

16 October 2023

Committee	Overview and Scrutiny
Date	Tuesday, 24 October 2023
Time of Meeting	4:30 pm
Venue	Tewkesbury Borough Council Offices, Severn Room

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND

Agenda

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the visitors' car park at the front of the building and await further instructions (during office hours staff should proceed to their usual assembly point; outside of office hours proceed to the visitors' car park). Please do not re-enter the building unless instructed to do so.

In the event of a fire any person with a disability should be assisted in leaving the building.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

To receive apologies for absence and advise of any substitutions.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the adoption by the Council on 24 January 2023 of the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct, effective from 1 February 2023, as set out in Minute No. CL.72, Members are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out on the Agenda to which the approved Code applies.

	Item	Page(s)
4.	MINUTES To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023.	1 - 23
5.	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24 AND ACTION LIST To consider the forthcoming work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the actions arising from previous meetings.	24 - 45
6.	HAVE YOUR SAY (4CS) ANNUAL REPORT To consider the annual report on the Council's comments, concerns, complaints and compliments to provide assurance that complaints are managed effectively.	46 - 64
7.	GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (10 October 2023).	65
8.	SEPARATE BUSINESS The Chair will move the adoption of the following resolution: That under Section 100(A)(4) Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.	
9.	LEISURE CENTRE CONTRACT MONITORING <i>(Exempt – Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))</i> To consider the performance of Places for People Leisure Management in its operation of Tewkesbury Leisure Centre and progress made in relation to returning to the original contract terms and conditions.	66 - 71

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2023
COUNCILLORS CONSTITUTING COMMITTEE

Councillors: N D Adcock, C Agg, H J Bowman, T J Budge, C L J Carter (Vice-Chair), M Dimond-Brown (Chair), P A Godwin, G C Madle, H C McLain, C E Mills, G M Porter, E C Skelt, M J Williams, P N Workman and I Yates

Substitution Arrangements

The Council has a substitution procedure and any substitutions will be announced at the beginning of the meeting.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, please be aware that the proceedings of this meeting may be recorded and this may include recording of persons seated in the public gallery or speaking at the meeting. Please notify the Democratic Services Officer if you have any objections to this practice and the Chair will take reasonable steps to ensure that any request not to be recorded is complied with.

Any recording must take place in such a way as to ensure that the view of Councillors, Officers, the public and press is not obstructed. The use of flash photography and/or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed and agreed in advance of the meeting.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 12 September 2023 commencing at 4:30 pm

Present:

Chair
Vice Chair

Councillor M Dimond-Brown
Councillor C L J Carter

and Councillors:

N D Adcock, C Agg, H J Bowman, P A Godwin, G C Madle, H C McLain, C E Mills, G M Porter, E C Skelt, M J Williams and I Yates

also present:

Councillor A Hegenbarth

OS.23 ANNOUNCEMENTS

23.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.

OS.24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

24.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T J Budge and P N Workman. There were no substitutes for the meeting.

OS.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

25.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 24 January 2023 and took effect on 1 February 2023.

25.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

OS.26 MINUTES

26.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.27 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

27.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 19-35. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the plan.

- 27.2 The Director: Corporate Services advised that the Forward Plan had been updated to incorporate changes requested by the Executive Committee and now included an overview of each Agenda item, a column for the Lead Member and a column for background papers. The plan itself was reasonably well populated and remained a fluid document, although he acknowledged there were a number of items in the pending section which he would work with Officers to slot into the appropriate meeting. A Member asked whether it would be possible to produce a summary document showing dates of the Executive Committee meetings and what was being considered at each meeting; she had found it difficult to identify what the Executive Committee was working on and felt this would help members of the public to more easily understand the work of the Committee. The Director: Corporate Services explained that the Forward Plan was owned by the Executive Committee and the Members of that Committee had expressed a desire to add more detail to the plan which was reflected by the additions he had described; however, he would take this comment away for consideration.
- 27.3 A Member noted that the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy was due to be considered by the Executive Committee on 18 October 2023 and she sought clarification as to whether that would be postponed given that it was not included for consideration on today's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda. The Head of Service: Community and Economic Development explained that, since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, the Borough Council had been consulted on the countywide Economic Development and Tourism Strategy and it was now intended to hold a Member seminar in relation to the countywide strategy as this would influence the Borough Council's strategy. Additionally, the strategy would need to align with the emerging work on the Council Plan and the priorities within that. The item would therefore be moved to the pending section in the interim.
- 27.4 In response to a query as to why the Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits Overpayments Debt Recovery Policy and the Equalities and Diversity Policy had both been deferred, as referenced at Page No. 33 of the report, the Director: Corporate Resources advised that the former had been included in the Forward Plan at the request of the previous Head of Service; it was anticipated that it would be removed follow a refocus of the team. The Equalities and Diversity Policy was an important policy that required a corporate group to take it forward and the supporting programme needed an action plan in order to demonstrate delivery against the policy so that item would also be removed from the Forward Plan for the time being. Another Member noted that the Volunteering Policy had been deferred from the meeting on 1 March 2023 until the new Council was in place and she asked when this was likely to be brought to the Committee. The Executive Director: Resources advised this would be taken forward by the new Associate Director: People, Culture and Performance who had taken up her post two weeks ago and he would seek a response prior to the next meeting. A Member noted that the 2024/25 budget would be considered by the Executive Committee on 7 February 2024 and asked when Members would consider a longer term budget. In response, the Executive Director: Resources clarified that the five year Medium Term Financial Strategy was due to be considered by the Executive Committee on 10 January 2024; he was hopeful this could be brought to an earlier meeting but it was currently scheduled for January.
- 27.5 It was
- RESOLVED** That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.28 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

28.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, circulated at Pages No. 36-45. Members were asked to consider the Work Programme and Action List.

28.2 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24 be **NOTED**.

OS.29 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE TRACKER - QUARTER ONE 2023/24

29.1 The report of the Director: Corporate Resources, circulated at Pages No. 46-99, attached the performance management information for quarter one of 2023/24. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to review and scrutinise the information and, where appropriate, identify any issues to refer to the Executive Committee for clarification or further action to be taken.

29.2 Members were informed this was the first quarterly monitoring report for 2023/24 and represented the latest information in terms of the status of the actions set out in the Council Plan. Progress against delivering the objectives and actions for each of the six Council Plan priorities was reported through the performance tracker, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, which was a combined document that also included a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Key financial information was also reported alongside the tracker documents with a revenue budget statement attached at Appendix 2 to the report, a capital monitoring statement attached at Appendix 3 to the report and a reserves position summary attached at Appendix 4 to the report.

29.3 Key actions for the quarter were highlighted at Paragraph 2.3 of the report and included approval of the introduction of webcasting, with an Officer project group having been established to take that forward, and the reinvigoration of the Garden Town following a gateway review. Members were reminded that, due to the complex nature of the actions being delivered, it was inevitable that some would not progress as smoothly or as quickly as envisaged and the details of those actions were set out at Paragraph 2.4 of the report. In terms of KPIs, the status of each indicator was set out at Paragraph 3.2 of the report. KPIs where direction of travel was down and/or not on target, were set out at Paragraph 3.3 of the report, with KPIs that were performing well highlighted at Paragraph 3.4 of the report.

29.4 The Chair drew attention to Pages No. 48 and 51 of the report, which highlighted the positive actions achieved during the period, and invited Members to comment. A Member expressed the view that the new corporate website which had been launched on 21 July was a brilliant piece of work and offered a vastly improved customer experience.

29.5 During the debate which ensued, the following queries and comments were made in relation to the Council Plan Performance Tracker:

Priority: Finance and Resources

Page No. 57 – Objective 2 – Action a) Ensure our Council Tax remains in the lowest quartile nationally – A Member questioned whether being in the lowest quartile had any correlation to the quality of services that could be provided by the Council.

The Executive Director: Resources advised that this was a target set by the previous Council and the authority had the eighth lowest Council Tax in the country at £40 below the lowest quartile threshold. Work had not yet commenced in relation to the setting of Council Tax for 2024/25; this was due to be approved in February along with the budget. Output would be greater with a higher Council Tax therefore services currently operated from a lower cost base – this could either be seen as being value for money, or that services could be better, depending on the individual viewpoint.

Page No. 58 – Objective 4 – Action a) Implement and deliver a project plan for the closure of the trade waste service – A Member asked what the environmental impact would be in terms of people disposing of waste in other ways.

The Director: Communities advised that, whilst there was always a risk that people would choose not to do the right thing, he did not believe that businesses that would ordinarily operate in the correct way would start flytipping as a result of the cessation of the trade waste service; however, the Environmental Health team would be monitoring the situation and he provided assurance that robust action was taken in relation to flytipping.

Priority: Economic Growth

Page No. 59 – Objective 2 – Action b) Work with partners to secure transport infrastructure improvements for the all-ways Junction 10 – A Member noted that the commentary stated that Gloucestershire County Council would continue to work closely with National Highways so that the construction of this much-needed improvement scheme worked for all users and he asked for clarification on the interface with Gloucestershire County Council on the issue of a transport route.

The Associate Director: Garden Towns advised that a bid had been made to the government for funding and they were now moving to the Development Consent Order. There would be slightly different involvement as a more formal partner in the process with a direct link for the Council to comment but there was a very structured plan in place.

Priority: Housing and Communities

Page No. 68 – Objective 3 – Action a) Adopt a revised charging schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy – A Member asked whether this action could be delivered within the revised timeframe.

The Associate Director: Planning advised that a significant amount of work was now underway including an internal audit to ensure money was correctly allocated and to check the systems used to track that – it was anticipated this would be reported to the Audit and Governance Committee at the end of November. There was a broader piece of work to be done around identifying priorities for the use and spending of CIL and establishing governance arrangements and it was anticipated that a timeline for those elements would be available for the Audit and Governance Committee meeting.

