

# **Children's Services Department**

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

**2021/22**

**DRAFT**



## Executive Summary

The Annual Complaints Report (ACR) is a public document, providing a mechanism by which the Isle of Wight Council's Children's Services Department (the Department) can be kept informed about the operation and effectiveness of its complaints procedure and support learning from complaints. This document covers the reporting period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Non-Children's Social Care Complaints are responded to by the Nominated Complaints Officer within the Isle of Wight Council. These types of complaints were not included within the ACRs for previous reporting periods produced under the Partnership arrangement, which focused solely on Children's Social Care (CSC) Complaints. However, in order to provide the Children's Services Departmental Management Team (CSDMT) with a full picture of complaints activity upon the island, it was agreed that moving forward the Non-Children's Social Care Complaints (Corporate Complaints) data would also be included. The Department's Business Services Support Team have been able to supply certain data for corporate complaints for the 2021/22 reporting period only, which has been included within this report. This does mean that no comparison analysis will be included within the report for corporate complaints where no previous data has been provided.

The key findings within the report can be summarised as:

1. A total of 83 representations were received either by the Children's Services Department's Complaints Team (CSCT) or dealt with by the Nominated Complaints Officer within the Isle of Wight Council in the 2021/22 reporting period. CSC complaints and 'other' representations saw an increase of 4.7% from 2020/21.
2. 80.7% of representations were considered in accordance with the statutory guidance (43.4% were accepted and managed as statutory complaints), 19.3% were managed as corporate complaints and 37.3% were 'other' complaints/representations. On average, the department receives less than 7 representations per month.
3. Of the 20 pre-complaints received, only 10 became formal complaints (50%) and of the two case concerns received during the reporting period, none progressed to statutory complaints.
4. During 2021/22, the average time taken to investigate and respond to new social care stage one complaints was 12 working days. This is an increase of 0.1 working days on average compared to the previous reporting period. For corporate stage two complaints, the average was 34 working days.
5. 41% of CSC complaints were responded to within 10 working days at stage one (31% in 2020/21); 59% between 10-20 working days (66% in 2020/21) and none exceeded the maximum 20 working day limit (3% in 2020/21). 13% of corporate complaints were responded to within 10 working days at stage

two; 56% between 10-20 working days and 31% exceeded the maximum 20 working day limit.

6. 'Parents' continue to be the group most likely to make a CSC complaint to Children's Services (70%).
7. The three highest category for the reason (nature) why CSC complaints are made are 'conduct of worker' (30%), 'poor communication' (19%) and 'insufficient support from Children's Services' (16%). 'Conduct of worker' continues to be the main reason for social care complaints being submitted but has increased by 117% on the number of complaints with this reason in 2020/21. 'Insufficient support from Children's Services' has seen a reduction from 10 complaints in 2020/21 (28%) to seven complaints in 2021/22. 'Poor communication' has doubled the number of complaints with this reason compared to 2020/21.
8. CSC complaints continue to be mainly in relation to CAST teams (87%, compared to 59% in 2020/21). The main movement in terms of complaints about specific services has seen a decrease around Disabled Children's Teams with six complaints submitted in 2020/21 reducing to none in 2021/22).
9. The predominant reason (nature) why corporate complaints are made are relating specifically to the EHCP process with over half (56.25%) of all corporate complaints. In particular to do with either a child not being given an EHCP or because provision within the EHCP was not being implemented. The other main reason within the reporting period relates to the Chillerton and Rookley Primary School consultation (37.5%).
10. Corporate complaints were made about two services in the current reporting period; the SEN Service (62.5%) and Strategic Development (37.5%), which is not surprising when the nature of complaints made were either to do with EHCPs and SEN Tribunals or school closure consultations.
11. For CSC complaints, the predominant outcome sought has changed in this reporting period to 'Complaint Issues Investigated' (26%), whereas in 2020/21 it was 'Better Communication' (16%). The next three highest identified categories are 'Change of Social Worker' (14%), 'Better Communication' (9%), 'Apology' (7%) and 'Increase Support from CSD' (7%). Seven social care complaints (16%) did not identify an outcome being sought as part of their submission at stage one.
12. For corporate complaints, the main outcome being sought was for an 'Apology and consultation rendered null and void' (19%), followed by 'EHCP for Child' (13%).
13. 65% of the actual outcomes achieved during the reporting period for CSC stage one complaints was for 'Explanation' (61%), followed by 'Apology & Explanation' (30%).

