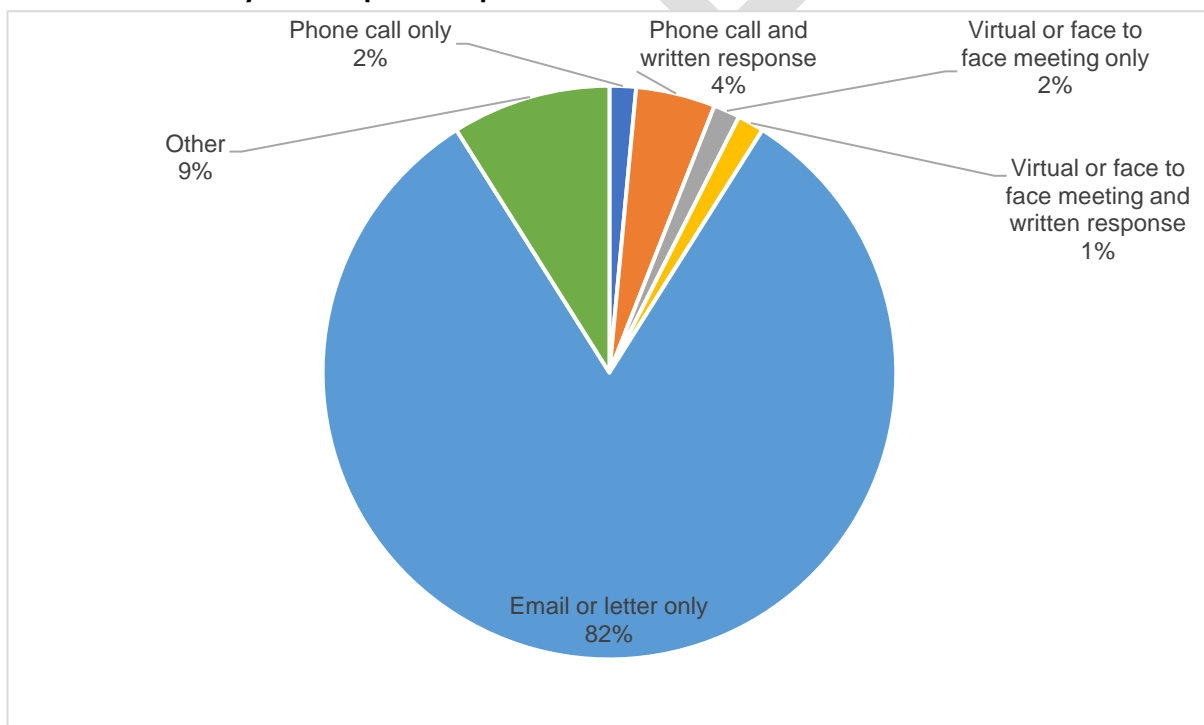
- 9.1. The following recommendations were put forward, within the 2021/22 report, for completion by the CSCT and/or directorate service areas during the 2022/23 reporting period:
- 9.2. ***Recommendation 1 – CSC Stage Two Recovery Plan. Develop a forecast model of how the CSCT intends to return CSC Stage Two complaints to a more manageable level, setting out clear timescales for delivery.***
- 9.3. A significant and thorough recovery plan was initiated in June of 2022 with the following key elements:
- More Investigating Officers (IOs) from senior management to be trained and support with the outstanding Stage Two caseload.
  - More Independent Persons (IPs) on the books, but also the current cohort cross skilled to be able to fulfil more roles.
  - Clarity on procedure, e.g., court matters, agreement of the Statement of Complaint.
  - 2 x dedicated IOs within CSCT.
- 9.4. The deadline to achieve the recovery plan and have the entire outstanding caseload completed or allocated was April 2023. This was achieved ahead of schedule in December 2022. The early delivery was predominantly achieved due to the above changes being implemented more quickly than anticipated.
- 9.5. For example, by being able to recruit an internal Council employee as the second dedicated IO, their recruitment and training plan was completed sooner than had they been external.
- 9.6. Equally, more IPs were recruited than was anticipated and the standard of those within the pool was exceptional. These IPs also received training that had been improved following feedback from the previous IP pool, making it more effective at preparing them to be self-sufficient and able to take on more cases.
- 9.7. It is also important to note the support from across the Directorate enabling more internal senior managers to be able to take on a complaint than originally forecast. This allowed more complaints to be allocated per month bringing the completion date forward.
- 9.8. Finally, great efforts were and continue to be taken to improve our initial stage one responses. The successful changes made, such as calling complainants and focussing on resolution, saw the number of complaints escalating to Stage Two reduce. Where the recovery plan anticipated escalations to remain as they were, the decrease resulted in fewer requiring allocation and therefore the completion date coming forward.



- 9.9. All CSC Stage Two complaints since January 2023 have been allocated within one calendar month as is expected.
- 9.10. **Recommendation 2 – Financial Resilience.** *There is a requirement for additional permanent resourcing to ensure longer term stability of the service. A report is to be developed to set out the additional resources being sought corporately to ensure new ways of working can be implemented, both as part of the recovery plan and also to ‘right size’ the CSCT to prevent future backlogs re-occurring in the longer term. Report to be submitted to Financial Resilience Group in June 2022.*
- 9.11. This report was completed and additional funding was provided. Temporary resource was agreed to support CSCT in clearing the outstanding caseload and additionally, ongoing permanent funding was provided to right size the team for the future, accounting for the fact demand on the service and the number of complaints are currently on trend to increase year on year, as a result of sustained increases in demand for Children’s Services.
- 9.12. **Recommendation 3 – Service Improvement.** *To support the CSC Stage Two recovery activity and to contribute to the stabilising of the CSCT in the future, a range of operational improvements have been identified. These include:*
- *Measures to reduce escalation of CSC complaints from Stage One to Stage Two;*
  - *Improvements to correspondence with complainants;*
  - *Improvements to guidance provided to officers for responding at Stage One for CSC Complaints;*
  - *Introduction of templates;*
  - *Process improvements (to be identified via a workshop);*
  - *CSC Stage Two document preparation;*
  - *Optimised use of technology such as power automate to increase efficiency;*
  - *Staff training;*
  - *Management structure and oversight;*
  - *Monitoring and reporting to support operational effectiveness and decision making within CSCT and wider Branch Management Teams; and*
  - *Training and support to IOs and Adjudication Officers.*
- 9.13. All of these elements were implemented with great success. More so than others is the new strength-based approach to initial complaints within both the CSC process and corporate complaints process. Whilst this method of working is still yet to be fully rolled out to all of the Children’s Services Directorate, early indications are very positive. This is explained in sections 9 and 10 of this report.