The Chair indicated that a briefing in relation to CIL was being arranged as part of the Member Induction Programme so there would be an opportunity to ask more questions at that session.

Key performance indicators for priority: Housing and Communities

Page No. 70 – KPI 11 – Total number of homeless relief cases held at the end of the quarter – A Member noted there was an increase compared to quarter one of the previous year but that only made sense if there had been a known increase in homelessness – there may be many more people in real difficulty than had been acknowledged in which case the increase was not necessarily negative and could be a positive.

The Head of Service: Housing felt it was difficult to say whether it was positive or negative overall and he stressed that the Council did not set a target. This was only a snapshot of cases based on those who had approached the Council for assistance and did not represent all of the people in need which could not be measured. There had been an increase in the number of cases being dealt with by the Housing team and there were fewer resources and options for resolving these issues. The Director: Communities indicated that the KPIs needed to be reviewed for the new Council Plan. There was a lot of hidden homelessness, e.g. sofa surfers, so it was virtually impossible to obtain an accurate figure at any one time as the situation was constantly changing. In general terms, the Housing team was certainly busier so people were struggling more and that was a trend across the county. The Chair indicated that he had been approached by the Leader of the Council about how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could assist with gaining a better understanding of how the Council was supporting the cost of living crisis and, if the Committee took on that work, Members could look at data which they felt would be helpful in order to gain a more accurate picture of how effective the Council was being and identify what required greater attention.

Pages No. 71 and 72 – KPI 15 and KPI 16 – Total new affordable housing properties delivered by tenure type and new affordable housing properties delivered on JCS sites by type – A Member asked whether a percentage could be included going forward rather than just numbers.

The Head of Service: Housing advised that the numbers were taken from the returns from registered providers. He undertook to discuss this with Planning Policy Officers to establish whether percentages could be provided going forward.

Page No. 73 – KPI 19 – Percentage of major planning applications overturned at appeal – A Member asked how this could be improved and what caused timescale agreement issues on older cases, some of which seemed to go on for a significant period of time.

The Associate Director: Planning advised that he had inherited responsibility for the Development Management review, part of which was about the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning function. A number of agency staff and contractors had been brought in to address the backlog of planning applications and there was a downward trajectory in the figures he had been provided with during his first weeks in the role. The government had announced backlog funding and skills capacity funding last month and a bid had been submitted on behalf of the Council; if successful, the authority could be awarded up to £100,000 of Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) funding which could be targeted to address the backlog. As well as working on the backlog, there were new applications coming in which needed to be determined within a certain timeframe so there was a lot to be done - he hoped, in time, to be able to give robust and more precise answers to such questions.

In terms of the older cases and timescale agreement issues, he was not sure of all the reasons for Tewkesbury Borough Council's backlog but generally it was a combination of factors including technical information not arriving early enough in the process to allow a decision to be made, Officer workload and the sheer amount of applications or delays with Section 106 Agreements which may be down to Tewkesbury Borough Council or Gloucestershire County Council. There was work to be done to look into the historic over time applications and understand what could be done to clear them. The Member raised concern that these cases skewed the figures and the Associate Director: Planning confirmed that was the case which was why a targeted piece of work was needed to understand the reasons – some would be easier to clear and some would continue to

take longer to determine than Officers would like.

In response to a query as to whether there were any financial implications and if there was a level of tolerance, the Associate Director: Planning explained that this particular KPI was derived from a national performance indicator set by government and Councils which fell below the threshold ran the risk of being put into special measures whereby the government could take back responsibility for making certain planning decisions. With regard to financial implications, there would always be a cost of defending an appeal whether that was successful or not and the Inspector could award costs against the Council if it was seen to have acted unreasonably. In terms of the threshold performance tracking downwards, there were numerous other major planning appeals still to be heard and the Council had lost another major appeal the previous day; in his view, this was an area where the authority was potentially vulnerable. The Executive Director: Resources advised that, in 2022/23, the Council had spent £600,000 on appeals which had far exceeded the £60,000 budget with excess costs having to be paid from reserves – this was concerning to him and his financial colleagues.

A Member indicated that she had raised concern regarding the number of planning applications yet to be determined and had asked for a list of all of those applications over the threshold which the government would expect within the legislation in order to get an indication of the extent of the problem. Another Member sought clarification of the threshold, and how close the authority was to exceeding that, and the Associate Director: Planning explained that the government set rolling periods for the threshold for special measures which meant it was a moveable feast depending on the start and end dates.

Following a brief debate regarding how to take this matter forward, and in acknowledging that this issue was due to be discussed by the Leader and Deputy Leader with the Chief Officers Group at a meeting the following day, it was agreed that the Chair would write to the Leader of the Council to inform him of today's discussion and the concerns raised and to offer the Committee's support to help address the problem.

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer First

Page No. 84 – KPI 38 – Percentage of formal complaints answered on time – A Member asked whether there was any information on how satisfied people were with the response they received and if any work was being done in terms of the services they fell into and identification of common issues.

The Director: Corporate Resources confirmed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an annual report which provided a breakdown of complaints by service area and type and that was due to be considered at the meeting in October.

Priority Sustainable Environment

Page No. 88 – Objective 1 – Action d) Appoint an additional Climate Change Officer to help support the declaration of a borough-wide climate emergency - A Member asked for more information on the Green Champions in terms of what they had achieved and how they could be utilised to help to deliver the Council's ambitions.

The Executive Director: Resources advised that the Green Champions had been established as a result of the Carbon Literacy Training which had been completed by more than 60 Officers. They comprised volunteers who represented their service areas and were helping to take forward some of the projects. The Chair felt it would be beneficial for the Green Champions to attend a future meeting of the Committee at an appropriate time.

Page No. 90 – Objective 2 – Action c) Carry out a review of the litter pickers scheme – A Member questioned why this did not have a smiley face.

The Director: Communities explained that there were no concerns around the litter pickers scheme itself but this action was about reviewing how the scheme was administered and that had not progressed as quickly as anticipated. The main issue was the amount of data and the need to ensure that records were accurate and up to date.

Key performance indicators for priority: Sustainable Environment

Page No. 93 – KPI 39 – Number of reported envirocrimes – A Member asked whether anything could be done to address the increase.

The Director: Communities advised that this KPI needed to be reviewed as it currently did not give any information regarding the performance of the team.

Page No. 94 – KPI 40 – Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted – A Member pointed out that the Ubico report which had been considered at the last meeting of the Committee had stated that the target was 60% and she asked why Tewkesbury Borough Council's target was below that at 52%.

The Director: Communities advised that 60% was a national target for 2035. Whilst the Council's target was 52%, it was working to 60% as a long term goal overall. There would be changes to the percentage achieved throughout the year, for instance, there tended to be an increase during the summer when the weather was better.

Another Member asked how the figure was calculated for material that was reused and the Director: Communities advised that this information was collected by Gloucestershire County Council. He undertook to find out how this was measured and provide a response by email.

Page No. 94 – KPI 41 – Residual household waste collected per property in kilograms – A Member asked why the target was to increase residual waste.

The Director: Communities indicated this was an error which needed to be addressed as it was intended to reduce residual waste.

- 29.6 Turning to the financial information, the Associate Director: Finance advised that the financial budget summary for quarter one of 2023/24 showed a projected deficit of £54,595 for the full year against the approved budget; this was a positive position to be in at this stage and it was hoped the deficit would reduce throughout the year. The full year projection highlighted an underspend of £525,619 in relation to employees with the majority of the surplus being accrued by One Legal and this was matched off by a reduction in third party income. Payments to third parties showed a projected surplus of £94,444 and the Ubico contract was expected to be underspent by £45,000 due to expected savings in relation to employees and diesel. In relation to corporate expenditure, treasury activities were in line with expectations and, despite interest rates continuing to rise, borrowing costs would not be impacted as the Council's loans had a fixed interest rate and no further borrowing was expected. The quarter one report had identified that grant funding was unlikely to be spent by year end and must be ringfenced for a particular project or service – this was estimated at £126,000 and whilst it would increase year end reserves, the Council did not have any discretion as to where it could be spent so it had been excluded from the reported position to give a more realistic overview of the Council's financial position. Appendix 2 to the report provided detail of expenditure at a service level with notes on variances over £10,000. Appendix 3 to the report showed the capital budget position as at quarter one which was currently £174,000 below the profiled budget but anticipated to be spent by the end of the year. A summary of the current usage of available reserves was attached at Appendix 4 to the report.
- 29.7 A Member noted that there were currently 14 vacant posts within One Legal and she raised concern that this seemed to be a significant number. The Associate Director: Finance advised that, as with planning, there was a lot of private sector competition so Locums were frequently used to cover vacant posts. There had been success with recruitment drives but it was difficult for local authorities to compete. In response to a query regarding the end date for the loans taken out by the Council, Members were advised that the Council had four loans, two of which had been taken out in 2016 for 40 years at a rate of 1/2% and two 15 year loans taken out more recently.

29.8 Having considered the information provided, it was

RESOLVED That the performance management information for quarter one of 2023/24 be **NOTED**.

OS.30 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN MONITORING REPORT

30.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Head of Service: Housing, circulated at Pages No. 100-131, which asked Members to consider the progress made against delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.