14. The actual outcomes achieved for corporate stage two complaints in 2021/22 were 'Explanation' (38%), 'Explanation and OT appointment offered' (13%) and 'EHCP process started' (13%).

The report also identifies five recommendations for CSCT or the wider department to implement or monitor, as appropriate, during the 2022/23 reporting period:

- **Recommendation 1 – CSC Stage Two Recovery Plan.**
- **Recommendation 2 – Financial Resilience.**
- **Recommendation 3 – Service Improvement.**
- **Recommendation 4 – Continue to increase capacity within the Independent Person (IP) pool and the Investigating Officer (IO) pool.**
- **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.**

The full report follows, supported by an Appendix of tables, containing further breakdowns of the information recorded by CSCT.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The report covers the Isle of Wight Council's Children's Services Department's (the Department) formal feedback and representations for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The report details the compliments and complaints formally recorded by the Children's Services Department's Complaints Team (CSCT). 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.
- 1.2 The Children's Act 1989 requires all local authorities with social services responsibilities to have a formal complaints procedure for children's social care complaints. Getting the Best from Complaint (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 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.
- 1.3 **Children's Social Care (CSC) Complaints:** These statutory complaints follow the Council's Statutory 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.
- 1.4 **Corporate Complaints:** The majority of the remainder of complaints for Children's Services fall under the Council'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. Having invariably received an informal response to their complaint, most corporate complaints are investigated directly at stage two and responded to by the Nominated Complaints Officer and if the complainant then remains dissatisfied they are also able to refer their complaint to the LGSCO.

## 2.0 Representations Received

2.1 A total of 83 representations were received by CSCT in the 2021/22 reporting period. This represents an increase 4.7% from 2020/21. Table 1.1 below highlights the breakdown of how these numbers compare to previous years.

**Table 1.1: Total Representations Split by Reporting Periods (Financial Years)**

Type of representation	Financial Year			
	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
<b>Children's Social Care (CSC)</b>				
Complaint	20	29	28	27
Pre-complaint (to Statutory Stage 1 Complaint)	10	3	2	0
Case Concern (to Statutory Stage 1 Complaint)	0	0	0	0
Joint complaint	0	0	0	0
Refused	3	3	8	0
Withdrawn	1	0	0	0
Case Concern	2	3	9	6
<b>Total CSC representations</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Corporate Stage 1</b>				
Complaint	16	-	-	-
Pre-complaint (to Corporate Stage 1 Complaint)	0	-	-	-
Pre-complaint (to Corporate Stage 2 Complaint)	0	-	-	-
Refused	0	-	-	-
Withdrawn	0	-	-	-
Corporate Stage 1	0	-	-	-
<b>Total corporate representations</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other Representations</b>				
Area initiated complaint	0	0	0	1
Pre-complaint	10	11	5	0
Professional to Professional Complaint	2	1	0	0
LGSCO	4	5	4	5
Local Response	0	2	2	0
Compliment	0	2	0	0
HantsDirect handoff	0	0	0	0
GDPR, FOI or SAR	7	3	4	0
Request for info	0	0	0	0
Ad Hoc	8	2	10	10
<b>Total other representations</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Total representations</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>49</b>

