

# Customer Feedback Annual Report Shropshire Council 2016/17

Feedback and Insight Team, Commissioning Support  
July 2017



# 1. Introduction

The annual customer feedback report is made available to members of the public, councillors and council staff to share information on the range of formal feedback received over the last year. This report covers complaints, compliments, comments and other types of feedback recorded from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

Quarterly reporting and more regular monitoring takes place within the Council during the course of the year. This work ensures an up to date understanding of customer experiences and enables learning and actions for service improvement.

Complaints containing an element of social care fall under the statutory guidelines. These are classed as statutory complaints for either adult or children's services and are handled in line with the statutory complaints procedures. The remainder of complaints are corporate complaints. Corporate complaints relate to a support service or services that do not provide social care and these are handled under the Council's corporate complaints procedure. You can find out more on Shropshire Council's website.

## Complaint

We aim to make it as easy as possible to make a complaint. A complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about the service provided by the council. Family members and advocates may also make a complaint on behalf of one of our customers. We will ask for consent to ensure that the complaint is not being made against the customer's wishes.

## Compliment

Many people get in touch with a compliment when the information or support they have received has exceeded their expectations. It is really helpful to learn when a service has been provided well or when a member of staff has done a great job. We like to recognise compliments alongside any complaints. It is good for us to say 'thank you' to our teams and staff members too.

## Comment

Feedback about a service could be:

- a suggestion to improve it.
- a question as to whether something could be done differently.
- an idea for delivering a service differently.



## 2. The Complaints Process

Shropshire Council encourages users of our services, their family members and carers to give feedback and highlight any concerns so that they may be addressed as quickly as possible. If problems cannot be resolved and the customer wishes to make a complaint, staff members offer advice on how to make a complaint. Support is also available from complaints officers based with Shropshire Council's Feedback and Insight Team.

- Speak to a member of staff and fill in one of our complaints leaflets.
- Telephone us: 0345 678 9000
- Email us at: [customer.feedback@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@shropshire.gov.uk)
- Fill in the customer feedback form on the council's website. Use the 'make a complaint' button at: <https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/feedback/corporate-complaints/>



Complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days of being received and we let the complainant know how their complaint will be handled.

### STAGE 1

An appropriate Investigating Officer will be allocated to the case and asked to investigate the complaint. This is usually a manager within the service area the complaint relates to. The complainant will be provided with a written response within approximately 6 weeks (12 weeks is the timescale for stage 1 and stage 2 responses and 6 weeks is usually allocated to each). In some complex cases it may take longer than 6 weeks at Stage 1 but we let the customer know if this extra time is needed and why. The Investigating Officer will write to explain the outcome of their investigation, any learning or actions and information outlining how to progress the complaint if the customer is not satisfied with the outcome.



### STAGE 2 - Review

An Investigating Officer will investigate the complaint in more detail. The investigating officer is often a more senior manager, commissioner or the Complaints Monitoring Officer. They will decide if there is more the service can do to address the concerns raised. If the reviewing officer believes the service has done all they reasonably can do, the customer will be written to and advised of this. They will also be given information about the Local Government Ombudsman.



### Ombudsman

If a complaint cannot be resolved locally it can be investigated by the Ombudsman. The council has a timescale of 28 calendar days to provide a response to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). Responses are often complex, lengthy and require a large volume of appendices to be collated, catalogued and returned to the LGO. Complainants can request to go to the Ombudsman without a review if they choose to.

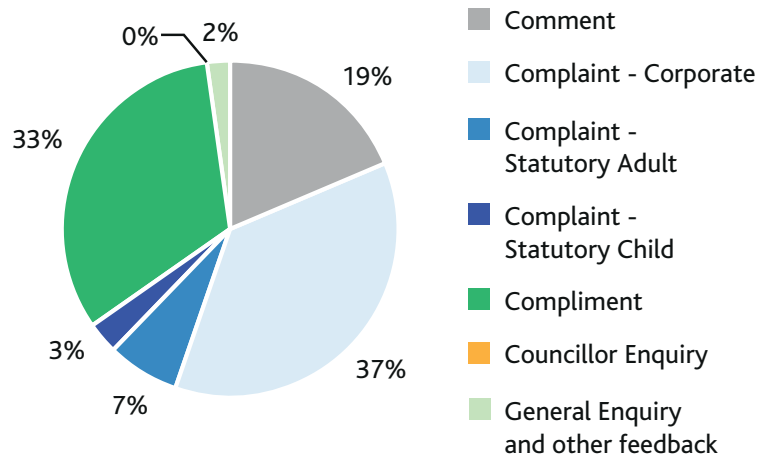
We cannot promise to get the result complainants want, but we do make sure that complaints are dealt with as quickly and as thoroughly as possible and we work to keep customers informed of what is happening and the progress being made.