30.2 The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing indicated that this was an inherited strategy which had been approved prior to the elections in May and he was keen for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look at it in detail to ensure it was fulfilling its aims. The Head of Service: Housing advised that the Housing and Homelessness Strategy had been approved in 2022/23 and had been developed in consultation with partners, including Members who had attended a workshop session. The strategy contained three key priorities: increasing the supply of new homes, including affordable homes; regenerating and making best use of existing housing; and meeting the housing needs of homeless households and others with specific needs. The main achievements against those priorities during the year were set out at Paragraph 2 of the report. In terms of priority one, this included working with Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) to progress the programme of rural housing needs surveys and Members were advised that GRCC had offered to run a session for all Members in relation to rural housing so that would be arranged in due course. In terms of priority two, it was intended to help customers to understand the level of accessible properties available on the housing register by adding a rating e.g. a property rated A would be fully adaptable and wheelchair accessible whereas a property rated G would be inaccessible. In addition, the team had supported a project led by Rooftop to secure better standards for customers in terms of tenure, energy efficiency and sizes. With regard to priority three, there was an ongoing piece of work to improve knowledge within the team in order to support survivors/victims of domestic abuse; hearing from individuals with lived experience had been very impactful and had led to different approaches being adopted in some cases.

30.3 In relation to the introduction at Page No. 106 of the report, a Member noted that paragraph three stated that a key priority was addressing the challenges of climate change and went on to mention that the strategy aimed to reduce reliance on fossil fuels for new and existing homes and he asked if there were any plans to offer retrofitting to existing homes. Members were informed that the Council did not provide grants directly but this was something offered through the Warm and Well Scheme delivered by the Severn Wye Energy Agency on behalf of the authority. A Member noted that Page No. 108 of the strategy stated that the average rent per week for a two bedroom property in Tewkesbury Borough was £172 for a private sector property which she felt seemed low given that rising interest rates had reduced property values and increased average rents. In response, the Head of Service: Housing confirmed that rents had increased over the two years since the strategy had been written and there were now fewer options available to rent in the private sector. In response to a query regarding how up to date the strategy was in terms of actions and targets, the Head of Service: Housing advised that that strategy itself spanned the period 2022-26 and the objectives were set out at Page No. 111 of the report. The Director: Communities explained that the strategy had been adopted by the previous administration so the Council may decide it wished to undertake a review. He clarified that the actions within Appendix 2 to the report correlated with the actions within the strategy. In relation to Page No. 108 of the report, a Member noted the number of new homes required during the period and

asked what that figure was based on. The Head of Service: Housing explained that this was informed by the housing needs assessment which had been carried out across the county in 2019 and published in 2020. The Member asked if it was possible that people were coming from other nearby towns and the Head of Service: Housing advised that the survey took into account the whole market area across the county as opposed to it being district by district. He undertook to circulate a link to the housing needs assessment report following the meeting.

- 30.4 With regard to Page No. 112 of the report, a Member asked how Objective 3 – Seek to reduce the impact of new homes on the environment whilst increasing their resilience to climate change, was being managed and was informed there were no specific outcomes, for example, securing a better standard of build was outside of the Council's control although this was something which could be included in the review of the Joint Core Strategy. Whilst it was difficult to see measurable outcomes, it was possible to point to schemes promoted by the Council which had been built to a higher standard, for instance, where properties were rated A for energy efficiency. The Member asked what had been done in terms of working proactively and in partnership with Parish Councils to find ways to meet local housing need and was advised that, for every housing needs survey, the Council met with the Parish Council and local groups to seek their opinion on potential suitable sites. In response to a query, the Director: Communities advised that the details of the housing needs surveys that had been undertaken in the borough to date were included on the Council's website and he would update Members following the meeting.
- 30.5 A Member drew attention to Page No. 114 of the report and she asked what was meant in terms of land assembly with regard to Objective 4 – Support housing-led regeneration included a bullet point around working with registered providers and other landowners to establish opportunities for land assembly. The Head of Service: Housing explained that this was about registered providers working collectively on a scheme to get the best results for an area. The Member asked if it included assembling properties which were already built and confirmation was provided that it could do, but it was also about assembling pieces of land for regeneration. In response to a query as to whether this referred to old or new housing, Members were informed it could be both – registered providers would look at their existing stock and decide whether to bring it up to a better standard through regeneration or to dispose of the stock completely. All opportunities were assessed in order to work out the best approach. Another Member noted that the first bullet point within Objective 4 referred to supporting the housing-led regeneration of allocated brownfield sites in Tewkesbury town centre and he asked what the latest position was in respect of the MAFF site. The Executive Director: Resources advised there was no site specific update but the new Executive Director: Place would be looking at the place vision for the whole borough when he joined the authority next month. Another Member queried how successful the regeneration of brownfield sites in Tewkesbury town centre had been and the Director: Communities advised that this ambition was more planning-focused and there were other sites which needed to be considered including one in Priors Park.
- 30.6 With regard to Page No. 123 of the report, Year One Priority 2 Action a) Develop a complementary strategy to reduce the number of empty homes, making use of legal powers available, a Member noted that there were 510 empty homes in 2021 and asked how many of those had been brought back into use. In response, the Director: Communities advised that none had been brought back into use to date as the first year of the Empty Homes Strategy focused on identification of empty properties. The team was now working on identification and prioritisation with a view to starting to bring properties back into use; however, that was a difficult and time consuming task which would be challenging with the current resources in the team. The Chair requested that an email be circulated to Members setting out what had happened to date and what was planned for the next 12 months. With

regard to Page No. 123 of the report, Year One Priority 2 Action d) Work jointly with registered providers and other partners to support carbon reduction demonstration projects and procure funding to assist with carbon reduction measures, a Member asked how many projects had been supported. In response, the Head of Service: Housing advised that no projects had been supported in terms of delivering products as work in year one had focused on accessing decarbonisation funding from the government but he was not aware that any registered providers had applied. The Director: Communities advised that Officers were in the process of arranging a Member seminar with Bromford in December where that could be explored in more detail.

- 30.7 A Member drew attention to Page No. 126 of the report, Priority 3 Action d) Conclude the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment and engage with the local communities to understand their requirements, and pointed out that Parish Councils interacted with people who needed to find these type of sites and she asked how information could be provided to Parish Councils to ensure those people were not excluded from the assessment. Another Member sought clarification as to whether the assessment and the call for sites had reached a conclusion and the Head of Service: Housing advised that it was a Gloucestershire County Council project so he would provide an update following the meeting.
- 30.8 In relation to Page No. 129 of the report, Priority 2 Action a) Review the options for dealing with social rented homes that are unpopular and difficult to rent, a Member noted that Bromford had been approached to identify properties that could be considered for alternative use and she raised concern that this meant there may be vulnerable people being placed in unsuitable accommodation. The Head of Service: Housing explained that 'unpopular' and 'difficult to rent' did not mean they were in poor condition, inappropriate or in bad areas, rather that there were more popular options close by, for instance, older two bedroom flats were less popular than newer two bedroom houses. In relation to Page No. 131 of the report, Priority 3 Action c) Ensure the future needs of children and young people are considered in rural housing needs assessments, a Member asked whether it was possible to be more imaginative around involving young people as their housing desires for the future may be quite different to the assumption of what they might need. There were creative solutions out there and she would like to see this action expanded beyond the housing needs assessment. The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing indicated that he would take this comment on board.
- 30.9 The Chair expressed the view that, whilst the Housing and Homeless Strategy was a good document which had been well researched, and there was clearly activity taking place, it was not possible to ascertain from the information presented exactly what had been achieved and how this was making a difference. He hoped that when the report came back to the Committee in six months time there would be improvements in both ambition and delivery. He indicated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be happy to work with the Lead Member to help make the necessary improvements. The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing thanked the Committee for the comments and suggestions and expressed the view that the landscape had changed significantly since the strategy had been written and today's discussion had given him food for thought in terms of the updates and response that was needed.

30.10 It was

RESOLVED

1. That progress against the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan be **NOTED**.
2. That a recommendation be made to the Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing that the ambitions and delivery of the strategy be reconsidered over the next six months.

OS.31 GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

- 31.1 Attention was drawn to the report from the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, circulated separately, which gave an update on matters discussed at the last meeting held on 8 September 2023.
- 31.2 The Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel indicated that he wished to draw particular attention to the increase in shoplifting across the county and advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner would be speaking to local shopkeepers and interested parties to work out what to do. He also highlighted the antisocial use of e-scooters and advised that the policy was that if a Police Officer saw an illegal scooter they must take action; however, this relied on a Police Officer being present.
- 31.3 A Member asked what level of interaction the Police and Crime Panel had with the Police and Crime Commissioner and whether they were able to ask questions and the Council's representative confirmed that was the case. With regard to violence against women, the Member asked whether Gloucestershire Constabulary intended to visit youth clubs as raising awareness amongst young people was key in terms of prevention and was something a number of Parish Councils across the county tried to facilitate. The Council's representative advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner was looking at going to schools and youth clubs to discuss his priorities with a specific focus on violence against women and girls although he was not aware of the timeframe for that. Another Member noted that rural crime cost had reduced by 29% and she asked whether that was the cost of theft/damage or the cost to the Police. The Council's representative explained that the Minutes of the meeting included a breakdown of how much was spent on crime in Gloucestershire; the cost of crime in rural areas related to cost to society. The Member asked how it compared to the actual crime rate as rural crime seemed to be increasing in her area. In response, the Council's representative undertook to seek a response to this question. In response to a query regarding the establishment of new Police community hubs, the Council's representative confirmed that more areas would be receiving a Police station but, for operational reasons, the locations had not been disclosed – it was hoped that all of the previous Police stations would be reopened with more established.
- 31.4 A Member asked what the Council could actually do in terms of addressing crime at a borough level and the Council's representative advised that the Community Safety Partnership was the mechanism for tackling crime at a district level. The Director: Corporate Governance advised that a presentation in relation to the Community Safety Partnership and whether it was delivering against its Terms of Reference was included in the pending items section of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and he undertook to establish when this could be delivered following the meeting. Another Member noted that this item was also intended to cover the Aston Project which was very important for Tewkesbury Borough.