- 9.14. Services who took part in the strengths-based approach trial were given complaints training with an emphasis on contacting complainants via a phone call or in a meeting to seek resolution. This was then followed up with a letter, so an audit trail existed. Other changes were made, for example removing language such as 'upheld' or 'not upheld' and giving services discretion with regards to their approach.
- 9.15. When escalating their complaints more recently, complainants are now asked to advise how their complaint was responded to. As Chart 4 below demonstrates, just 9% of escalations come after the service have spoken to complainants, either by phone or in a meeting.
- 9.16. The vast majority (82%) of escalations are made after responses are provided in writing only, proving it is not a successful method of resolution.
- 9.17. A recommendation to reflect this information is provided later in section 12 of this report.

**Chart 4: How was your complaint responded to?**



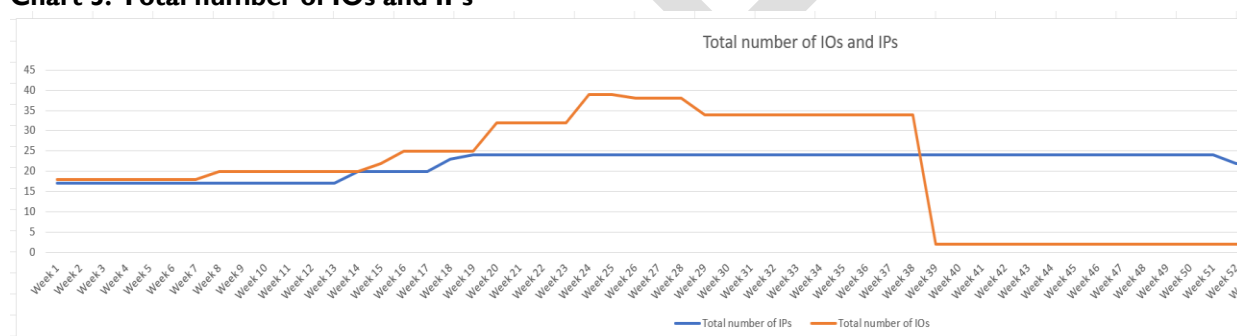
Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council Social Care data

- 9.18. ***Recommendation 4 – Continue to increase capacity within the Independent Person (IP) pool and the Investigating Officer (IO) pool. This will be an ongoing action across the 2022/23 reporting period.***
- 9.19. This action was completed and is now at an appropriate level, with 22 IPs available to CSCT. Work continues to upskill these IPs so some may fulfil other roles where resilience is weaker, such as to act as Chair and/or sit on

Stage Three panels.

- 9.20. Contrary to the IP pool increasing, the IO pool was decreased, but deliberately so. Where previously there were over 30 IOs in the pool, they were predominantly senior managers across HCC and IWC who were asked to take on an investigation on top of their usual day roles.
- 9.21. As a result of clearing the backlog, the Dedicated IO (DIO) role being trialled within CSCT was made permanent and a second full time DIO was recruited into the team, taking the total number of DIOs to two. By having two DIOs within the CSCT multiple cases can be allocated to each individual ensuring continued compliance against the Ombudsman's allocation expectations, but they are also the subject matter experts in the process and therefore require less support from the wider CSCT.
- 9.22. Chart 5 below gives an example of how IO and IP numbers changed throughout the reporting period.

**Chart 5: Total number of IOs and IPs**



- 9.23. ***Recommendation 5 – Continue to work with the appropriate Departmental service lead to confirm what is recorded within the Department's Children's Social Care Case Management System, when a complaint is made. Proposal to be completed by 31 March 2023.***
- 9.24. This action has been superseded by the implementation of the new Children's Social Care Case Management System (Mosaic) project, which is currently ongoing and will include this action within it.

## 10. Learning and Service improvement from the 2022/23 reporting period

10.1. As a result of the Complaints Manager quality assuring every CSC Stage Two report and personally sitting in attendance at every CSC Stage Three review panel meeting, a qualitative and quantitative analysis of themes and trends has been possible.

10.2. In 2022/23, there were a total of 18 of these two stages combined. With this detailed insight and from regular analysis of the data, the following steps have and are being taken to ensure the Council continues to learn from and prevent future complaints.

### 10.3. Communication

10.4. Poor Communication was a theme in 2021/22 and continues to be a part of the feedback provided in this reporting period. This includes complainants feeling their expectations of communication are not being met, alongside more general feedback that policy and procedure was either not understood or explained. This is illustrated in such a high number of complaint outcomes (54) being recorded as including an 'explanation' provided.

10.5. Where complaints are not upheld and no apology or remedial action is required, there are still lessons to be learnt and potential opportunities for the prevention of similar complaints in the future.

10.6. Where complaints have been resolved with just an explanation of policy or procedure, it is important to reflect on how such a complaint could have been prevented and various initiatives are being explored.