### 3. Customer Feedback 2016/17

- In 2016/17 there were 1,989 cases of formal feedback recorded by Shropshire Council. There were:

- 731 corporate complaints
- 139 Adult Services statutory complaints
- 52 Children's Services statutory complaints
- 5 councillor enquiries
- 39 general enquiries and other types of feedback (including premature enquiries).
- 374 comments
- 646 compliments

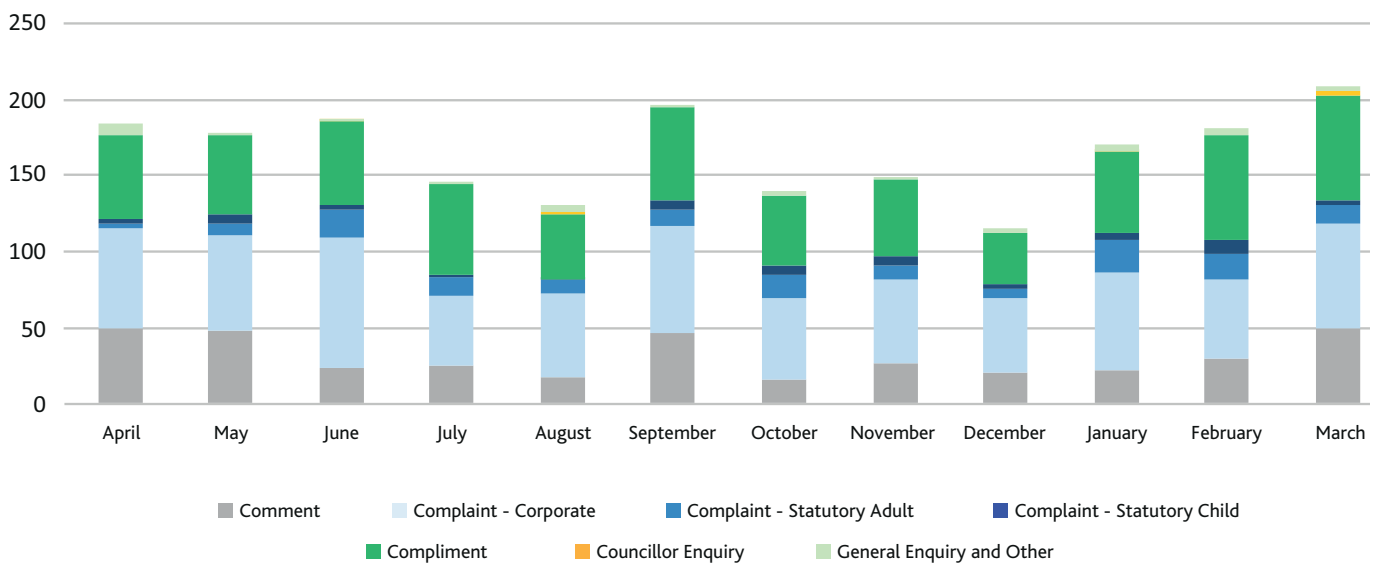
**Types of Customer Feedback Received 2016/17**



Complaints formed 46% of all cases, followed by compliments at 33%. 19% of all customer feedback cases were comments and 2% of cases were other types of enquiry.

A separate report is available for MP enquiries since MP enquiries often relate to complaints and inclusion would result in double counting and the over reporting of cases.

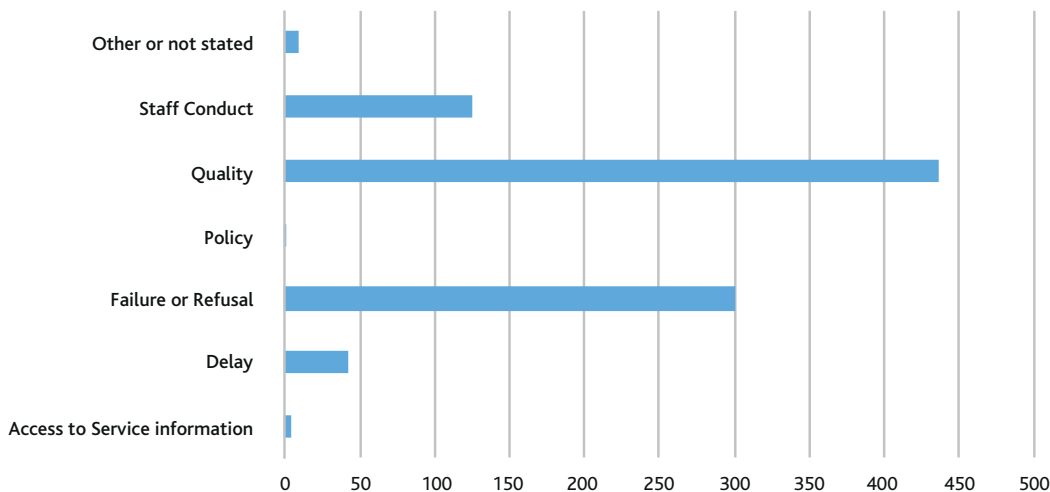
**Customer Feedback by Month 2016-17**



Over the year, there was an average of 165 customer feedback cases. March 2017 saw the greatest number of cases at 208, followed by September 2016 at 199 cases. December and August, as the months containing the main holiday periods, saw fewer cases of customer feedback than any other months. There were, on average 77 complaints made to Shropshire Council each month.

The last quarter of 2016/17 (January to March 2017) saw a greater volume of customer feedback cases than any other quarter in the year, followed by quarter 1, suggesting that there is no overall pattern of increases over the course of the year.