31.5 The Chair asked whether the Council's representative could be given authority by the Committee to invite the Police and Crime Commissioner to attend a future meeting and the Director: Corporate Resources advised that this had been included on the Committee's Work Programme but was felt it would be better suited to an all Member seminar and Officers were liaising with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office with regard to dates.

31.6 It was

RESOLVED That the Police and Crime Panel update be **NOTED**.

OS.32 GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

32.1 Attention was drawn to the report from the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee, circulated at Pages No. 132-134, which gave an update on matters discussed at the last meeting held on 20 July 2023.

32.2 The Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee advised that the meeting had largely been taken up by transport which was a Gloucestershire County Council competence as opposed to a district one. His main concern was that the County Council Officers had not known the relevant Officers to engage with at Tewkesbury Borough Council and had subsequently sent the consultation documents to Democratic Services in the hope they would reach the correct person. He had asked for a meeting with the Interim Planning Policy Manager to check that Tewkesbury Borough Council was engaging when requested as it was important that Councillors at both a Borough and Parish level had a voice and were able to tell people in their communities what was recommended and why it was needed.

32.3 In response to a query regarding funding of the bus improvement plan, the Council's representative clarified that this would be via Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP Plus) funding. The Member indicated that he was passionate about saving local bus services and had sought the local MPs support in relation to that. He went on to raise concern that cycleways often had inappropriate surfaces, were full of debris or did not link up with roads in the right way and there was infrastructure in private ownership which was being ignored – there were heritage railways with space at the side for cycleways between different centres and that would not be difficult to achieve. In his view, that was where engagement should be focused rather than developing new ones alongside roads. Another Member felt that the bus improvement plan would benefit young people, particularly in rural areas; there were young people in her Ward who chose a college based on whether they could reach it. The Council's representative confirmed that the plan aimed to link villages with towns and towns with cities to make it as effective as possible – this was why the role of the Parish and Borough Council was so important to ensure the right messages were being received by the County Council. A Member pointed out that Brockworth had its own sustainable transport plan and suggested that the Borough Council should look into the needs and wants of residents. People were scared of using roads for cycling so they avoided them and that should not be the case. A Member asked what other forms of transport were being considered as part of the Mass Transit Project and was advised that no decisions had been made as yet and consultation was currently underway; however, buses were favoured over trains which were quite expensive.

32.4

It was

RESOLVED That the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee update be **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 6:50 pm

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
5.	Executive Committee Forward Plan	Consideration to be given to producing a summary of the Executive Committee Forward Plan showing meeting dates and the items to be considered in order for members of the public to be able to easily identify the work of the Committee.	Comment by Cllr Bowman.	Director: Corporate Resources	
		Economic Development and Tourism Strategy to be moved from 18 October 2023 to pending items section to allow consultation on the countywide strategy and alignment with the new Council Plan priorities.		Democratic Services Officer	Yes
		Items to be removed from pending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits Overpayments Debt Recovery Policy. • Equalities and Diversity Policy. 		Democratic Services Officer	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No <small>(IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)</small>
		Date to be confirmed for the Volunteering Policy to be brought to the Executive Committee (currently in pending).		Executive Director: Resources	
7.	Council Plan Performance Tracker – Quarter 1 2023/24	Page No. 68 – Objective 3 – Action a) Adopt a revised charging schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy – CIL briefing to be arranged for all Members.	Introduction to CIL and Section 106 Arrangements Member Briefing originally scheduled to be held on 12 July but subsequently postponed.	Associate Director: Planning	
		Pages No. 71 and 72 – KPI 15 and KPI 16 – Total new affordable housing properties delivered by tenure type and New affordable housing properties delivered on JCS sites by type – Consideration to be given as to whether percentages can be provided as well as numbers going forward.		Head of Services: Housing	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No <small>(IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)</small>
18		Page No. 73 – KPI 19 – Percentage of major planning applications overturned at appeal – Chair to write to the Leader of the Council to inform him of the discussions and concerns and to offer the Committee’s support to help address the problem.	Chair emailed Leader on 12 September 2023.	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee via Democratic Services Officer	Yes
		Page No. 88 – Objective d) – Green Champions to attend a future meeting of the Committee as and when appropriate.	Added to pending items section of the Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Yes
		Page No. 93 – KPI 39 – Number of reported envirocrimes – KPI to be reviewed as it does not currently give any information about performance of the team.		Director: Communities	
		Page No. 94 – KPI 40 – Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted – Members to be advised how the percentage of reused material is calculated.		Director: Communities	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		Page No. 94 – KPI 41 – Residual household waste collected per property in kilograms – Target should be to reduce residual waste (typo or error to be addressed).		Director: Communities	
8.	Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan Monitoring Report	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council to run a session on rural housing.	Added to Member training programme – date to be agreed.	Democratic Services Officer	Yes
		Link to housing needs assessment report to be circulated to Members.		Head of Service: Housing	
		Members to be advised of the housing needs surveys that had been undertaken in the borough to date.		Director: Communities	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No <small>(IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)</small>
		P123 – Year One Priority 2 Action a) Develop a complementary strategy to reduce the number of empty homes, making use of legal powers available – Email to be sent to Members setting out what had happened during the first year of the Empty Homes Strategy and what was planned for the next 12 months.		Director: Communities	
		Date to be confirmed for Member seminar with Bromford.	Already included in Member training programme. PAs liaising with Bromford regarding availability.	Democratic Services Officer	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		<p>P126 – Year One Priority 3 Action d) – Conclude the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment and engage with the local communities to understand their requirements - Members to be provided with information in relation to the assessment and the call for sites, including whether this had reached a conclusion.</p>		<p>Head of Service: Housing</p>	
		<p>P131 – Year Two Priority 3 Action c) Ensure the future needs of children and young people are considered in rural housing needs assessments – Consideration to be given to being more imaginative in terms of the involvement of young people in shaping future housing, action to be expanded beyond the housing needs assessment.</p>	<p>Noted by the Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing.</p>	<p>Head of Service: Housing</p>	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		Recommendation to Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing that the ambitions and delivery of the strategy be reconsidered over the next six months.	Chair emailed the Lead Member on 12 September 2023 to summarise the comments made by the Committee and advise of the recommendation.	Director: Communities / Head of Service: Housing	Yes – will be assessed when the report comes back to O&S in March 2024.
9.	Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel Update	Members to be advised how rural crime cost compared to the overall crime rate.	Raised by Cllr Madle who indicated that rural crime seemed to be increasing in her area.	Cllr Porter via Democratic Services Officer.	
		Date to be established for the presentation on the Community Safety Partnership/Aston Project to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Currently in pending items.	Director: Corporate Governance	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 12 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		Date to be confirmed for Member seminar with Police and Crime Commissioner.	Already included in Member training programme. PAs liaising with Police and Crime Commissioner's Office regarding availability.	Democratic Services Officer	

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

REGULAR ITEMS:

- **Executive Committee Forward Plan**
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24 (to include the Action List Update on a quarterly basis – June, September, December and March meetings each year).**

<p><u>Additions to 24 October 2023</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Deletions from 24 October 2023</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Committee Forward Plan – Executive Committee meeting on 18 October postponed to 9 November so no updates to discuss. • Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee Update – Council’s representative unable to attend. 				
Committee Date: 5 December 2023				
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Council Plan Performance Tracker – Quarter Two 2023/24	To review and scrutinise the performance management information and, where appropriate, to require response or action from the Executive Committee.	Director: Corporate Resources	Leader of the Council	No.

Committee Date: 5 December 2023				
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (3 November 2023).	N/A	N/A	No.
Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (28 November 2023).	N/A	N/A	No.
Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (30 November 2023).	N/A	N/A	No.

Committee Date: 16 January 2024

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Active Gloucestershire Report on the Progress of its 'We Can Move' Project	To consider the annual report on the progress of the project which the Council agreed to fund for five years (2021/22-2025/26) to gain assurance around value for money and successful outcomes.	Head of Service: Community and Economic Development	Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing	No.
Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (11 January 2024).	N/A	N/A	No.

Committee Date: 13 February 2024

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Council Plan Performance Tracker– Quarter Three 2023/24	To review and scrutinise the performance management information and, where appropriate, to require response or action from the Executive Committee.	Director: Corporate Resources	Leader of the Council	No.
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel Update	To receive an update from the Council’s representative on matters considered at the last meeting (6 February 2024).	N/A	N/A	No.

Committee Date: 26 March 2024				
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Housing and Homelessness Strategy	To monitor delivery of the actions in relation to the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	Director: Communities	Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing	No.
Customer Care Strategy	To consider the progress made against the actions within the Customer Care Strategy during 2023/24 and to endorse the action plan for 2024/25.	Associate Director: Transformation	Lead Member for Customer Focus	No.
Depot Services Working Group Annual Report	To consider the progress made by the Working Group in 2023/24.	Director: Communities	Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment	No.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25	To consider and approve the forthcoming Committee work programme	Director: Corporate Resources	Lead Member for Corporate Governance	No.

Committee Date: 26 March 2024				
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2023/24	To approve the annual report as required by the Council's Constitution to ensure that the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are promoted, both internally and publicly, to reinforce transparency and accountability in the democratic process.	Director: Corporate Resources	Lead Member for Corporate Governance	No.
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (22 March 2024).	N/A	N/A	No.
Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting (12 March 2024).	N/A	N/A	No.