10.7. Through analysis of the complaints relating to communication and where an explanation helped to provide a resolution, a number of themes emerge:

### 10.8. Nepotism

10.9. Whilst there is no evidence or upheld complaints regarding the issue of nepotism, there is certainly a perception that it exists within the Isle of Wight Council's Children's Services. When asked to answer accusations of nepotism, various Investigating Officers have all commented that procedure is well followed and all staff are able to articulate controls in place well. However, a lack of a specific policy on the topic does lead some complainants to be dissatisfied and enforces their view that nepotism exists.

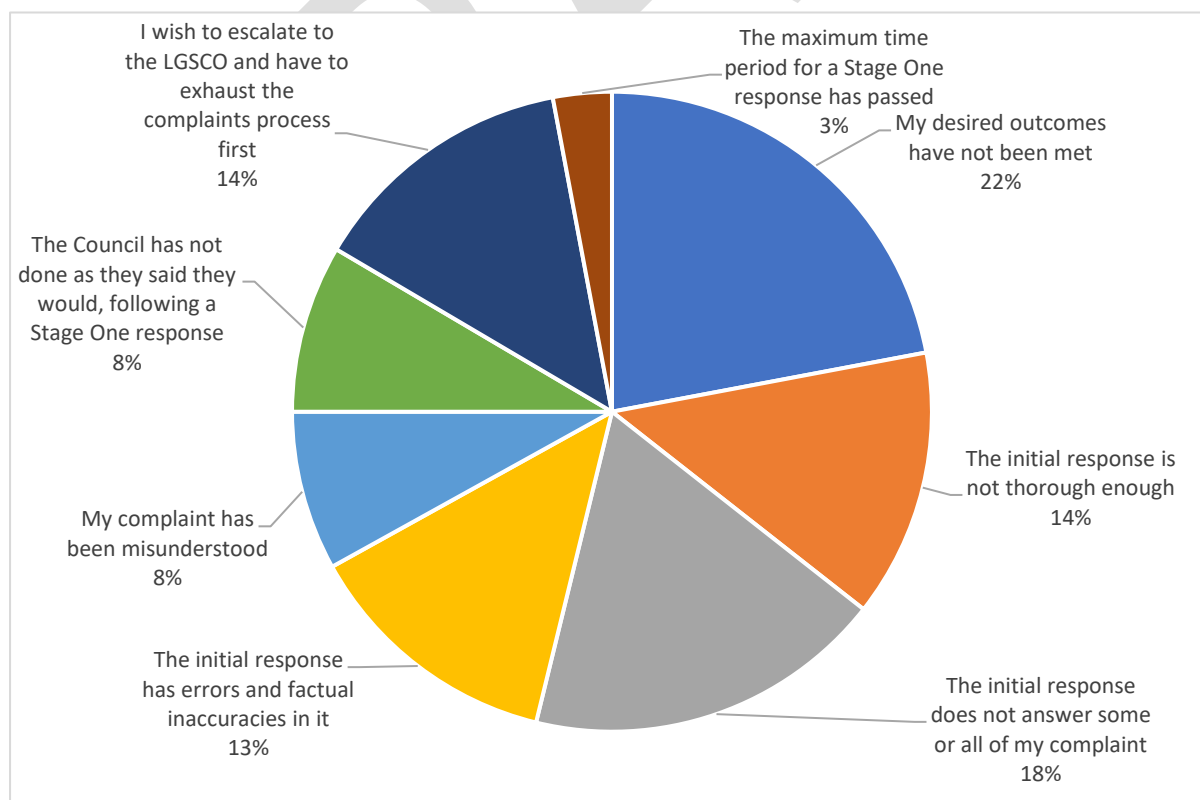
10.10. A recommendation is provided in section 12 of this report.

10.11. **Individuals without Parental Responsibility (PR) expecting the same amount of access to information, social workers and Children's Services as those with it.**

- 10.12. There have been examples of those without PR being dissatisfied with the level of communication they receive. These predominantly include family members, such as grandparents, aunts and uncles and new partners of those with PR, who have influence in the child(ren)'s life.
- 10.13. In many instances, when the relevant service was able to explain the limitations of communicating with an individual without PR, combined with the reality of Social Workers being allocated to the child(ren) and not the adult(s), complaints were resolved.
- 10.14. A recommendation is provided in section 12.
- 10.15. **Non-resident parents feeling out of the loop, regarding the care of their children, and for males, accusations of gender bias.**
- 10.16. Analysis also found that there is a pattern of non-resident parents feeling 'out of the loop' and/or excluded from discussion and decisions regarding their child(ren)'s care. There is a perception that Social Workers focus too much on the resident parent and exclude non-resident parents as a result.
- 10.17. Complainants refer to examples where social workers will visit the resident parent's premises, but not theirs, or that communication regarding the child(ren) is disproportionately with the resident parent.
- 10.18. On the occasions these types of complaints have been investigated, no accusations of bias have been upheld, however, there remains opportunity to prevent these types of complaints and reduce dissatisfaction, even if it is only as a result of a perceived injustice.
- 10.19. Similarly, to the previous point regarding communication, a key message in resolving these complaints is that Social Workers are assigned to the child(ren) and not the adult(s).
- 10.20. A recommendation for preventative measures is provided in section 12.
- 10.21. A key observation from this theme is how lacking this trend is within the data. Specifically, the number of 'Non-resident parents' recorded as making a complaint was very low at one (2%). Further analysis of the data suggests that many individuals logged as 'Parents' are better described as 'Non-resident parents'. However, at the point of logging, this information is not readily available to CSCT and to seek clarification would cause disproportionate delay to the complaint progressing. This illustrates the importance of continuing to take both a qualitative and quantitative approach to analysing the complaints data.
- 10.22. **Changes of Social Workers**

- 10.23. A number of complaints were made to include dissatisfaction that Social Workers were changing, for reasons such as internal changes and individuals resigning, but that parents were not made aware. Feedback for this period was that on many occasions it was not until a new Social Worker contacted them that they were aware of such a change.
- 10.24. A recommendation for preventative measures is provided in section 12.
- 10.25. **Faceless communication**
- 10.26. Particularly when CSC complaints were escalated to Stage Two, when Investigating Officers (IOs) were conducting meetings with complainants, the feedback was often *“you’re the first person I’ve spoken to since complaining”*. This led to further feedback that complaint responses were too corporate, considered faceless and lacking in empathy. Analysis shows this was part of the motivation to escalate to Stage Two as complainants had felt their complaint was misunderstood or not fully answered.
- 10.27. As Chart 6 shows, the reasons for escalation are varied. Within the reasons given, 54% relate to the content of the initial response being inadequate, such as ‘The initial response does not answer some or all of my complaint’. This is further evidence that talking directly to complainants via the phone or in a meeting is imperative to ensuring as many successful resolutions as possible.