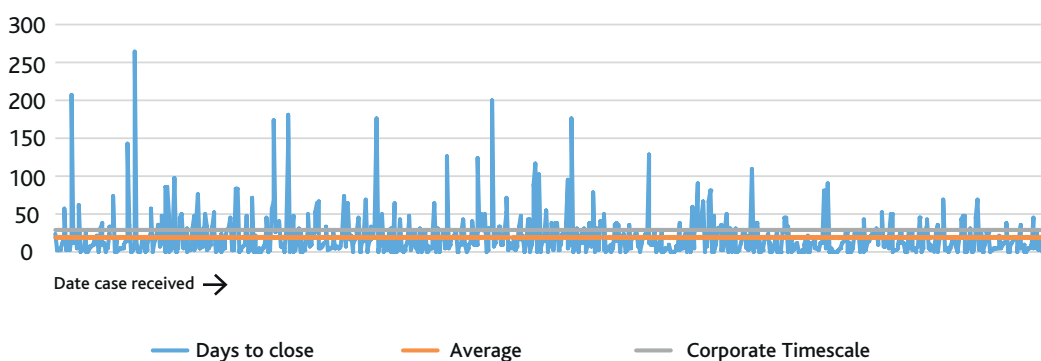
### Category of Complaints Received 2016/17



There were 922 complaints made within the year. 'Quality' was the main category under which complaints were made within the year. Only the main or dominant issue may be recorded and it should be noted that some complaints are more complex and cover a number of different categories. Within 'quality' there are a number of sub categories and analysis highlights that 'quality – service provided' and 'quality - unreasonable decision' were the dominant sub categories. 'Failure or refusal' was the second main category under which complaints were recorded in 2016/17 and the dominant sub category within that was 'failure or refusal to deliver a service'.

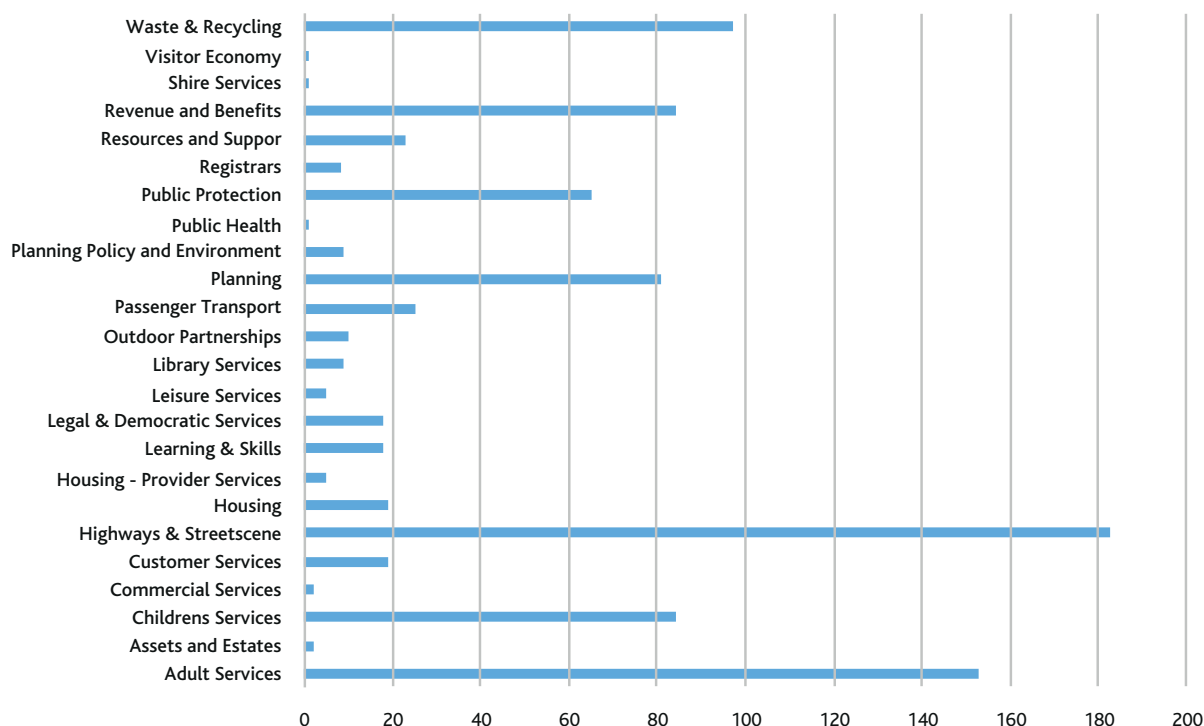
During 2016/17 Shropshire Council took an average of 20.2 days to respond to stage 1 complaints. This is well within the 30 day timescale Shropshire Council works to. However it should be noted that there is significant variation around the average and some cases, particularly complex complaints, can take longer than the 30 days allocated to respond (60 days total for stage 1 and 2 responses for corporate complaints). The chart shows the cases received (in date order) and the time taken to close each case. As a result, despite good average performance, days to close should remain a focus for ongoing performance monitoring.

### Days to Close Stage 1 Complaints 2016/17



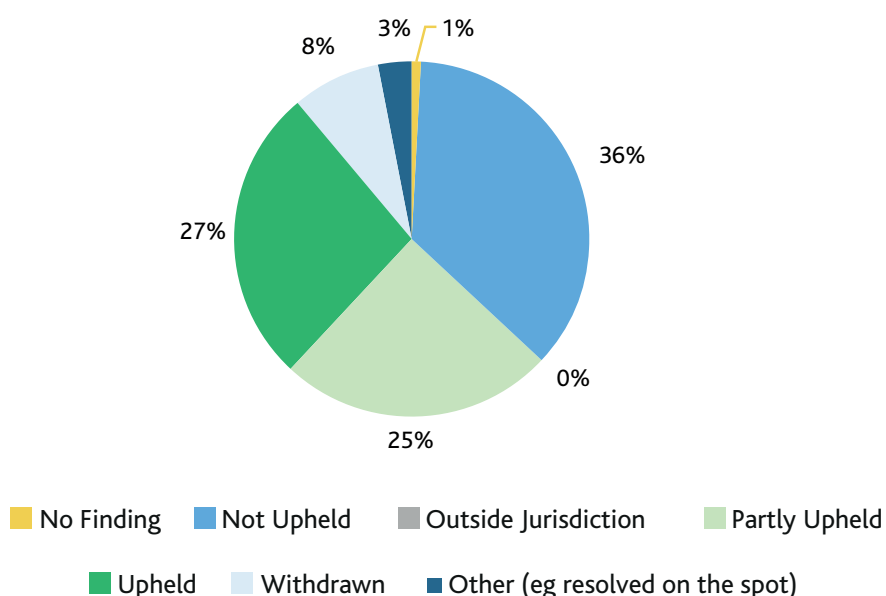
Some types of service are more likely to result in complaints than others and the chart below highlights complaints by service area. Highways and Streetscene received 20% of all Shropshire Council's complaints during 2016/17 followed by Adult Services at 17%. Children's Services, Planning and Revenue & Benefits each received 9% of complaints.