PENDING ITEMS				
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Date Item Added to Pending
Community Safety Plan Monitoring Report	Annual report – programme in once Community Safety Plan has been agreed (expected April 2023).	Director: Communities	Lead Member for Community	February 2023
Community Safety/Aston Project Presentation	To evaluate whether it is delivering against its Terms of Reference – agreed at the O&S meeting on 7 June 2022	Director: Communities	Lead Member for Community	7 June 2022
Communications Strategy	To consider the progress made against the actions within the Communications Strategy during 2022/23 and to endorse the action plan for 2023/24 – deferred from 28 March 2023.	Associate Director: Transformation	Lead Member for Customer Focus	March 2023
Review of Economic Development and Tourism Strategy	To consider the draft Economic Development and Tourism Strategy and to recommend to the Executive Committee that it be approved.	Head of Service: Community and Economic Development	Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion	September 2023 – due to need to wait for the outcome of Gloucestershire County Council's strategy. Previously deferred from January, February and July 2023 as further discussions required due to the importance of the document for Tewksbury Borough.

PENDING ITEMS				
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Date Item Added to Pending
Green Champions	Action from Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 September 2023 that the Green Champions attend a future meeting of the Committee as and when appropriate.	Director: Communities	Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment	12 September 2023

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

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COMMITTEE DATE: 17 January 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
9.	Depot Services Working Group Update	Head of Community Services to speak to Community and Economic Development Manager regarding evaluation of the Grange Field project and to inform Members where this would be reported.	A member briefing note will be issued once the installation of the signage is complete.	Director-Communities/ Head of Service-Community and Economic Development.	No October 2023 December 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 7 March 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
9.	Customer Care Strategy	Report It system to be looked at by IT to see if anything can be done to improve the customer experience.	The Business Transformation Team will be redesigning the report a problem system in line with Ubico's new in-cab technology system. The project will start shortly after the waste and recycling element launches on 24 Oct 2023. Geographic Information System (GIS)	Associate Director-Transformation	No. September 2023 May 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 7 March 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
			<p>will be an essential element to support the project. As part of the project, we will reach out to the county and make sure any information that improves customer experience is utilised. The revised report a problem system will launch in May 2024.</p> <p>We have offered a 2-year GIS role to a candidate with a wealth of knowledge in the field and will make sure to use their skills to better prepare our data for the revised report a problem go live date.</p>		

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 13 June 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
6.	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022/23 and Action List	Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (EDST) to be moved from July to September.	Following an update at O&S Committee in September it was agreed the EDST will be placed in 'pending items' to allow the council to take into consideration the outcome of the Gloucestershire County Councils EDST work.	Democratic Services Officer	Yes
		Police and Crime Commissioner Presentation to be removed from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24 as this should be for all Members.	Contact has been made with the office of PCC and we are waiting for a date to be confirmed.	Director: Communities	No.
		Page No. 28 – 22 October 2019 – Warm and Well Update – Latest annual Warm and Well report to be circulated via email.	Various warm and well reports have been circulated. For more information members can see here: Severn Wye Energy Agency –	Director: Communities	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 13 June 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
			sustainability now, and for the future		
		Page No. 29 – 12 July 2022 – Ubico Report 2021/22 - Seminar on in-cab technology to be held for all Members.	This is a transformational project, and an overview was given to Transform Working Group on 10 Oct. A wider member update will be circulated once in-cab has been fully tested and in operation.	Director: Communities	Yes
		- Update on in-cab technology to be included in Ubico Annual report due to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July.	Overview provided to committee as part of annual report.	Director: Communities	Yes
		Page No. 30 – 11 October 2022 - Depot Services Working Group Update – Officers to consider what other information could be included on the interpretation boards following a	An outline of the maintenance regime will be included on the boards.	Head of Service: Community and Economic Development	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 13 June 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No <small>(IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)</small>
		request to include a plan for future management with timings for grass cutting, hedge removal etc.			
		Page No. 34 – 7 March 2023 - Customer Care Strategy – Demonstration of the systems within Liberty Create to be provided as part of the Member Induction session involving the Business Transformation Team on 6 July 2023 (request to see Report It/GIS mapping).	A demonstration of the liberty platform was completed as part of the member induction programme, which took place on 6 July 2023.	Associate Director: Transformation	Yes.
		Actions to be removed from the list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page No. 28 – 22 October 2019 – Warm and Well Update - Page No. 28 – 7 June 2022 - Update on Local Policing Arrangements - Page No. 29 - 12 July 2022 – Ubico Report 2021/22 	Actions removed.	Corporate Services Officer	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

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COMMITTEE DATE: 13 June 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page No. 29 – 11 October 2022 – Places Leisure Presentation - Page No. 30 – 17 January 2023 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022/23 and Action List, Active Gloucestershire 'We Can Move' Project Presentation 			
7.	Council Plan Performance Tracker – Quarter Four 2022/23	<p>P46 – Objective 4 – Action a) Deliver the approved trade waste business case to make the service commercially viable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members to be advised of the tonnage of trade waste collected per year. 	In the year 2022/23 1,173 tonnes of trade waste was collected.	Director: Communities	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan for withdrawal of service to be circulated to Members when available. 	Project plan was circulated to committee members on 12 September 2023.	Director: Communities	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 13 June 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No <small>(IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)</small>
		P60-61 – Objective 3 – Action a) Work with partners, infrastructure providers and developers to progress the delivery of key sites – Relevant Members to be provided with an update in relation to North West Cheltenham (Junction 10) and West Cheltenham.	An update was circulated to Overview and Scrutiny Committee members.	Director: Corporate Resources	Yes
		P78 – KPI 34 – Average number of sick days per full time equivalent – - More detail on the reasons/distribution of sickness to be included in the Annual Workforce Development Strategy Review.	More details on the reasons of sickness was included in the Annual Workforce Development Strategy update in the July committee.	Associate Director: People, Culture and Performance.	Yes
		- Consideration to be given to providing separate figures for long and short term sickness in future.	Noted, this will be split out within the KPI each quarter.	Associate Director: People, Culture and Performance.	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 13 June 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
8.	Nomination to Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor G C Madle appointed – notify County Council, update Outside Bodies lists.	County Council notified, Outside Bodies list updated.	Democratic Services Officer	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 11 July 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
4.	Minutes	<p>Additional actions to be included in the Action List:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minute No. OS.8.3 – Parking Strategy Review – Executive Director: Resources and S151 to discuss with the Lead Member at the earliest opportunity whether the revised strategy should be taken forward for approval, or whether it needed to be reconsidered given the time which had now passed since the Working Group had reached its conclusions and in light of the new Council. 	An agreement from Lead Member to postpone review until 2023/24.	Executive Director: Resources and S151	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 11 July 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minute No. OS.9.2 - Pending items – Director: Corporate Resources to discuss with Officers how these items could be brought forward. 	<p>Discussions have taken place and the Communications Strategy report will be brought to Committee in December 2023.</p> <p>The remaining are reliant on third parties, and we are working on moving them out of pending items e.g. Aston Project.</p>	Director: Corporate Resources	Yes
7.	Ubico Report 2022/23	Additional information to be included in future reports:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grounds maintenance/grass cutting information. 	This will be included in future reports.	Director: Communities	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparable data for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - previous years; and - other similar authorities 	This will be included in future reports.	Director: Communities	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 11 July 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance against KPIs/objectives. 	This will be included in future reports.	Director: Communities	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page No. 60 – Safety Concerns – explanation of what was meant by a safety concern to be included alongside the graphs. 	This will be included in future reports.	Director: Communities	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page No. 62 – Accidents – Information on type of accident to be included (similar to the categories used for safety concerns as at Page No. 60). 	This will be included in future reports.	Director: Communities	Yes
		Social media post to remind residents their food caddies must be visible when putting them out for collection.	Noted.	Director: Communities	Yes
		In-cab technology to be incorporated into the Ubico and Waste Management Member Induction programme session on Thursday 14 September 2023.	This was covered as part of the member induction, although it should be noted that the focus of the member	Director: Communities	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 11 July 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
43			induction was strategic and an introduction to the mechanisms of Ubico as a wholly owned Teckal company rather than the operational aspects.		
		Items to be referred to the Depot Services Working Group:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of the costs and benefits associated with replacing food waste caddies with larger, more robust receptacles. 	This item has been added to the next Depot Service Working Group agenda, which will take place in December.	Director: Communities	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on what was currently being done by the Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership to increase recycling rates. 	Discussions took place at the Depot Services Working Group in October on the GRWP campaigns for the forthcoming year.	Director: Communities	Yes
		Information on how the Council was performing against its nearest	This was also discussed at the working group in October.	Director: Communities	Yes.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 11 July 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		neighbours in terms of achieving the 60% recycling rate to be included in the performance tracker.			
		Tewkesbury Projects – Sweeper schedule to be made available to Members on the Council's website once implemented and trialled.	This is currently being looked at and will be circulated in due course.	Director: Communities	No.
8.	Annual Workforce Development Strategy Review	Appendix 2 – Assessment against Key Performance Measures – Service breakdown to be provided in future in order to identify any particular services/grades where specific action was required.	The next annual review will contain further recruitment breakdown by service area.	Director: Corporate Resources	Yes
		Percentage of work-related absences to be provided to Members.	Included in October 2023 papers	Senior HR and OD Adviser	Yes
		Brief update on what was planned in 2023/24 under each heading to be provided to Members in order for them to understand the ambitions for the next 12 months.	Work in progress. Will be informed by the new Council plan.	Director: Corporate Resources	No.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 January 2023 – 11 July 2023

COMMITTEE DATE: 11 July 2023					
AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
9.	Financial Outturn Report 2022/23	Members to be advised why the Ubico contract was showing a contract saving of £15,282 (Page No. 44) compared to Appendix A of the Financial Outturn report (Page No. 97) which outlined an overspend of £137,000.	Circulated on 19 July 2023.	Associate Director: Finance	Yes
11.	Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update	Update to be circulated via email.	Circulated on 28 July 2023.	Democratic Services Officer	Yes

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	24 October 2023
Subject:	Have Your Say (4Cs) Annual Report
Report of:	Head of Service: Audit and Governance / Communications and Customer Experience Manager
Head of Service/Director:	Director: Corporate Resources / Associate Director: Transformation
Lead Member:	Lead Member Customer Focus / Lead Member Corporate Governance
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

This report provides a summary of Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints (4Cs) received during 2022/23. These four Cs make up our 'Have Your Say' approach, which incorporates our formal complaints process. An annual report with further analysis is attached at Appendix 1 and includes the annual letter received from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) on complaints it has determined. The 4Cs framework was introduced in May 2021 using our digital platform, Liberty Create. The new framework widened the options available for our customers to feedback to us, meaning we get a better understanding of any performance trends or areas of concern. Building it on our digital platform also means customers can get in touch with us about any issue they wish to at a time that suits them.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the annual report on the Council's comments, concerns, complaints and compliments to provide assurance that complaints are managed effectively.