**Chart 6: Main reason for escalating?**



Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council Social Care data

## 10.28. **Service Improvements**

10.29. In response to the above areas of communication improvement, and in line with good practice, a number of successful initiatives have been introduced, as follows:

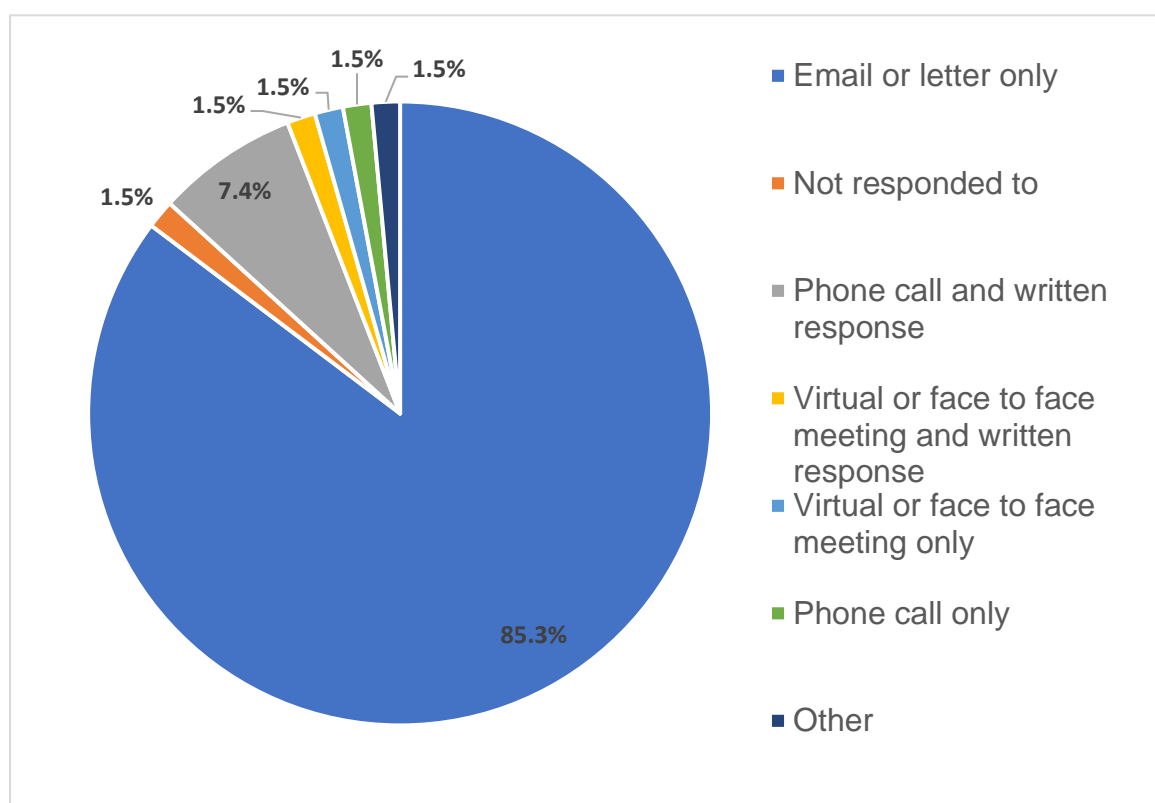
## 10.30. **Complaint responses**

10.31. As previously mentioned, the use of telephone calls and meetings at the early stages have been introduced, giving opportunity for discussion and resolution early on. This has been very well received and is reducing previous concerns of written responses not understanding the complaint fully, leading to avoidable escalation.

10.32. When escalating a complaint from the initial stage, complainants are asked to complete the escalation e-form. Through this e-form, data is captured such as 'how was your complaint responded to?' and 'what is the main reason for you escalating your complaint?'. On all occasions, the answers are multiple choice and complainants can answer as they wish, either selecting from pre-written answers or by providing their own response under 'other'.

10.33. Chart 7 below provides evidence that the majority of the complaints that escalate from the initial stage have not had a phone call or meeting organised to seek resolution. Just 10.4% of complainants who used the e-form, suggested that a call or meeting was arranged. The remaining 89.6% were only contacted in writing, or suggest they had no response whatsoever. In the instance where it is alleged no response was provided, further investigation shows a response was provided within timescales.

10.34. It is important to note that this data is reliant on complainants correctly completing the form and therefore allowances should be made with regards to the data confidence. It is also a combination of all HCC complaints and IWC Social Care complaints.

**Chart 7: How was your complaint responded to?**

Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council Social Care data

- 10.35. At the end of the current reporting period, the top five answers in response to 'what is your main reason for escalating your complaint?' were:
- My desired outcomes have not been met (21%).
  - The initial response does not answer some or all of my complaint (19%).
  - The initial response has errors and factual inaccuracies in it (14%).
  - The initial response is not thorough enough (13%).
  - I wish to escalate to the LGSCO and have to exhaust the complaints process first (13%).
- 10.36. The new way of resolving complaints with phone calls and/or meetings, it is hoped, will continue to reduce escalations as well as addressing the reasons complainants give for doing so.
- 10.37. Further detail regarding escalations to the LGSCO is included under section 11.
- 10.38. **Call back requests**



- 10.39. Where communication was a clear theme of complaint in the latter part of 2022, a new method of communication was introduced. When completing the e-form individuals are asked, rather than making a formal complaint, would they rather request a call back from the appropriate manager (screen shot below).