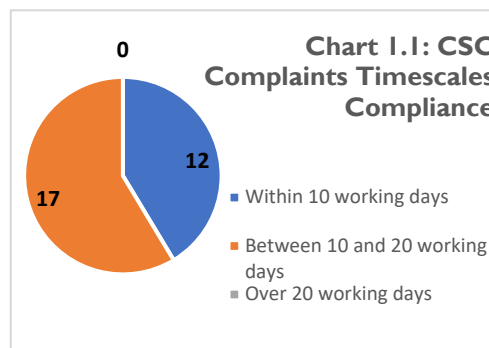
- 2.2 Within the reporting period, there were also:
- 0 compliments;
  - 31 'other' types of enquiry (8 were recorded as Ad Hoc);
  - 36 statutory representations of which 20 were accepted into the statutory complaints process; and
  - 16 corporate representations, of which all were accepted into the corporate complaints process.
- 2.3 80.7% of representations were considered in accordance with the statutory guidance (43.4% were accepted and managed as statutory complaints); 19.3% were managed as corporate complaints; and 37.3% were 'other' complaints/representations. On average, the department receives less than seven representations per month.
- 2.4 20 pre-complaints were received in the reporting period. A pre-complaint occurs when a representation is made but there is insufficient information included to allow the department to respond. The individual concerned is contacted by CSCT and asked to provide the necessary detail. Where this happens, the representation is then brought into the formal complaint process (pre-complaint to complaint).
- Observation** – 9.6% of all activity is classed as 'ad-hoc'.
- Observation** – no case concerns escalated into complaints.
- Observation** – of the 20 pre-complaints received, only 50% became formal complaints.
- 2.5 Professional to Professional complaints are complaints received from other professionals and not made on behalf of service users.
- 2.6 No compliments were received in the reporting period (two received in 2020/21).
- 2.7 A total of three complaints were refused during the reporting period, matching the number refused during 2020/21. A detailed breakdown of the reasons for these refusals can be found in table 1 within the supporting Data Appendix.

### 3.0 Timescale compliance

- 3.1 During 2021/22, the average time taken to investigate and respond to new CSC stage one complaints was 12 working days. This is a slight increase of 0.1 working days on average compared to the previous reporting period.

3.2 For corporate stage two complaints, the average was 34 working days but this number has been affected by two complaints going significantly over time.

3.3 As can be seen in Chart 1.1, 12 (41%) CSC complaints were responded to within 10 working days at stage one, compared to 10 (31%) in 2020/21; 17 (59%) between 10-20 working days, compared to 21 ( ) in 2020/21, and no completed CSC complaints exceeded the maximum 20 working day limit, compared to one (3%) in 2020/21.

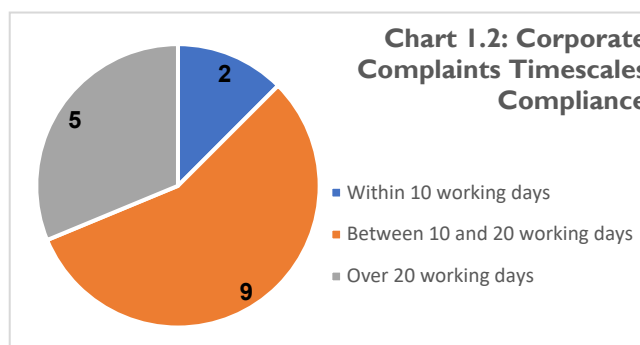


3.4 This reporting period has seen a positive movement around CSC complaints timescale compliance at stage one with more cases being completed either within the 10 working days indicator (10 percentage points increase).

3.5 However, the position around stage two social care complaints continues to be an area for improvement. At the end of the 2021/22 reporting period, there were four complaints accepted but awaiting allocation at stage two due to limited capacity within the County Council's Investigating Officer (IO) and Independent Person (IP) resource pool.

3.6 An implementation plan has been developed, with actions being taken both within and outside of the reporting period to tackle the issues being faced. This includes increasing the capacity within the County Council's Investigating Officer and Independent Person resource pool to assist with progressing CSC complaints at stage two and at stage three (see section 12 for more information of actions being taken).

3.7 13% of corporate complaints were responded to within 10 working days at stage two; 56% between 10-20 working days and 31% exceeded the maximum 20 working day limit, as can be seen in Chart 1.2.



3.8 A further breakdown of timescale compliance can be found in Table 2 within the supporting Data Appendix.



## 4.0 Who make complaints and how are they submitted?

- 4.1 Parents continue to be the group most likely to make a CSC complaint to Children's Services (70%). The three most popular methods for making a complaint continue to be by 'email', 'e-form' and 'letter'.
- 4.2 Data pertaining specifically to Young Peoples' complaints (as a subset) is included later in the report.
- 4.3 A further breakdown of who made CSC complaints and how they were submitted can be found in Table 5 within the supporting Data Appendix.