Financial Implications:

None directly from this report but, under the Formal Complaints Policy, on some occasions remedies include ex-gratia payments to the complainant.

Legal Implications:

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has power to investigate complaints of maladministration against the Council (subject to certain exceptions) and may make recommendations as to how such complaints may be resolved. Where considered appropriate the Ombudsman has the power to issue a formal report on any particular case for consideration by the Council. Although not legally bound to accept any recommendations from the Ombudsman, it is important that the Council takes careful note of them and learns from any recommendations that it makes.

<p>Environmental and Sustainability Implications:</p> <p>None directly.</p>
<p>Resource Implications (including impact on equalities):</p> <p>There is a manpower resource to investigate any complaints that are received.</p>
<p>Safeguarding Implications:</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>Impact on the Customer:</p> <p>None directly from this report but the impact of poor customer service leading to formal complaints being raised can lead to unnecessary delays, stressful situations for the customer, and reputational damage to the Council.</p>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 'Have Your Say' approach was approved at Executive Committee in March 2021. The approach incorporates the Formal Complaints Policy in the four 'Cs': Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints.
- 1.2 The framework is built on our digital platform, Liberty Create, to help ensure feedback from customers is responded to appropriately and consistently and that the process is simple as possible for the customer.
- 1.3 The complaints element of the 4Cs framework is monitored by a designated officer within the Corporate Services team, and a quarterly analysis is presented at Leadership Team and annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The reporting and monitoring system has helped ensure that complaints are handled in a consistent way and their progress can be closely monitored so that responses are made in a timely manner. Complaints may be reported onwards to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) by the complainant once the complaint has been dealt with through the Council's complaints framework.

2.0 HAVE YOUR SAY APPROACH - THE FOUR Cs

- 2.1 Whilst there is not a statutory requirement for us to report the details contained within Appendix 1, we recognise the importance of ensuring our customers feel they will be:
- Listened to.
 - Treated honestly, fairly, and politely.
 - Given help and advice as quickly as we can.
 - Individual needs and right to privacy will be respected.
 - Kept informed about what is happening.

This annual report provides an overview of how we are performing in respect of customers' feedback to us and helps to inform our Customer Care Standards and our customer first Council Plan (2020- 2024) priority.

3.0 COMPLIMENTS

3.1 A compliment is defined as ‘a polite expression of praise or admiration for a service received’. It could be about a person, a team, a service, a single event, or a chain of circumstances that made the experience a positive one.

3.2 Overall, the number of compliments received in 2022/23 (73) remain on par with 2021/22 figure (75). When compared to 2020/21 (43) there was an increase of 52% in the number of compliments received.

4.0 COMMENTS

4.1 We consider a comment to be ‘a verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction about a standard of service, policy or decision made by Tewkesbury Borough Council.’

4.2 Comments received in 2022/23 have increased by 42% with a total of 483 comments received compared to 2021/22 figure of 340 comments. Examples of comments received varied from queries relating to change of circumstances for council tax accounts, benefit queries, planning application queries, and waste and recycling queries. Under section two of the report, you will find a breakdown of comments received by service area.

5.0 CONCERNS

5.1 We let our residents know that we consider a concern to be ‘something that is bothering the customer, but they don’t feel they need to go through our more formal complaints procedure route to reach a resolution’. An example of a common concern is if a bin has been missed on more than one occasion.

5.2 Prior to the 4Cs framework being introduced, our customers had little choice online to raise issues with us other than submitting a formal complaint. Introducing the concerns element to our 4Cs means that customer can raise issues with us that are frustrating them but that do not need to go down the formal complaints route where a statutory response time is 20 working days. Instead, the expectation is that concerns are responded to within five working days.

5.3 Details of the number of concerns received by service area and examples of concerns can be found under section three of Appendix 1.

6.0 COMPLAINTS

6.1 Unlike compliments, comments and concerns, there is a statutory process in place for formal complaints. Our Formal Complaints Policy sets out what customers can expect from the two-stage process, including how we receive, manage, and respond to complaints. Section four of the attached annual report provides the following breakdown in relation to complaints received during 2022/23:

- the number of complaints received for both stage one and stage two
- four-year trend of complaints
- service areas the complaints related too and how many were justified,
- the nature of the complaint issues
- how many were answered within the 20-working day timescale across a four-year period
- how we are performing compared to other local authorities

6.2 If complainants remain dissatisfied after the second stage of our formal complaints procedure, they can escalate their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). On an annual basis every Council receives an Annual Review Letter from the LGSCO, which sets out the number of complaints it has received in the year and the decisions made. These decisions are published on its website at <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/tewkesbury-borough-council/statistics> but can also be found attached to the annual report.

7.0 LESSONS LEARNT

7.1 We consider a lesson learnt to be when ‘knowledge or understanding is gained by an experience’. This could be as a direct result from a positive or negative experience. When it’s positive, we will look to see if it can be applied elsewhere, and when it’s negative, we want to ensure that the issue is not repeated. Key learning points identified following formal complaints can be found within section 6 of the annual report.

8.0 LOOKING AHEAD

8.1 As a Council, we agree that it is important we place importance on the information we gain from complaints, and we continually look to ensure our complaints process is robust.

8.2 The LGSCO is conducting a consultation on a proposed complaints code jointly with the Housing Ombudsman. The code could potentially bring several changes which will require our current formal complaints procedure and policy to change. Following the outcome of this, the Audit and Governance team will carry out a review of the complaints policy and process to ensure it is relevant and compliant with the code.

8.3 In addition, further training sessions will take place in the upcoming year, especially for the appropriate officers who undertake complaint investigations.

8.4 Aligned to the Business Transformation team’s iterative approach to service rollout, a review will be carried on the way in which customers and officers are recording comments and concerns to identify any improvements.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 None.

10.0 ASSOCIATED RISKS

10.1 If complaints are not handled in accordance with the approved framework and the Council does not learn from the complaints received there is a potential reputational risk to the Council.

11.0 MONITORING

11.1 The Council will continue to report on a quarterly basis to the Leadership Team where necessary providing a summary report for each quarter. Formal complaints response times are monitored through a key performance indicator in the Council Plan performance tracker, which is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

12.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES/COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 12.1** Corporate Formal Complaints Policy
Customer Care Strategy
Council Plan 2020-2024

Background Papers: None

Contact Officer: Director: Corporate Resources
01684 272002 Graeme.simpson@teWKesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 - 'Have your Say' 4Cs annual report 2022/2023.

Have your say

4Cs Annual Update



2022-2023

Introduction

This report presents (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023) summary of our Have Your Say (4Cs) approach.

Our 4Cs approach covers Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Formal Complaints. We encourage residents to give us their views, and these are captured and reported through our digital platform, Liberty Create.

Whilst there is not a statutory requirement for us to report the details contained within this report, we recognise the importance of ensuring our customers feel they will be:

- Listened to.
- Treated honestly, fairly, and politely.
- Given help and advice as quickly as we can.
- Individual needs and right to privacy will be respected.
- Kept informed about what is happening.

This annual report provides key information in respect of customers' feedback to us and helps to inform our Customer Care Standards and our 'customer first' Council Plan (2020- 2024) priority.

It covers our comments, concerns, complaints and compliments, which were introduced as part of the Have Your Say (4Cs) approach following the launch of our digital platform. This provided additional options for our customers to feedback to us, where we can get a better understanding of any performance trends or areas of concern. Building it on our platform also means customers can get in touch with us about any issue they wish to at a time that suits them.

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1. Compliments

We let our residents know that we consider a compliment to be ‘a polite expression of praise or admiration for a service received’.

Compliments can be received in various methods, including phone, email and through our online compliments form.

We received 73 compliments in 2022/23, which is on par with the previous year’s figure of 75 but

an overall increase of 52% when compared to the 2020/21 figure of 43.

The top five service areas receiving compliments are: waste and recycling (27), customer services (9), planning (7), revenue and benefits (7) and economic and community development (7).

2. Comments

We let our residents know that we consider a comment to be ‘a verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction about a standard of service, policy or decision made by Tewkesbury Borough Council.’