**Complaints by Service Area 2016/17**



- At the end of 2016/17 828 stage 1 complaints were completed or closed. Other stage 1 complaints remained open or had been cancelled. A proportion of complaints had also progressed to stage 2 or beyond.
- Of the closed stage 1 complaints 27% were upheld (226 complaints), 25% were partly upheld and 36% were not upheld.
- Of the complaints that were upheld, 22% were with Waste & Recycling, 19% Highways & Streetscene and 16% Adult Services.

### Outcome of Stage 1 Complaints 2016-17



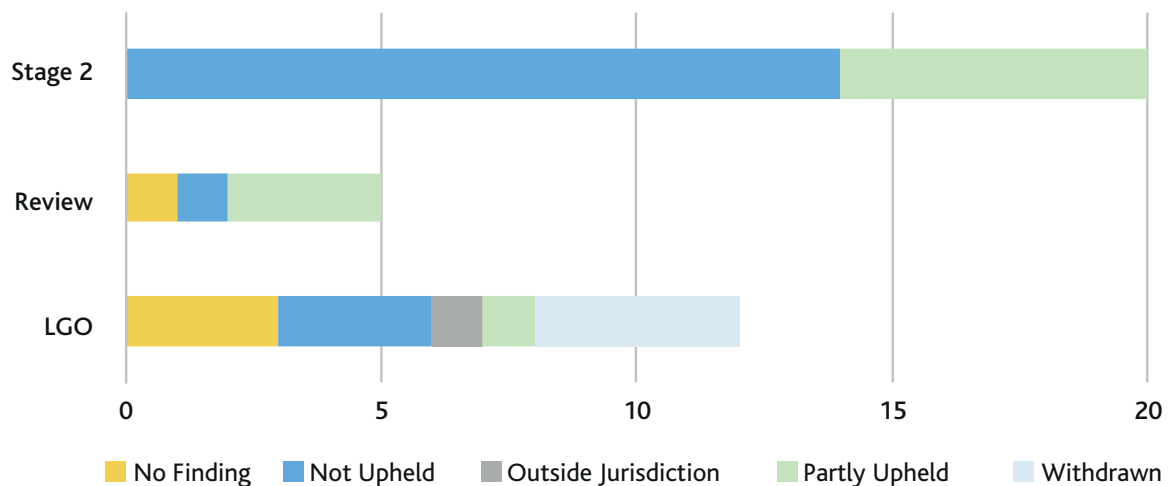
## 4. Progression of Complaints

Effective stage 1 complaint handling can reduce the number of stage 2 complaints. It is important to understand how many complaints progress beyond stage 1 and this is a measure included within regular performance reporting. During 2016/17 only a small proportion of all the complaints Shropshire Council received progressed beyond stage 1.

34 complainants requested that their complaint should be progressed beyond stage 1 during 2016/17. There were 46 separate investigations completed beyond stage 1 (complainants could progress their complaint to stage 2 and then to LGO). The table below shows the number of closed complaints within the year that progressed beyond stage 1 by service area and the chart below highlights the outcome of those complaints.

	LGO	Review	Stage 2	Total investigations
Adult Services	6	5	3	14
Children's Services			2	2
Highways & Streetscene			2	2
Housing	1			1
Learning & Skills	1		2	3
Passenger Transport	3			3
Planning	3		9	12
Planning Policy and Environment			2	2
Public Protection	2		3	5
Registrars			2	2
<b>Total investigations</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>46</b>

### Outcome of Cases Beyond Stage 1 2016/17



The Shropshire annual report from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) highlighted that 90 complaints and enquiries were made to the LGO from Shropshire during the year (see Appendix 1). Of those, 23 resulted in an investigation outcome: 12 were not upheld and 11 were upheld. The LGO reports Shropshire Council's upheld rate at 48%. Some of the complaints the LGO investigated related to complaints received by Shropshire Council before the start of the financial year (and so not covered within this report).

Appendix 2 highlights recommendations made by the LGO within 2015/16. All recommendations are monitored and have been actioned by the Shropshire Council service area responsible for the complaint.

Overall Shropshire Council has performed well. Slightly fewer complaints were upheld by the LGO compared to last year (15), and a small proportion of total complaints are subject to review/stage 2 or LGO investigation. Despite good performance overall there is a recognition that the learning from complaints may help to reduce complaint numbers in future. Learning is explored in more detail later in this report.

## 5. Annual Comparison 2014/15 and 2015/16

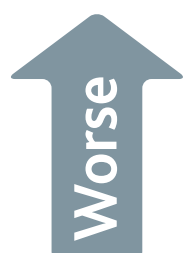
### Number of compliments - increased

In 2015/16 462 compliments were recorded for Shropshire Council and this has increased to 646 in 2016/17. Compliments average at 54 a month with fewer compliments recorded in August and December than in any other months of the year. Overall the numbers of compliments received are fairly steady over the year but quarter 4 saw the greatest number of compliments overall.