Compliments, Complaints and Data Protection form

\* Required

Request a call back

We are dedicated to resolving, listening and learning from any feedback we receive and aim to do so as swiftly as possible at a local level.

9. Before making a formal complaint would you like to request a call back from an appropriate manager? \*

Call backs will be made as quickly as possible and no later than two working days after the request. Please be aware calls will most likely take place within working hours (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm).

Yes

No

Back Next

- 10.40. If they respond 'yes' to this, the submission is recorded as a 'call back request' rather than a formal complaint and the appropriate manager is asked to organise a call back. This does not remove the individual's right to submit a formal complaint at a later stage if still dissatisfied.
- 10.41. This approach has proved very successful with 40.7% (11) of those completing the form responding 'yes' when asked if they wish to have a call back, rather than make a complaint.
- 10.42. **Compliments, Complaints and Data Protection form**
- 10.43. Continuing on the subject of the complaints e-form, in 2022 a new version was introduced which is accessible via the website. The new e-form, built with Microsoft Forms (MS Form) and automated with the use of Power Automate, is a more user friendly version of the previous form.
- 10.44. By being an MS Form the CSCT have direct access to its content and are able to make instantaneous edits and improvements if any are identified.

- 10.45. The form also uses 'branching'. This is a capability within the MS Form that allows the form to intuitively only ask questions relevant to the submission. For example, if an individual is making a complaint on behalf of a child, both their details and the child's are requested. If, however, they are making a complaint on their own behalf, secondary details are not required and therefore not requested. This helps to reduce the time spent completing the form, potential duplication and ensure all information received by the relevant team is of value.
- 10.46. With the help of Microsoft software called Power Automate, the triaging of all submissions via the e-form is now automated. This means that whilst the individual completing the form has a seamless experience of completing only the relevant sections to their submission, CSCT only receive the information relevant to them, saving them time in not having to identify specific complaint elements that require action.
- 10.47. **Ad-hoc work**
- 10.48. The 'Ad-hoc' category makes up 23.7% of all work received by the CSCT, which is higher than is desirable. 'Ad-hoc' representations are pieces of correspondence covering a variety of queries such as safeguarding, school matters and topics relating to other Local Authorities. All matters that the CSCT are unable to meaningfully support with.
- 10.49. A project is in place to further analyse why this is the case, what elements should have gone somewhere originally and how these can be better signposted to reduce unnecessary workload within the team.
- 10.50. A recommendation regarding this is provided in section 12.

## 11. A review of the effectiveness of the complaints procedure

- 11.1. 13% of complainants advise they only use the complaints process in order to be able to approach the LGSCO, implying resolution is not possible by the Local Authority. The CSCT predicts that, on average, Independent Person costs alone for a single Stage Two complaint costs an average of £1k and a single Stage Three panel £2k. It is important to also factor in the time of senior managers and the administration required, which also come at a significant cost.
- 11.2. It is the view of this report that the national CSC complaints process has significant room for improvement in areas such as the following:
- The process is written for children and young people but fails to acknowledge the vast majority of those who use it are parents.
  - The process disproportionately restricts early referrals to the LGSCO, often insisting on completing the entire complaints process before doing so. A significant number of resources have as a result been diverted from key front-line services, which could have been prevented.
  - The statutory guidance is outdated and lacking in detail, making it unclear for Local Authorities and complainants. Where steps have been taken to give further guidance, there is a lack of specific information and guidance from the LGSCO. It is the view of this report that more needs to be done to ensure decisions are consistent, or that discretion is made explicit for decision makers.
  - The Stage Three review panel meeting provides very little value to the process and is an expensive meeting for taxpayers to fund. The significant majority of cases see no change following a Stage Three review panel meeting, putting in to question its value to all parties and furthermore its cost effectiveness.

## 12. New recommendations

### 12.1. Recommendation 1: Comms strategy within the Children & Families Branch

12.2. In response to the lessons identified in the previous section, a communication strategy should be designed and implemented. This strategy should include workstreams on:

- The management of expectations with regard to general communication by Social Workers.
- Communication with those who do not have Parental Responsibility (PR).
- Communication with non-resident parents.
- The way in which the change of a social worker is communicated.

12.3. This should be produced as a joint document by Children's and Families colleagues and the CSCT ready for use by 1 April 2024. Once in place, any lessons learnt will be considered for replication and/or expansion across other services within the Children's Services Directorate.

### 12.4. Recommendation 2: All of the Children's Services Directorate to take a strengths-based approach to resolution

12.5. Following the success of those services who have adopted a strength-based approach and opted to call or meet complainants at the early stages of their complaint, it is this reports recommendation that all of the Directorate adopt this approach as soon as possible.

12.6. This is best done by re-introducing stage one of the corporate complaints process.

12.7. This report recommends that CSDMT approve such an approach to be rolled out across all of the Directorate by 1 September 2023. Ownership of this action, should it be approved, would be with the Customer Relations and Complaints Manager.

### 12.8. Recommendation 3: Chasing of actions agreed

12.9. The CSCT should embed the practice of recording all actions from complaints made and monitoring actions to ensure they are completed as agreed.

12.10. To be actioned by the Customer Relations and Complaints Manager by 1 September 2023.

### 12.11. Remedial action for complaints upheld

12.12. Services within the Directorate should be reminded of their ability to take remedial action in order to resolve complaints and prevent escalation.