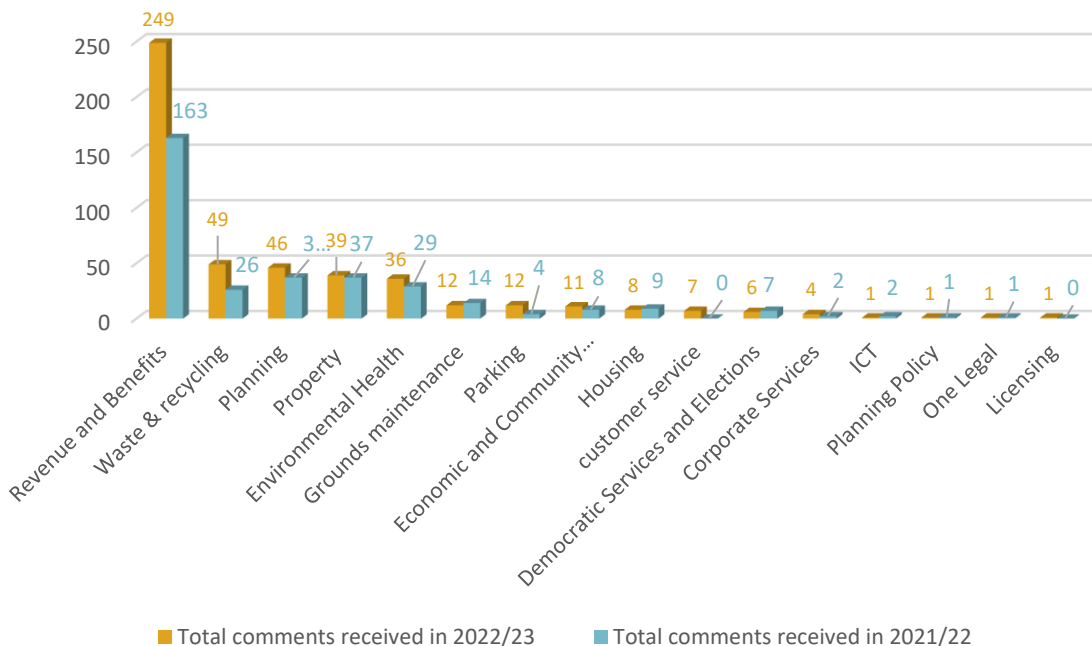
During the year we received 483 comments through the ‘comment’ option online. This is an increase of 42% when compared to 2021/22 figure of 340 comments.

Comments are the responsibility of the service area to ensure they are responded to effectively and efficiently in line with our customer standards and ‘have your say’ approach.

Examples of comments received during the year include enquiries relating to change of circumstances for council tax accounts, requesting information from service areas, planning application queries, council tax payments, benefit queries, and queries relating to waste and recycling.

During 2023/24, a review on the comments will be carried out to get a better understanding of timescales of the comments, types of comments being received and identify any duplication of forms that might be available for the customer to complete.

The chart below shows a breakdown of comments received by service area:



3. Concerns

We let our residents know that we consider a concern to be ‘something that is bothering the customer, but they don’t feel they need to go through our more formal complaints procedure route to reach a resolution’. An example of a common concern is if a bin has been missed on more than one occasion.

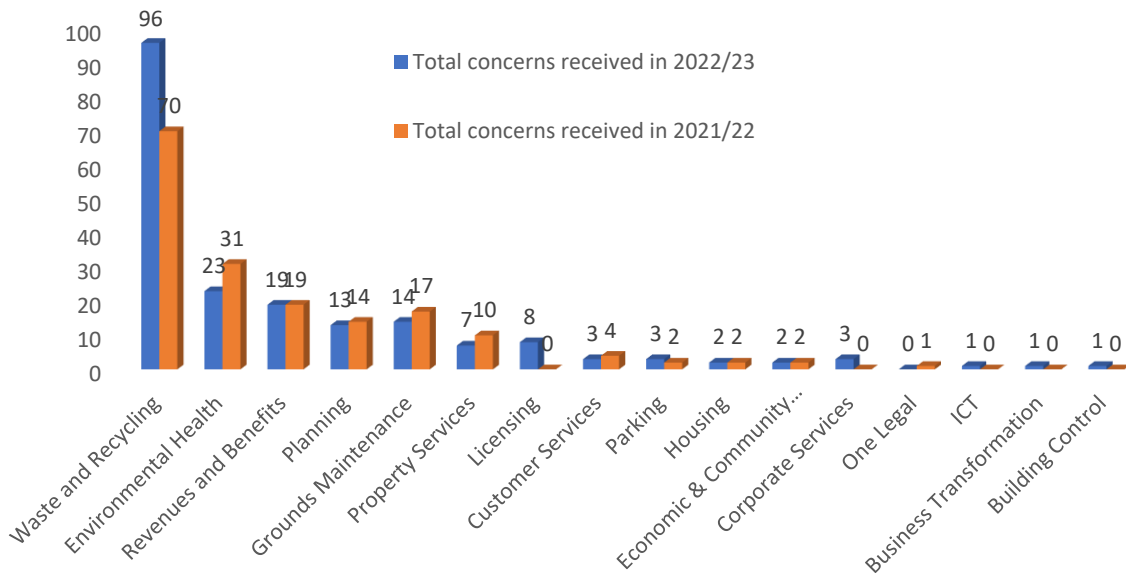
The benefit to a customer raising a concern rather than a formal complaint is that the response time is generally quicker. Formal complaints have a statutory response time of 20 working days, whereas concerns should be responded to within our Customer Care Standards expectation of five working days.

Last year, a total of 196 concerns were raised - an increase of 14% compared to 2021/22 of 172 concerns.

Concerns raised tended to be around front-line services such as waste and recycling, environmental health, revenue and benefits, planning and grounds maintenance.

Examples of concerns raised include repeated missed bins, placement of bins, behaviour of taxi drivers, and chasing for responses for various departments.

The below chart is a breakdown of concerns received by service area during 2022/23:



4. Formal complaints

Unlike comments, concerns and compliments, there is a statutory process in place for formal complaints.

We let our customers know that we consider a formal complaint to be ‘an expression of dissatisfaction that requires a formal response about the standards of service, actions, or lack of action, by the council or our staff.’

Our formal complaints policy sets out what customers can expect from this two-stage process – including how we receive, manage, and respond to complaints.

There are two stages to our complaints process:

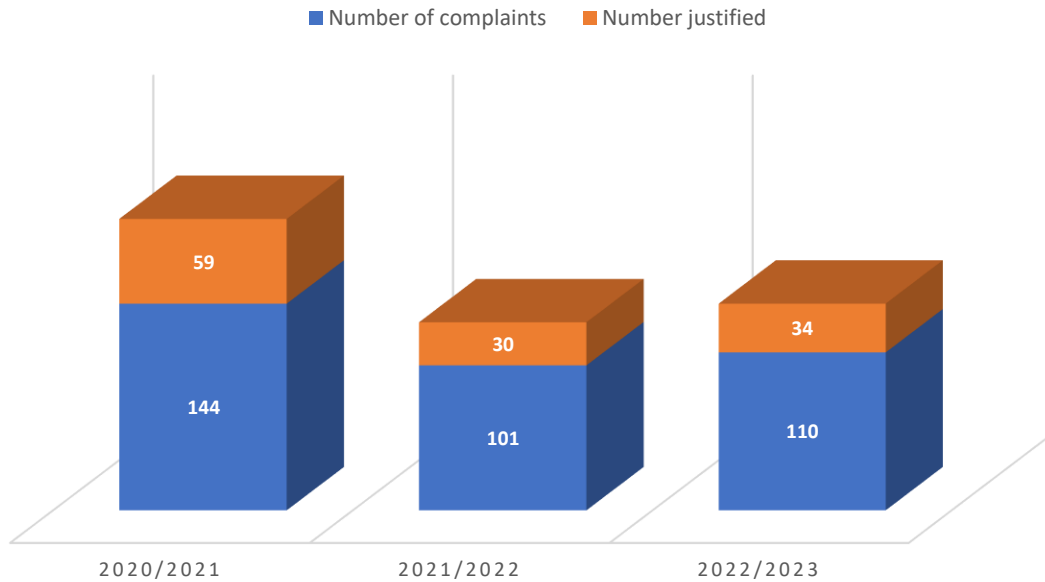
- **Stage one**- the complaint will be acknowledged within three working days and responded to fully by the relevant manager of the service within 20 working days.
- **Stage two**- if the customer is not satisfied with the stage one response, they may ask (within 30 working days) for the complaint to be reconsidered. An independent senior manager will be assigned to investigate the stage two complaint. We aim to respond fully within 20 working days.

We aim to respond to 90% of formal complaints within the agreed timescale. This is monitored as a key performance indicator through the Council Plan performance tracker, which is reported on a quarterly basis to our Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

If the customer remains dissatisfied, they may appeal to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). A summary of LGSCO complaints can be found on page 11.