### Number of complaints - increased slightly

The number of complaints received was 922 in 2016/17 compared to 874 in 2015/16 (an increase of 5.5%). Although this can be viewed as a negative development, the positive consideration is that people feel able to make a complaint and increases can be a result of improvements in complaint recording.





## Nature of complaints - problems remain similar

The table below highlights that the nature of complaints over the last 2 years follows a very similar pattern and the results are almost identical.



Category	2015/16	2016/17
Access to Service or Information	1%	1%
Delay	8%	5%
Failure or Refusal	30%	33%
Policy	1%	0%
Quality	46%	47%
Staff Conduct	13%	14%
Other or not stated	1%	1%
	100%	100%

## Days to close - a little longer to resolve complaints

In 2015/16 it took Shropshire Council an average of 17.4 days to close stage 1 complaints. In 2016/17 this increased to 20.2 days. This well within the 30 day corporate timescale we work to for stage 1 complaints. The slight increase is likely to be the result of a number of factors including an overall increase in complaint numbers, an increase in the number of complex complaints cases received and the capacity within teams to respond to complaints (overall staffing levels have reduced).



## Outcome of complaints - Slightly fewer complaints are upheld

In 2015/16 30% of complaints were upheld, 25% were partly upheld and 36% were not upheld. The proportions are very similar in 2016/17. In 2016/17 27% of cases were upheld, 25% were partly upheld and 36% were not upheld. (Other cases may have been withdrawn, resolved on the spot or resulted in a no finding).



## Complaints Progressing Beyond Stage 1 - has decreased

- On the 31 March 2015, 13 cases were open at stage 2 or beyond. On 31 March 2016 there were 7 cases open at stage 2 or beyond. Within the year 31 cases had progressed beyond stage 1 and been closed (some had been withdrawn). During 2014/15 the number of closed cases at stage 2 and beyond was 35.



## 6. Example Compliments

Shropshire Council received 646 compliments during 2016/17. Many of the compliments highlight recognition for staff members who provided a higher standard of service or care than customers expected to receive.

"I used your [Shropshire Archives] new website for the first time today... It is easy to use and very visual. I obtained the information I needed immediately! ... I would also like to congratulate you on obtaining the Accreditation. That is wonderful news and something to be very proud of. It is so important for Shropshire to have the acknowledgement of your high standards and professionalism." (Archives)

"I phoned up only yesterday to report that my black refuse bin was split open. I had my new bin delivered today. The gentleman who delivered it unlocked my gate for me as I'm unable to ... Thank you for such an extremely quick service and top marks for the most polite, helpful gentleman who saw to my gate". (Waste & Recycling)

"I would like to express sincere appreciation for the absolutely excellent quality of surfacing work that has been done on the lane and around our property. Following decades of heartache with flood damage to this lane and our property my wife and I can now at last relax and we are very grateful for the care and attention you have given both with the sorting of the drainage and the re-surfacing". (Highways & Streetscene)

"The customer had her bus pass and handbag stolen and went into Castlegates for a replacement. She was still a little shaken by the incident. She said the service was "wonderful and everyone was so kind." (Customer Services)

"You have been extremely helpful, offered constructive comment and been hugely informative and have addressed the issues I have raised with you very professionally and positively – and without delay. On behalf of the many others I have spoken for on the matter, may I thank you again for all your help and advice". (Public Protection)

"Thank you for the superb job Rights Of Way have made on the Dowles Brook bridleway... ..you have done a really good job putting this one right. A lovely new bridge and more space by the side of the brook. Thank you very much". (Outdoor Partnerships)

"I would like to pass on our sincere thanks to the Registrars who conducted our Marriage Ceremony at Oswestry. We were extremely well looked after, and the sensitivity shown to us helped make the day extra special". (Registrars)

Compliment from All Stretton Reading Group. "Many thanks for your help and efficiency. We appreciate the excellent service offered by the library". (Libraries Service)

"X [social worker's name] was knowledgeable, efficient, friendly, conscientious, always ready to listen and always keeping her promises". (Children's Services)

"the Understanding Your child course...was fantastic and a brilliant help to me... I feel a much more happy and confident Mum." (Children's Services)



## 7. Example Complaints

Shropshire Council received 922 complaints during 2015/16. Understanding these complaints is important. Common concerns and issues are identified as early as possible to help ensure further complaints are not necessary. Some example complaints have been included below in order to highlight the type of feedback Shropshire Council receives. These examples were not all upheld and many related to a lack of understanding of the service Shropshire Council was able to provide. Where necessary wording within complaints has been removed within the examples to ensure anonymity. The next section of this report looks more closely at learning and the actions taken as a result of complaints.

"I would like to make a complaint about the manner in which the planning process has been handled with regards to a development in [name removed]. The Planning Department has not exercised sufficient control over the development allowing the developer to carry out works for which he did not have consent". (Planning)

The customer reported a dangerous situation with a fallen tree and nothing appears to have been actioned, resulting in a second contact to report the issue again. (Planning Policy and Environment)

The customer reported that they "collected ten bags of litter, a bicycle, half a tyre, parts of a car and a road cone from a small area of bushes next to the footpath on Crowmere Road Roundabout, in front of Shrewsbury Baptist Church". They wanted to say that it was "clear this hadn't been cleaned for a long time. Bushes were overgrown etc." (Highways & Streetscene)

Complaint about the Oswestry Trail. "It was very disappointing to find that the walk was made difficult and longer because of changes that have been made to the route. .... the route had in places been redirected. The gate which gave them entry to farm land had been chained closed"...They found that stiles had been replaced by fences, blocked by water tanks... and in one place "the route had been completely obliterated by sludge and slurry" (Outdoor Partnerships)