12.13. To be actioned by the Customer Relations and Complaints Manager by 1 September 2023.

**12.14. Reducing work categorised as ‘ad-hoc’**

12.15. Analysis of the category ‘ad-hoc’ should be completed and work undertaken to reduce this influx of work.

12.16. To be actioned by the Customer Relations and Complaints Manager by 31 March 2024.

**12.17. To further increase use of the e-form**

12.18. Efforts should be made to increase the total of those using the e-form, to ensure mandatory information is captured at the first point of contact.

12.19. To be actioned by the Customer Relations and Complaints Manager by 31 March 2024.

**12.20. Increase timescale compliance**

12.21. Efforts should be made to increase timescale compliance, with analysis of specific pain points and how they can be alleviated to improve response times.

12.22. With regards to corporate complaints, CSCT should return to advising complainants they will receive a response within 20 working days but requesting a response from the service in 10 working days. CSCT will then chase from day 11 onwards.

12.23. To be actioned by the Customer Relations and Complaints Manager by 31 March 2024.

**12.24. Policy on nepotism**

12.25. As previously mentioned, this report and the wider CSCT have seen no evidence that such a culture exists, however there is a perception of it amongst some complainants. Therefore, a public facing policy, to provide reassurances to those who may have concern is recommended.

12.26. To be actioned by the Deputy Director of Children’s Services by 1st April 2024.

## APPENDIX 1

The relevant section of the guidance for this annual report is copied below;

### **5.6 Annual report**

*5.6.1 Local authorities must each financial year publish an Annual Report (regulation 13(3)). This should draw upon the information already gathered under section 5.1 for recording purposes. However, this Annual Report is a separate requirement and should not contain personal information that is identifiable about any individual complainant.*

*5.6.2 The Annual Report should be arranged by the Complaints Manager and should provide a mechanism by which the local authority can be kept informed about the operation of its complaints procedure. The report should be presented to staff, the relevant local authority committee and should be made available to the regulator and the general public. It should provide information about:*

- *representations made to the local authority;*
- *the number of complaints at each stage and any that were considered by the Local Government Ombudsman;*
- *which customer groups made the complaints;*
- *the types of complaints made;*
- *the outcome of complaints;*
- *details about advocacy services provided under these arrangements;*
- *compliance with timescales, and complaints resolved within extended timescale as agreed;*
- *learning and service improvement, including changes to services that have been*
- *implemented and details of any that have not been implemented;*
- *a summary of statistical data about the age, gender, disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity of complainants; and*

*a review of the effectiveness of the complaints procedure (see section 5.7 on Monitoring and Quality Assurance).*

## APPENDIX 2

Key terms:

**Children's Services Complaints Team (CSCT)** – The team within the Children's Services Directorate responsible for processing all IWC CSC complaints.

**Representation** - A representation is a piece of work requiring action by the CSCT, regardless of whether or not it is processed as a complaint. A representation could trigger a single and simple piece of work lasting a matter of minutes, a large piece of work over many months with numerous activities or anything in between.

**Children's Social Care (CSC) Complaints:** These complaints follow the Council's CSC Complaints Procedure for Children's Services (Stage One – local resolution; Stage Two – investigation; Stage Three – complaint review panel). When a complainant has exhausted the three stage complaints process, they can ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) to consider their complaint. Complainants are also able to refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any point in the formal process, however, if the complaint is still being considered by the local authority the LGSCO may deem the complaint premature and direct the complainant back to complete the local authority's complaint process.

**Corporate Complaints:** The majority of the remainder of complaints for Children's Services fall under the IWC's corporate complaints procedure, ensuring compliance with the Local Government Act 1974. For example, these may be complaints about the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service, School admissions, a support service or administrative process rather than children's social care. This process is managed entirely by IWC and is not a part of the current partnership agreement.

# **Children's Services Directorate**

## **Annual Report on Compliments, Complaints and Representations**

**2022/23**

### **Appendix 3 – Data Tables**



## Representations Received

**Table 1 - Complaint Refusals Breakdown**

Refusal Reason	Financial Year			
	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019/20
<b>Children's Social Care (CSC) Refusals</b>				
Best Interest of Child / YP	1	0		
Court Proceedings	1	3		
Criminal Proceedings	0	0		
No PR	0	0		
Not in Best Interest/Age of Child/YP	0	0		
Out of Time	2	0		
Outside of Remit	0	0		
Repeat Complaint	0	0		
<b>Total CSC refusals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Corporate Refusals</b>				
No PR	0	0		
Not in Best Interest/Age of Child/YP	0	0		
Out of Remit (Appeal)	0	0		
Out of Time	0	0		
Repeat Complaint	0	0		
Tribunal	0	0		
<b>Total corporate refusals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>Total Refusals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>		

## Timescale compliance

**Table 2 – Timescale Compliance**

	Stage	Financial Year							
		2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
<b>CSC Complaints</b>	<b>Stage 1</b>								
	Total number of complaints	51		29		32		35	
	- in 10 working days	23	40%	12	41%	10	31%	23	66%
	- in between 10 and 20 working days	25	44%	17	59%	21	66%	9	26%
	- in over 20 working days	3	7%	0	-%	1	3%	3	9%
	- average time to complete (days)	13		12		11.9		13.4	
	<b>Stage 2</b>								
	Total number of complaints (completed)	14		4		0		2	
	- in 25 working days	0	-%	0	-%	-	-%	0	-%
	- in between 25 and 65 working days	2	20%	0	-%	-	-%	0	-%
	- in over 65 working days	7	46%	4	100%	-	-%	2	100%
	- Received but not progressed	0	-%	4		7		2	
	- Withdrawn	5	33%	1		0		0	
<b>Stage 3</b>									
Total number of complaints (completed)	4		0		0		1		
- in under 50 working days	3	75%	-	-%	-	-%	-	-%	
- in 50 working days	0	0%	-	-%	-	-%	-	-%	
- in over 50 working days	1	25%	-	-%	-	-%	1	100%	
<b>Corporate complaints</b>	<b>Stage 2</b>								
	Total number of complaints (completed)	15		16		-		-	
	- in 10 working days	2	13%	2	13%	-	-%	-	-%
	- in between 10 and 20 working days	4	27%	9	56%	-	-%	-	-%
	- in over 20 working days	9	60%	5	31%	-	-%	-	-%
- average time to complete (days)	24		34		-		-		