## 5.0 Nature and Service

- 5.1 The three highest category for the reason (nature) why CSC complaints are made are 'conduct of worker' (30%), 'poor communication' (19%) and 'insufficient support from Children's Services' (16%). 'Conduct of worker' continues to be the main reason for social care complaints being submitted but has increased by 117% on the number of complaints with this reason in 2020/21. 'Insufficient support from Children's Services' has seen a reduction from 10 complaints in 2020/21 (28%) to seven complaints in 2021/22. 'Poor communication' has doubled the number of complaints with this reason compared to 2020/21.
- 5.2 CSC complaints continue to be mainly in relation to CAST teams (87%, compared to 59% in 2020/21). The main movement in terms of complaints about specific services has seen a decrease around Disabled Children's Teams with six complaints submitted in 2020/21 reducing to none in 2021/22).
- 5.3 The predominant reason (nature) why corporate complaints are made are relating specifically to the EHCP process with over half (56.25%) of all corporate complaints. In particular to do with either a child not being given an EHCP or because Provision within the EHCP was not being implemented. The other main reason within the reporting period is to do with Chillerton and Rookley Primary School consultation (37.5%).
- 5.4 Corporate complaints were made about two services in the current reporting period; the SEN Service (62.5%) and Strategic Development (37.5%), which is not surprising when the nature of complaints made were either to do with EHCPs and SEN Tribunals or school closure consultations.

**Observation** – There is an argument that concerns being labelled 'complaints' due to dissatisfaction with a consultation

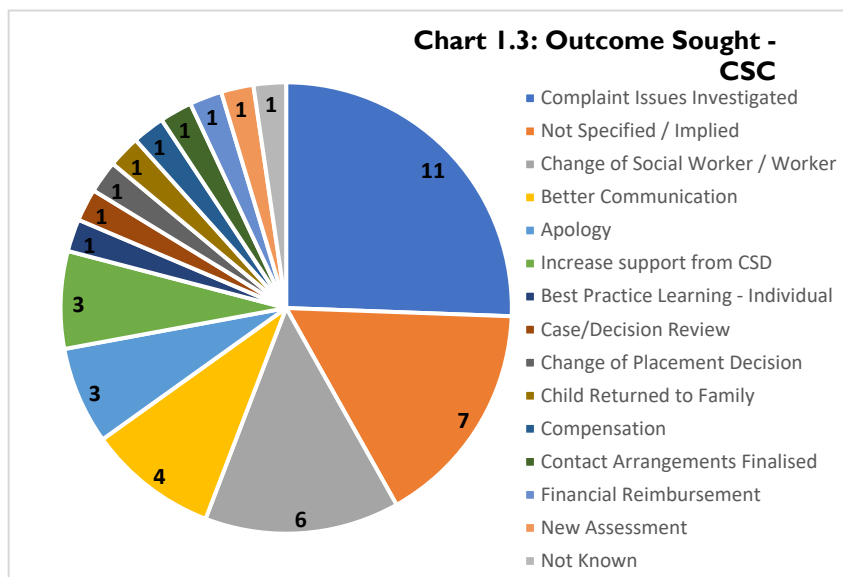
exercise should not be classed as a complaint but feedback through the consultation process.

5.5 A further breakdown of the nature of complaints made can be found in Tables 6a and 6b within the supporting Data Appendix, with services involved in Tables 7a and 7b.