The customer paid a £60 deposit for an advance booking. She understood that this amount was non-refundable and was a booking cost. However, she was never made aware that if she booked within 12 months then this fee would not be applicable. The customer commented that if she was made aware that there was another option she would have waited a few months and booked then. (Registrars)

The complainant wishes to complain about the "fairly useless service SC offer library users, particularly when there is a charge of some £6 to arrange a book to be transferred from another Shropshire library". (Libraries)

"Communication was indirect and inconsistent. The timescales and the transitions between each worker have been appalling." (Children's Services)

"this case has been handled with lack of care and professionalism from the beginning.." (Children's Services)

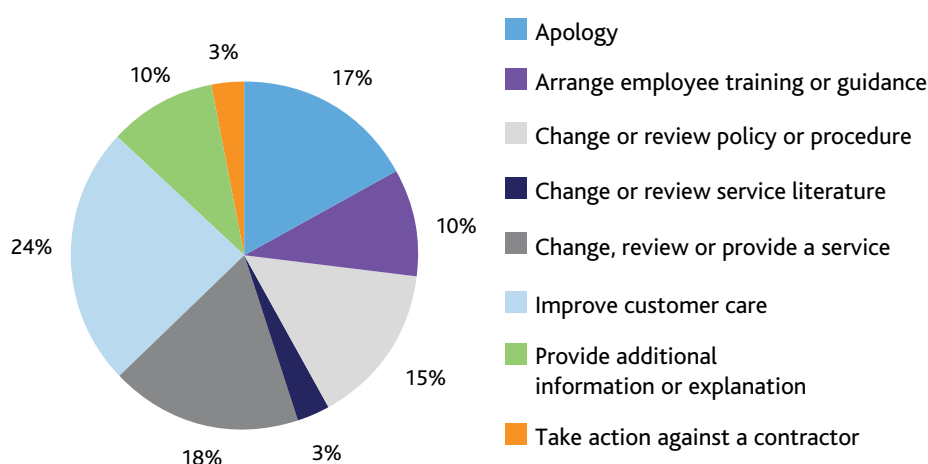
The complainant is unhappy about the lateness of invoices received relating to a care package. The customer comments they didn't know how much they had to pay. (Adult Services)



## 8. Learning and Actions

Shropshire Council recorded learning and or actions against 54% of complaints in 2016/17. 34% of complaints had an improvement action recorded and 20% had a learning point recorded. Limitations in the system used to record complaints mean that the ability to easily record and report multiple learning and action points is not currently in place but has been identified as a future requirement within Digital Transformation and the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM). Currently learning and actions are considered by each service area and it is not easy to identify the type of learning that could be applied across the whole organisation. The charts below highlight the primary action and learning point recorded.

**Improvement Actions Recorded 2016/17**



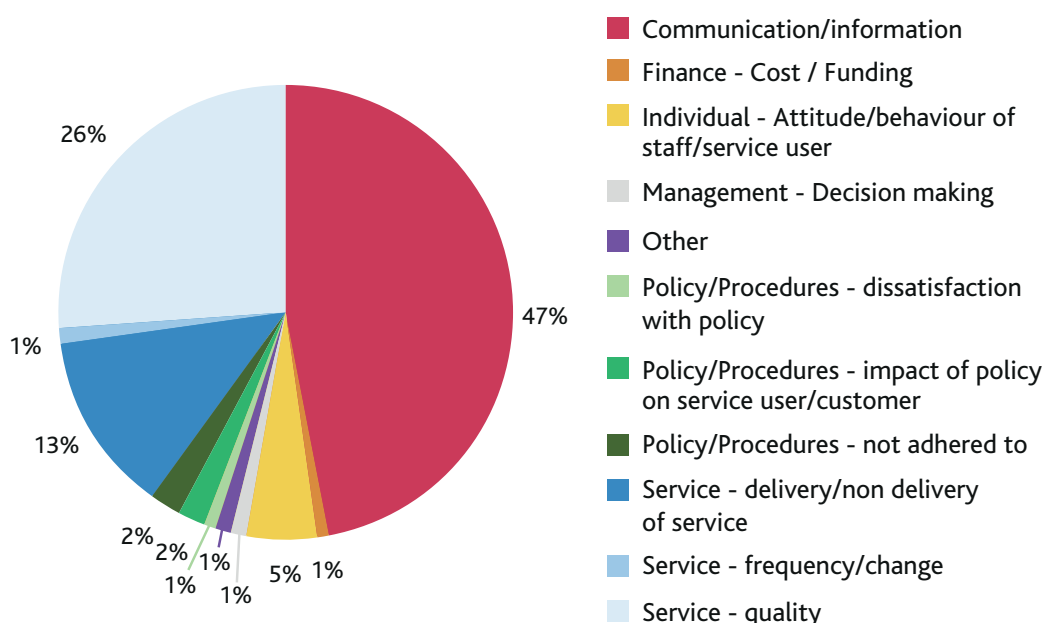
Of the actions that were recorded against complaints closed in 2016/17:

- 24% were to improve customer care
- 18% were to change, review or provide a service
- 17% were to make an apology
- 15% were to change or review a policy or procedure.

Consideration of the learning points recorded during the year highlights:

- 47% of learning points related to communication/information
- 26% of learning points were in relation to service quality
- 13% of learning points fell into the category of delivery or non-delivery of a service
- Other types of learning points were not seen in any significant numbers.