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

## Who make complaints and how are they submitted?

**Table 3 - CSC Stage One Complaints - How Received**

Method	Financial Year							
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
Complaint Form	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
E-Form	16	39%	8	27%	12	38%	4	13%
Email	22	53%	20	67%	15	47%	16	53%
Email via DCS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Letter	2	5%	2	6%	5	16%	7	23%
LGSCO (via)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Telephone	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 4 - CSC Stage One Complaints - Method Used to Make Complaints Young People's Complaints**

Method	Financial Year							
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021		2019-2020	
Complaint Form	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
E-Form	1	100%	0	0%	3	60%	0	0%
Email	0	0%	1	100%	1	20%	2	100%
Letter	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 5 - CSC Stage One Complaints - Who Makes Complaints - Received from**

Received from	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
<b>Parent/Adopter</b>						
Parent	26	63%	21	70%	24	75%
Non-Resident Parent	1	2%	4	14%	0	0%
Adopter	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Ex-Partner	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Partner	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Step-Parent	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total Parent/Adopter</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Non-Parent Relative</b>						
Grandparent	5	12%	2	7%	1	3%
Sibling	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Relative	2	4%	1	3%	1	3%
<b>Total Non-Parent Relative</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Foster Carer/Prospective Foster Carer</b>						
Foster Carer	2	4%	0	0%	1	3%
Private Foster Carer	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prospective Adopter/Foster Carer	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prospective Foster Carer	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total Foster Carer/ Prospective Foster Carer</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Service user</b>						
Service user (adult)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Service user (young person)	1	2%	0	0%	2	6%
<b>Total Service User</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Advocate</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>						
Birth Parent of Adopted Child	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Friend/Neighbour	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total Miscellaneous</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

## Nature and Service

**Table 6a - CSC Complaints - complaint nature**

Nature	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
Assessment Outcome	2	4%	2	5%	2	3%
Assessment Process	3	6%	1	2%	1	3%
Bruising Protocol	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Change of Placement Decision	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Child Protection Conference Process	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Conduct of Worker	17	33%	13	30%	6	19%
Contact Dispute	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
CSD Acted Unlawfully	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
CSD Failing in Duty of Care	0	0%	5	12%	0	0%
CSD Provision / Service Withdrawn	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Decision to Change Placement	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Decision to Change S/W	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Delay/Failure to Keep Informed	0	0%	2	5%	0	0%
Delay in Provision of Service	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Eligibility for Funding	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Finance	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Funding	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Insufficient Support from CSD	1	2%	7	16%	10	28%
Non-Fulfilment of Duty	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Outcome of Decision/Assessment	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%
Personal Budget Dispute	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Placement Dispute	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Policy Dispute	0	0%	2	5%	1	3%
Poor Communication	5	10%	8	19%	4	13%
Quality of Service	19	38%	0	0%	0	0%
Refusal of Service	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Respite Dispute	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
Safeguarding	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Welfare Concerns Not Acted Upon	0	0%	1	2%	3	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 6b – Corporate Complaints - complaint nature**

Nature	Financial Year				
	2022/23		2021/22		2020/21
Chillerton and Rookley consultation	0	0%	6	37.5%	
Child not given EHCP	0	0%	3	18.75%	
Provision in EHCP not being implemented	0	0%	6	37.5%	
SEN tribunal decision disregarded	0	0%	1	6.25%	
Childs EHCP	11	73%	0	0%	
SEN panel member	1	7%	0	0%	
Lack of SEN school places	1	7%	0	0%	
Holiday activity fund	1	7%	0	0%	
Household support voucher not valid	1	7%	0	0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Table 7a - CSC Complaints - service involved**

Service	Financial Year					
	2022-23		2021-2022		2020-2021	
Adoption	1	7%	1	4%	0	0%
Care Leavers	1	7%	1	3%	2	6%
CAST	37	73%	27	87%	19	59%
Child in Need	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Children Looked After	1	7%	1	3%	2	6%
Disabled Children's Team	2	4%	0	0%	6	19%
Early Help Hub	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%
Family Placement	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Family Support	3	6%	0	0%	0	0%
Fostering	4	4%	0	0%	1	3%
Independent Reviewing Service	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MASH/CRT	0	0%	1	3%	2	6%
Not receiving a service	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Unknown / Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 7b - Corporate Complaints - service involved**

Nature	Financial Year				
	2022/23		2021/22		2020/21
SEN	13	87%	10	62.5%	
Strategic Development	0	0%	6	37.5%	
Holiday activity fund	1	7%	0	0%	
Household support	1	7%	0	0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Table 8 - CSC Stage One and Corporate Stage Two Complaints - outcome sought**