## 6.0 Outcomes sought – social care and corporate complaints

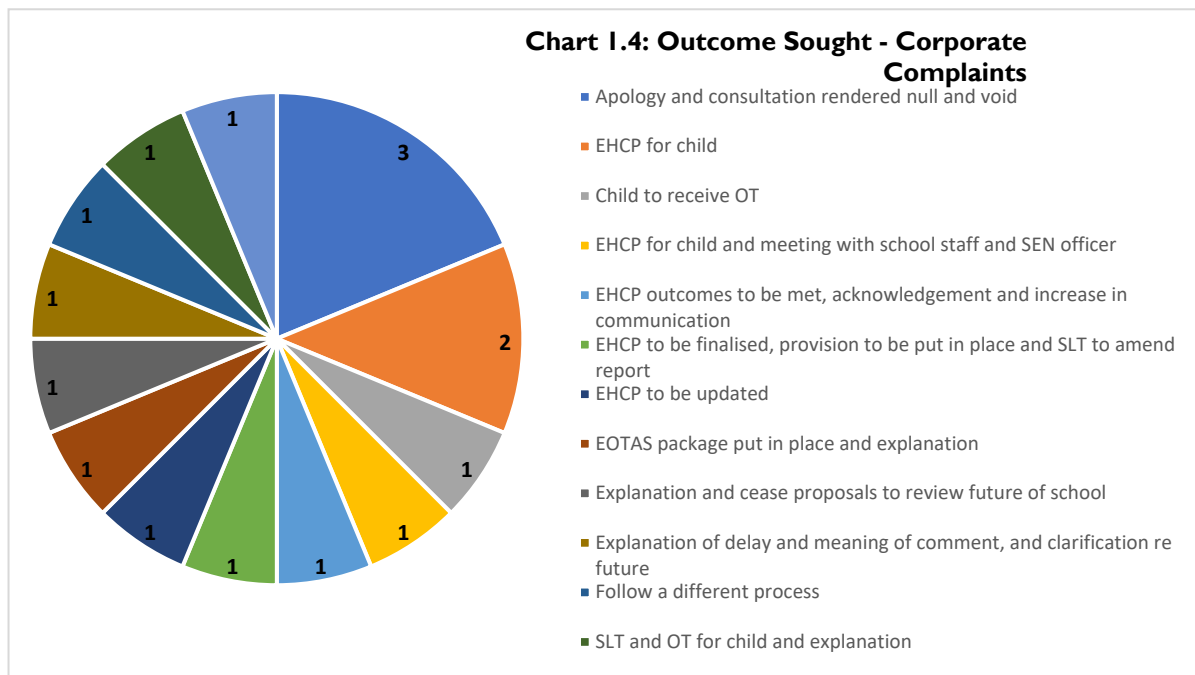
6.1 When making a complaint, complainants are asked to state what outcome they are seeking. This provides a useful indication to the responding manager about what potentially would resolve the complaint and also provides comparative data in relation to the actual outcome i.e., the outcome of the investigation.

6.2 For CSC complaints, the predominant outcome sought has changed in this reporting period to 'Complaint Issues Investigated' (26%), whereas in 2020/21 it was 'Better



Communciation' (16%). The next three highest identified categories are 'Change of Social Worker' (14%), 'Better Communication' (9%), 'Apology' (7%) and 'Increase Support from CSD' (7%). Seven social care complaints (16%) did not identify an outcome being sought as part of their submission at stage one, as can be seen in Chart 1.3.

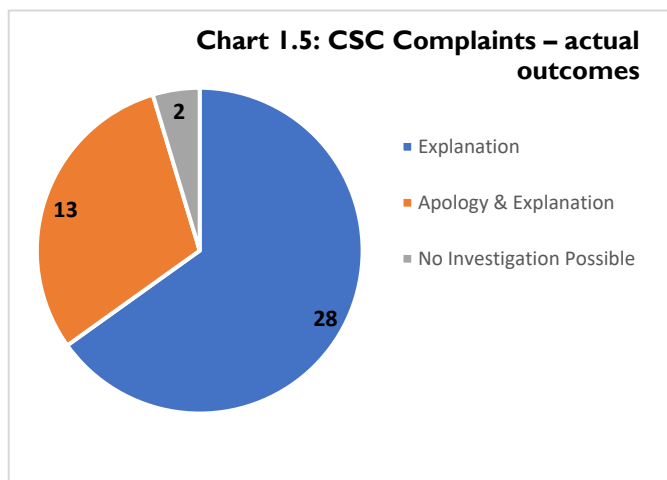
6.3 For corporate complaints, the main outcome being sought was for an ‘Apology and consultation rendered null and void’ (19%), followed by ‘EHCP for Child’ (13%), as can be seen in Chart 1.4.