**Learning Points Recorded 2016/17**



## 9. Example Learning and Actions

Shropshire Council has been implementing learning from complaints over the course of the year. Examples are shown below to highlight the type of action taken in order to minimise the number of complaints received and try to ensure that customers receive a good standard of service. Wording within the examples has been altered slightly for simplicity and to ensure confidentiality.

We talked the customer through the process of how to use the online planning register and advised of details concerning the development proposals.

The customer was provided with an apology. The officer covering the area was contacted and asked to investigate the paths further to see what actions could be taken to resolve the situation.

An apology was provided to the customer for the level of service they received and any inconvenience this may have caused. It appears that whilst their call was on hold and the advisor was attempting to transfer the call, the call became disconnected, and no attempt was made to call the customer back. As a result of your complaint staff members will be reminded how to handle longer hold times.

A night scout was completed on 26 January 2017 and a number of street lighting faults were recorded (not all of them are the responsibility of Shropshire Council) only one still remains as a fault because parts cannot be obtained so the Council has asked the contractor to replace it. The feedback received suggests that there could be more faults that the Council is not aware of so the customer will be asked for additional information to help find the additional lighting faults.

Following the complaint the street lighting fault was reported and repaired within 4 days.

An apology was made for the problems the customer has been experiencing in respect of bins not being returned to where they are presented. The council will report the concern to the contractor.

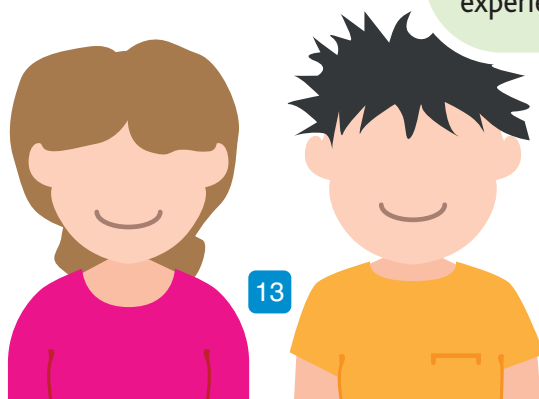
A letter has been issued to the customer apologising for the delay in communications regarding responding to their complaint. Following on from this reply a site meeting has been suggested to help find a way forward.

A letter of apology has been sent to the customer for the manner in which they were spoken to by a member of staff. The customer was informed that Shropshire Council always strives to provide a high standard of customer service and they are sorry that they did not find this to be the case on that day. The manager will work with the member of staff concerned.

The customer was emailed and apologies given for the delay they experienced as a result of traffic light problems. The sensors were adjusted as a temporary fix so as not to cause problem over the weekend. The customer was thanked for raising this issue as without feedback these items may not come to the forefront to be resolved.

I didn't really want to make a complaint.

I hoped that if I told the council about my experiences, lessons would be learnt, things would change, and other people wouldn't experience the same situation again.



## 10. Conclusions

Local data highlights that, overall there were more cases of customer feedback recorded in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16. There were more complaints in 2016/17 than in 2015/16 (a 5.5% increase) but there were also more compliments. The nature of complaints remains similar. Stage 1 complaints handling remains effective with small a small proportion of complaints progressing to Stage 2. Where attention is required these performance issues are highlighted within the recommendations.

A close analysis of complaints by service area (separate and more detailed reports are provided for Children's Services and Adults Services) highlights the main themes for services receiving the greatest number of corporate complaints. Please note that these are reported issues and not necessarily upheld complaints:

- **Highways & Streetscene** – lack of response/communication, complaints about roadworks and road closures, concerns about the cleanliness of streets/roads (particularly grass or hedge cuttings not being cleared away), potholes, and to a lesser extent concerns about lack of street lighting.
- **Waste & Recycling** – missed bin collections, not returning bins or recycling containers to properties after emptying, removal of second bins, attitude and behaviour of individuals collecting waste, long waiting times for new bin delivery.
- **Revenue & Benefits** – challenges setting up payments, difficulties contacting the service on the telephone, delays in service, and customers believing administrative mistakes have been made.
- **Planning** – failure to respond to communications, difficulties contacting the service on the telephone, complaints that concerns do not appear to be taken into account, failure to undertake enforcement action and concerns about the Council's service/processes.
- **Public Protection** – complaints about verbal communication by parking enforcement officers, problems using parking payment machines, difficulties contacting the licensing department.

It is difficult to assess how well Shropshire Council is performing overall with a lack of benchmarking data available to compare Shropshire Council with other local authorities. The Local Government Ombudsman has issued the Shropshire Council report included as Appendix 1. The LGO upheld rate in 2015/16 for Shropshire Council was 50% and in 2016/17 the upheld rate was 48%. Overall the LGO received 83 enquiries from Shropshire Council area in 2015/16 and 90 in 2016/17 (23 were investigated by the LGO). Overall performance is similar across the 2 years.





# 11. Recommendations

This annual report helps to highlight areas where performance may still be improved with the aim of reducing the number of complaints received. Recommendations for attention during 2016/17 are included below.