Outcome Sought	2022/23			2021/22			2020/21		
	CSC	Corp	Total	CSC	Corp	Total	CSC	Corp	Total
Agreed Service Implemented	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apology	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	0	1
Apology & Explanation	7	0	7	0	0	0	3	0	3
Apology and consultation rendered null and void	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0
Assessment / Reassessment	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assurance of Non-Reoccurrence	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Best Practice Learning - Individual	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Better Communication	2	2	4	4	0	4	5	0	5
Case/Decision Review	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	2
Change Made to Contact Arrangements	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Change of Placement Decision	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Change of Social Worker / Worker	4	0	4	6	0	6	1	0	1
Child Returned to Family	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Child to receive OT	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Compensation	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Complaint Issues Investigated	13	0	13	11	0	11	4	0	4
Contact Arrangements Finalised	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
CSD Involvement Ceased	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EHCP for child	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
EHCP for child and meeting with school staff and SEN officer	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
EHCP outcomes to be met, acknowledgement and increase in communication	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
EHCP to be finalised, provision to be put in place	0	3	3	0	1	1	0	0	0
EHCP to be updated	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Emotional/Educational/Psychological needs met by CSD	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
EOTAS package put in place and explanation	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Explanation	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Explanation and cease proposals to review future of school	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Explanation of delay and meaning of comment, and clarification re future	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Financial Reimbursement	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Follow a different process	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Increase support from CSD	1	0	1	3	0	3	4	0	4

Outcome Sought	2022/23			2021/22			2020/21		
	CSC	Corp	Total	CSC	Corp	Total	CSC	Corp	Total
Meeting Request	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Assessment	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Not Known	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Not Specified / Implied	12	0	12	7	0	7	4	0	4
Other	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Personal Budget	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Policy/Procedure Review	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Request Fulfilled	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S/W to Remain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SLT and OT for child and explanation	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Stop consultation and do not close school	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>



**Table 9 - CSC and Corporate Complaints – actual outcome**

Actual Outcome	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		Total	2021-2022		Total
	CSC	Corp		CSC	Corp	
Acknowledgement of mistake	0	0	0	0	1	1
Apology & Explanation	24	2	25	13	0	13
Assessment / Reassessment	0	1	1	0	0	0
Change of Social Worker / Worker	0	0	0	0	0	0
EHCP process started	0	0	0	0	2	2
Explanation	27	2	29	28	6	34
Explanation and meeting offered	0	0	0	0	1	1
Explanation and mistake acknowledged	0	2	2	0	1	1
Explanation and OT appointment offered	0	2	2	0	2	2
Financial Reassessment / Review	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial Reimbursement (Actual)	0	1	1	0	0	0
Linked amended	0	0	0	0	1	1
Meeting Offer	0	1	1	0	0	0
No Investigation Possible	0	1	1	2	0	2
Request for EHCP to be updated	0	0	0	0	1	1
Request for provisions to be put in place	0	0	0	0	1	1
Request Fulfilled	0	1	1	0	0	0
Service to Continue	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supportive Work with YP	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>59</b>

## Young People's Complaints

**Table 10 - CSC Complaints – nature**

Nature	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
Change of Placement Decision	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Delay in Provision of Service	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Insufficient Support from CSD	0	0%	1	100%	1	20%
Non Fulfilment of Duty	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Policy Dispute	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Poor Communication	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Professional Conduct	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Quality of Service	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 11 - CSC Complaints - service involved**

Service	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
Care Leaver	0	0%	1	100%	2	40%
CAST	1	100%	0	0%	2	40%
Children in Care	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Child in Need	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Early Help Hub	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MASH/CRT	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 12 - CSC Complaints - outcome sought**

Outcome Sought	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
Agreed Service Implemented	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Apology	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Better Communication	0	0%	0	0%	2	40%
Change Made to Contact Arrangements	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Change of Placement Decision	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Change of Social Worker / Worker	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Complaint Issues Investigated	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Explanation	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Financial Reimbursement	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Increase Support from CSD	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
New Assessment	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Specified / Implied	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Known	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Policy/Procedure Review	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Request Fulfilled	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

**Table 13 - CSC Complaints - actual outcome**

Outcome Sought	Financial Year					
	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
Apology & Explanation	1	100%	0	0%	1	20%
Change of Social Worker / Worker	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Explanation	0	0%	1	100%	3	60%
Meeting / Offer of a meeting	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No Investigation Possible	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Service to Continue	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Supportive Work with YP	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Request Fulfilled	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

Percentage calculated to zero decimal places

## Profile of complainants

**Table 15 – CSC complaints - disability**

Disability	Number of representations		
	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
Not Stated	44	25	23
No	11	3	7
Yes	1	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 16 – CSC complaints - gender**

Gender	Number of representations		
	2022-2023	2021-2023	2020-2021
Not Stated	45	22	22
Male	3	6	4
Female	8	2	6
Male & Female	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 17 – CSC complaints - age**

Age	Number of representations		
	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
0 - 16	0	0	0
16 - 19	1	0	2
20 - 24	0	0	0
25 - 59	10	7	7
60 - 64	0	0	0
65 and over	1	0	1
Not known/Stated	44	23	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 18 – CSC complaints - ethnicity**

Ethnicity	Number of representations		
	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
Not Stated	29	23	7
Not Asked	15	0	15
White British	12	5	9
Other White	0	1	1
Asian/Asian British	0	0	0
Black/Black British	0	0	0
Mixed	0	1	0
Other Ethnic Group	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>

## LGSCO Complaints

**Table 19 - Complaints received by Children's Services from LGSCO**

<b>Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) complaints</b>		
<b>LGSCO Referrals Received</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
Number of referrals received by CSCT from LGSCO in period	3	3
Number of final decisions received from LGSCO in period	3	2
Number of final decisions received when referral was received outside of period	3	2
<b>Type of LGSCO referral</b>		
Education / Non Social Care (LGSCO Complaint)	3	3
Social Care (LGSCO Complaint)	0	1
LGSCO – Assessment (referred back for local resolution)	0	3
Not Known	0	0
<b>Outcome</b>		
There was fault in the delay in issuing the decision following the annual review	0	1
Upheld – LA to apologise, make payments to complainant for distress and training for staff	1	2
Upheld – LA to make payment to complainant	1	0
Upheld – Maladministration – no injustice	0	0
Injustice remedied during LGSCO consideration	0	0
Closed after initial enquiries	3	0
No fault by LA	1	0
Awaiting outcome	0	3