## 7.0 Actual Outcomes – social care & corporate complaint

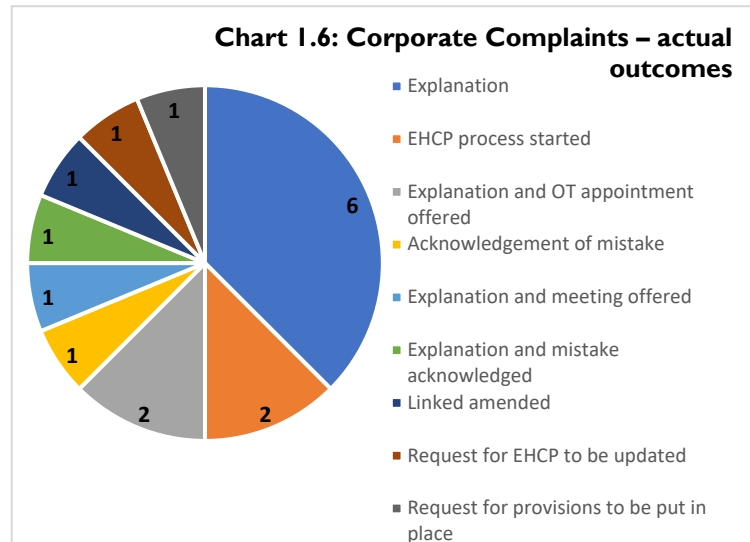
7.1 Having identified from the complainant the outcome they are seeking, the actual outcome achieved is taken from the response letter.

7.2 Chart 1.5 provides a summary breakdown of ‘actual outcomes’ for Social Care Complaints within the reporting period. Complaints falling under ‘other’, in respect of actual outcome, can take a variety of forms including specific agreed action to resolve the individual complaint, such as provision of funding/a one off payment, a specific communication plan or another bespoke outcome.



7.3 65% of the actual outcomes achieved during the reporting period for CSC stage one complaints was for ‘Explanation’ (61%), followed by ‘Apology & Explanation’ (30%).

7.4 The actual outcomes achieved for corporate stage two complaints in 2021/22 were 'Explanation' (38%), 'Explanation and OT appointment offered' (13%) and 'EHCP process started' (13%), as can be seen in Chart 1.6.



7.5 A further detailed breakdown of sought and actual outcomes is available under Tables 8 and 9 within the supporting Data Appendix.

7.6 Table 1.2 below shows the status of CSC complaints that completed stage one summarising whether a decision was 'upheld', 'not upheld', 'partially upheld' or where a 'no finding' outcome was required.

**Table 1.2: Social Care Complaints received**

Investigation Outcome	Number	Percentage
No Finding	1	2%
Not Upheld	18	36%
Partially Upheld	29	58%
Upheld	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

7.7 For the current reporting period, the following key points around 'actual' outcomes for Social Care complaints were identified:

- 'Explanation' made up 57.8% of complaint outcomes, of this 28 were CS Complaints and 6 Corporate Complaints.
- Of the 2 complaints which were 'Upheld', and 29 complaints which were 'Partially Upheld' all resulted in remedial action being taken.

## 8.0 Learning from complaints

8.1 Complaints can provide both opportunities for learning and indications that Children's Services practice is appropriate. In some instances, specific areas for service improvement are identified.

8.2 Key learning points and service improvements identified from both social care and corporate complaints received in 2020/21 were consistent with previous reporting periods, focusing on common re-occurring practice issues, which cause of a significant number of complaints, including:

- the importance of **good communication** and ensuring **agreed actions are completed** as agreed with service users.
- **timely replies** to communications from service users and correspondence (minutes and case paperwork) sent to service users as agreed.
- **adherence with CSD's own policies and procedures** particularly but not exclusively relating to workers conduct and timescales.

8.3 The learning from individual complaints is, as a point of good practice, usually included in the response letter to the complainant by the senior manager, who also implements and monitors any required action.