1. It is important to include a core recommendation concerning the ongoing recording of customer feedback by all staff. Information will be made available on the staff intranet for all staff members to refer to and to remind staff of the value of customer feedback and the learning it can generate.
2. Communication is an underlying theme for many complaints and for some areas of service complaints appear to be generated because customers are frustrated that they cannot contact the service or have not had a response to an initial enquiry. These complaints could be avoided with improved customer contact and it is recommended that staff are encouraged to update customers even if an answer cannot be provided in order to reassure customers that their concerns are taken seriously, they have not been forgotten and a response will be made.
3. The time taken to respond to stage 1 complaints increased by an average of 3 days for 2016/17 (to 20.2 days). Average performance remains well within the 30 working day timescale. If the number of complaints increases further during 2016/17 there is a danger that timescales could increase further. It is recommended that this continues to be monitored within quarterly reporting (and the more regular reports provided to some service areas). Investigating officers will be reminded of the need to respond within the agreed timescales.
4. Overall the number of cases handled at stage 2 or beyond has increased slightly. This isn't a concern at the moment and it appears to be a result of the increase in complaint numbers rather than ineffective stage 1 handling. However, it is recommended that this continues to be monitored closely. Should the number of stage 2 complaints increase there will be a significant impact on Shropshire Council's Complaints Monitoring Officers and Feedback and Insight Team.
5. An ongoing recommendation should be that all staff are supported through the complaints process. Certain types of service and role are likely to generate more complaints than others. The more pressure staff are under the more likely that some mistakes could be made. The emphasis must be placed on making the most of the learning from complaints and preventing future complaints.



## Recommendations continued...

6. It is recommended that all complaints investigators record the learning and actions from complaints and, where appropriate, highlight learning and actions within response letters. This focus on learning and action should result in a reduction in complaint numbers and limit the officer time spent on complaint handling and investigation.
7. Toward the end of 2015/16 the LGO issued expectations concerning the way in which local authorities deal with provider complaints. Shropshire Council has made progress in adopting a more robust approach to the handling of provider complaints (with an emphasis on adult social care). However, it is recognised that there is further work required and that the Council should aim to adopt good practice across all service areas.
8. It is recommended that all services ensure their customers understand how to provide customer feedback (compliments, complaints and comments). Although information is available on the Council's website it is recognised that some people are less likely to access websites and could benefit from verbal or written communications. (Leaflets are available for staff to use and posters will be available shortly).
9. Work has been taking place to explore the development of training on the Council's new Learning Management System. Although still early days it is hoped that this presents an opportunity for more accessible training rather than the occasional face to face sessions held on request.
10. The Council's IT Transformation Programme presents an opportunity to overcome limitations with the current system for recording, monitoring and reporting customer feedback. It is recommended that the work to implement a new system (part of the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) is a top priority throughout 2017/18.



# Appendix 1

Local Authority Report: Shropshire Council  
For the Period Ending: 31/03/2017

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

## Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
13	7	7	9	6	7	5	36	0	90

## Decisions made

Detailed Investigations					Complaints Remedied		
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
6	0	38	22	12	11	48%	89
<b>Notes</b>  Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.  The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.					Complaints Remedied		
					by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement	
					10		1

## Appendix 2

### Recommendations to the Council made by the LGO during 2016/17

Department	LGO's Recommendation	Recommendation actioned
School Transport	The complaint was related to changes in school travel arrangements. The LGO findings were that the Council was entitled to make the change but should have consulted the complainant first. Consultation will need to take place in future.	Yes
Housing Benefit	The complaint was regarding a housing benefit overpayment. The LGO will not investigate. This is because the Council has decided the complainant does not have to repay any benefit. In addition, the Council has apologised for the delay in responding.	Yes
Adult Social Care	The LGO found that there is some evidence of fault in arrangements made by the Council for a capacity assessment to be carried out in the home of the complainant. The LGO believes that this did not cause injustice to the complainant. The Council has agreed to apologise and review its procedures in this area.	Yes
Democratic	There was fault in the way the independent appeal panel considered a school appeal. The recommendation was for the Council to offer a fresh appeal.	Yes
School Transport	The Council offered to reconsider a decision not to provide free school transport. As a result the LGO decided not to investigate further.	Yes
Adult Social Care	The investigation found that the Council did not communicate effectively with a service user's family regarding the date when charges would apply for care. This prevented the family from making informed decisions regarding care. The LGO recommendation was for the Council to prevent this from happening again and to remedy the injustice caused. This recommendation has been actioned.	Yes
Planning	The LGO found fault by the Council in the way it dealt with a planning application and fault in the way it considered subsequent complaints of noise nuisance from the premises. The Council agreed to pay £300.	Yes
Adult Social Care	The Council was at fault when it failed to audit Mrs X's direct payments regularly and to make her support plan clear about all support related costs. It will waive half the debt she accrued, ensure she has a clear support plan and improve the way it does this in the future.	Yes
Planning	The LGO found that the Council looked into complaints about use of a site for motorcross events without fault. There was delay by the Council in responding to two other complaints. The Council proposes to now look into these complaints. As the complainant is not directly affected by the possible change of uses in the two other complaints, this was a satisfactory remedy.	Yes, and ongoing

Department	LGO's Recommendation	Recommendation actioned
Adult Social Care	The complaint was about charges for an adult son's care and support. The LGO found no fault in the Council's financial assessment, but it should have reviewed the son's needs and care plan more regularly. Recommendations have been actioned.	Yes
Adult Social Care	The Council is at fault for failing to provide details of the required financial contribution at the outset of a nursing care placement. The LGO also noted a delay in assessing the complainant's finances and informing them of the amount to pay. The Council agreed to waive its charges from November 2014 to April 2015. The Council also agreed to pay £200 for the time and trouble taken to pursue the complaint and the stress of receiving a substantial bill with little prior warning.	Yes

# Customer Feedback Annual Report Shropshire Council 2016/17

For more information concerning Shropshire Council's  
customer feedback reporting contact:

Feedback and Insight Team,  
Commissioning Support, Shropshire Council  
Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 6ND

Email: [customer.feedback@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@shropshire.gov.uk)  
[www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk)