8.4 Some examples identified during the reporting period included:

- **Social care stage 1** – Following a complaint it was identified that there was a misunderstanding, which led to information being mis-communicated. This has been addressed with the member of staff and an explanation was provided.
- **Social care stage 1** – Children's Services failed to inform the individual of a meeting on the date it was due, and it was accepted that the timing was not appropriate. The inappropriateness of this was discussed with the member of staff and it was identified that the date of the next meeting should be provided in a timely manner to ensure attendance.
- **Social care stage 1** – Best practice not followed. This was followed up with member of staff to ensure that information is communicated in a timely and effective manner.

## 9.0 Young People's Complaints

9.1 In 2021/22, only one young person made a complaint, compared to five in the previous reporting period.

9.2 The young person's complaint was made via an advocate on the young person's behalf.

9.3 The complaint was in regard to 'Care Leavers' services, which had received two complaints in 2020/21.

9.4 'Financial Reimbursement' was the outcome being sought, with the complaint 'not being upheld' and resulting in an outcome of 'Explanation'.

9.5 A breakdown of young people's complaints can be found in Tables 10 to 13, within the supporting Data Appendix.

## Social care complaints escalation

- 9.6 There was a decrease in the number of complainants having their social care complaint escalated after receiving a statutory stage one response. In 2020/21 21.9% of CSC stage one complaints escalated to stage two, compared to 13.8% in 2021/22.
- 9.7 During the reporting period, four CSC stage two complaints were completed. None of the stage two complaints were completed within the 25 working day period, with all four complaints taking over the 65 working days to complete.
- 9.8 As identified under sections 11.0 and 12.0 within the report, further work has been undertaken within and outside of the reporting period to increase the capacity within the County Council’s Investigating Officer and Independent Person pool to assist with progressing CSC complaints at stage two and in turn for stage three.

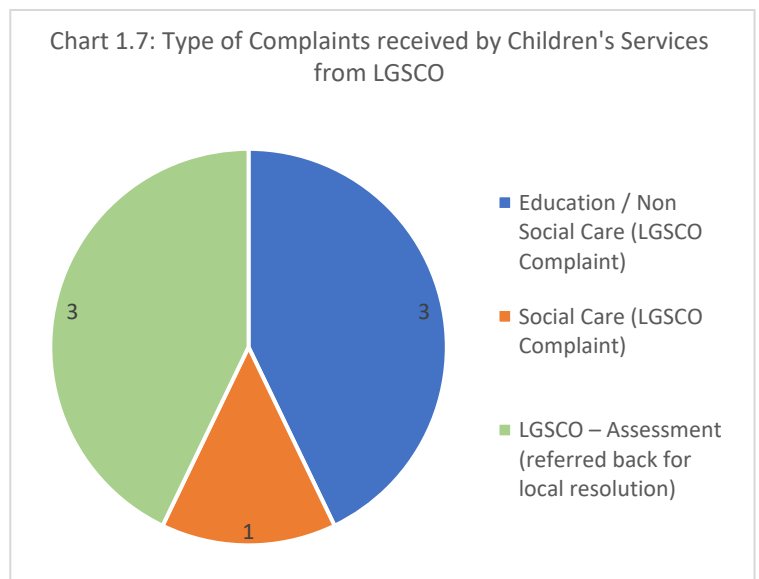
## 10.0 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

10.1 The number of complaints received via the LGSCO was 7 during the reporting period.

10.2 42.8% of complaints received in the reporting period (3) were assessed by the LGSCO as being premature and therefore referred for local resolution.

10.3 When the LGSCO find fault, the ombudsman makes recommendations in relation to remedy to the complainant and/or learning for the County Council in terms of our practise and processes.

10.4 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 usually result in the LGSCO deciding a complaint is ‘premature’ and it is returned to the Council for investigation and response.



10.5 With regards to the single social care complaint that was not considered premature, the following actions were carried out and the LGSCO deemed them satisfactory:

- Action taken to address delays in allocating the complaint to stage two,
- A time and trouble payment made

## 11.0 2020/21 recommendations – progress

**Recommendation 1 – Develop an Implementation Plan and ensure delivery of the service improvements identified within the Children’s Services Transformation Practice’s review of Children’s Services Complaints.**

**Progress – Action Superseded.** This action has been superseded by the actions being developed as part of the recovery plan around CSC stage two complaints, service improvement actions and financial resilience activity, which has been included as part of the recommendations for the 2022/23 reporting period.

**Recommendation 2 – Working alongside the Childrens Services Performance Manager, continue to incorporate the benefits of the new Complaints Case Management System through the capturing of evidence to support learning, by updating the format of the Annual Complaint Report (ACR) to include this additional detail.**

**Progress – ONGOING.** This action will be carried forward as part of the service improvement activity being overseen by the new Complaints Manager.

**Recommendation 3 – Establish the ongoing team structure arrangements for the Children’s Services Complaints Team, confirming the ongoing approach to the statutory Complaints Manager position.**

**Progress – Partially Completed.** The department has successfully recruited a new permanent Complaints Manager and filled the vacancy create during the reporting period of an experienced Complaints Officer. The ongoing future proofing of the Children’s Services Complaints Team has been amalgamated into the Financial Resilience activity, which has been included as part of the recommendations for the 2022/23 reporting period.

**Recommendation 4 – Increase capacity within the Independent Person (IP) pool to ensure successful increases within the Investigating Officer (IO) role are not impacted by a lack of availability of IPs to support investigations.**

**Progress – ONGOING.** A lot of work has gone into generating additional capacity, which has proven successful. As of 30 May 2022, the CSCT had access to 20 IOs and 17 IPs. Activity is ongoing to continue to increase capacity and this action will continue to be included as part of the recommendations for the 2022/23 reporting period.

**Recommendation 5 – The observations identified within the 2020/21 ACR recommendations, to be further explored to identify any viable pattern/trend that could lead to learning/practice improvements.**

**Progress – ONGOING.** This action will be carried forward as part of the service improvement activity being overseen by the new Complaints Manager and extended to include 2021/22 data.



**Recommendation 6 – 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.**

**Progress – ONGOING.** To be carried forward to 2022/23 report.

## 12.0 2021/22 Recommendations

12.1 The following recommendations are put forward for completion by the CSCT and/or department service areas during the 2022/23 reporting period:

**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.

**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 Hampshire County Council’s Financial Resilience Group in June 2022.

**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.

These improvements will be implemented across the 2021/22 reporting period.

**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 2021/22 reporting period.

**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.

## Appendix 1 – Data Report

The supporting data tables can be accessed through the following link:

**ADD WEBPAGE LINK BEFORE PUBLISHING ON WEBSITE**

## Appendix 2 - Glossary

### Complaint

*Getting the Best from Complaints, DfES 2006* defines a complaint as:

*'an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet, in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response'.*

Within Hampshire Children's Services, both the children's social care and corporate complaints processes use this definition.

### Case Concern

The definition of a case concern, as developed by CSCT, is:

*'An operational / case issue which is current, has a 'here and now' impact and requires a 'same day' intervention.'*

This is in contrast to complaints which will nearly always have a historical element and, whilst significant, do not require immediate intervention. Correctly identifying representations as concerns enables them to be passed swiftly to the appropriate team for action. The option to have their concern dealt with as a complaint is explained and remains an option at any point.

### Pre-complaints

Representations received by the complaints team that could become a formal complaint in the future, or where further clarification is needed from the originator before the matter can be responded to, are recorded as pre-complaints.

### Area Initiated

Complaints which are managed at a local level, that CSCT become aware of, and may have some input into.

### Enquiries

The complaints team is also involved with enquiries received by the Director's Office, from MPs, Councillors and the Department for Education (DoE).

### HantsDirect Handoff

Calls made to HCC's contact centre where the caller wants to speak to a manager, but they are either unavailable or not found. Request is passed to CSCT who identify manager and ask for contact to be made within three days whilst also advising that if concern is not resolved a formal complaint can be made.

### Miscellaneous

Representations received by the team that do not fall within its remit are recorded on Respond under 'miscellaneous'. These include disciplinary issues, non-Children's Services complaints, complaints about other agencies and local authorities.