THREE-YEAR TREND

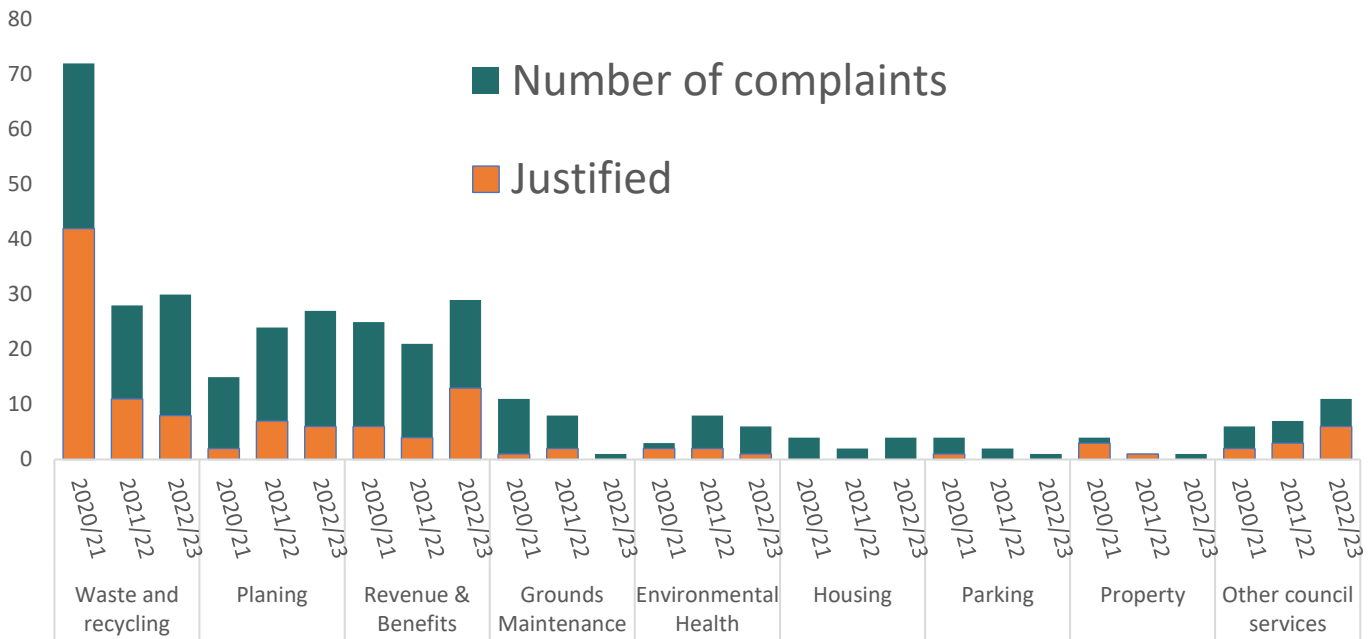


- 110 complaints were received in 2022/23. Eight were withdrawn during the complaints process. Of the 102 complaints where decisions were made, 72 (71%) were responded to within the required timescale.
- Changes have been implemented to improve the response rate which include; monitoring all stages within the Audit and Governance team, rolled out training for those answering complaints and increasing reminders are sent to the responding managers. As a result, in Q1 2023/24 the response rate was over 95%.
- Around one in three complaints were not justified following investigation at stage one.
- 19 complaints were escalated to stage 2.

Stage one

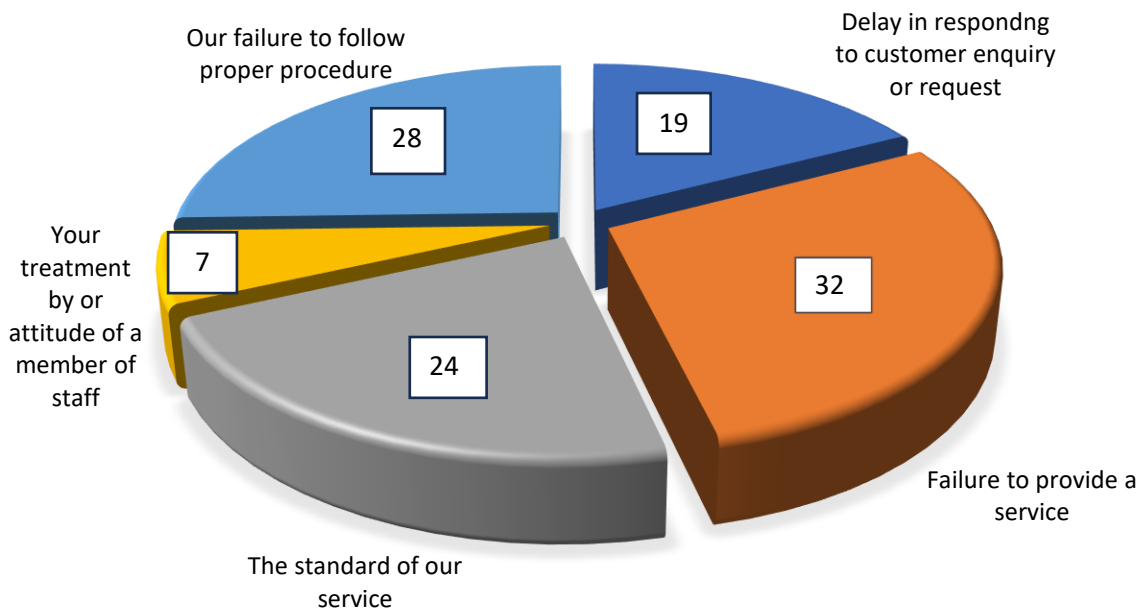
What service area did the complaint relate to and how many were justified?

The complaints were made to the following services:

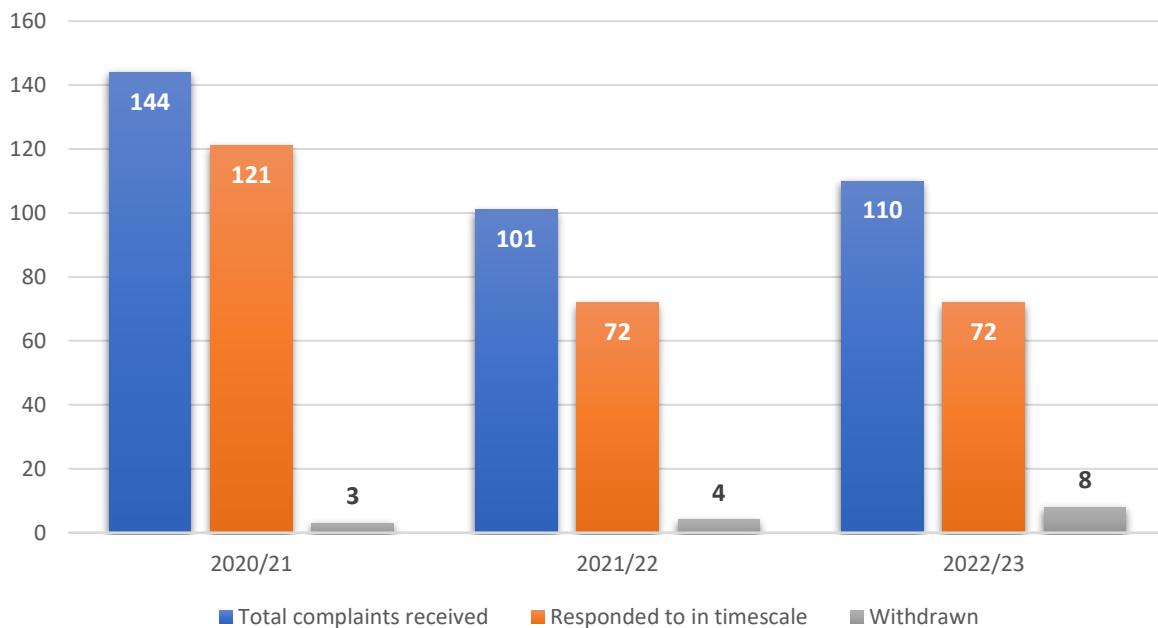


- 'Other council services' include Customer Services, Licensing, Land charges, Corporate Services, Building Control and One Legal.
- Of the 110 formal complaints received, 34 were justified at stage one, 36 partially justified, 32 not justified and eight were withdrawn during the process.
- There was a 58% decrease in the number of waste and recycling complaints compared to 2020/21. This is because customers, if they wish to, can raise waste-related issues as a 'concern' rather than having to be dealt with through the formal complaints process.

The nature of the complaint issues were:

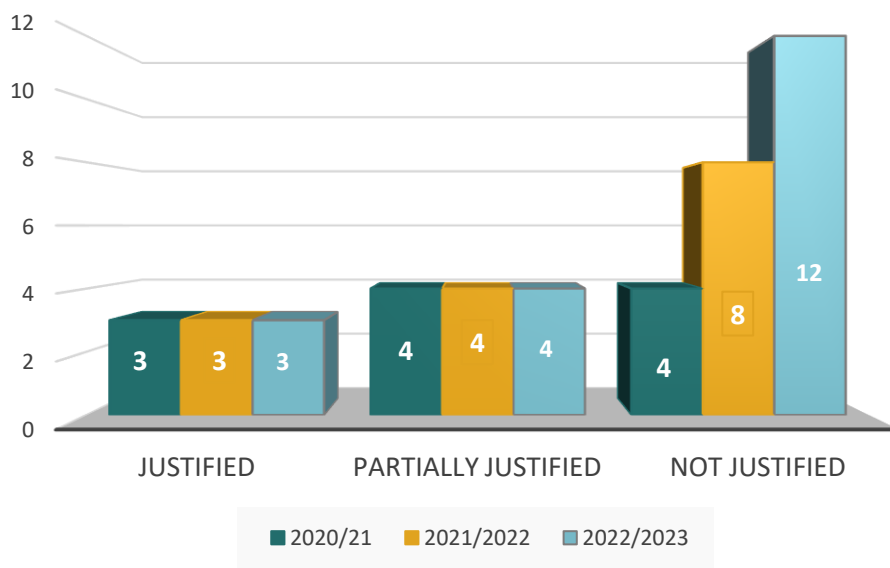


How many stage one complaints were answered within 20 working days?



- Since 2019/20 there has been a 23% reduction in the number of complaints being responded to on time.
- Last year, 71% of stage one complaints were responded to on time compared to the 74% in the previous year. This is below our target of 90%. Additional training and increase in monitoring have been carried out to improve this, which has led to Q1 2023/24 response rate as being 97%.
- The top three service areas responding outside of time were Planning (11), Revenue and Benefits (10) and Environmental Health (5).

How many stage two complaints were received and what were the outcomes?

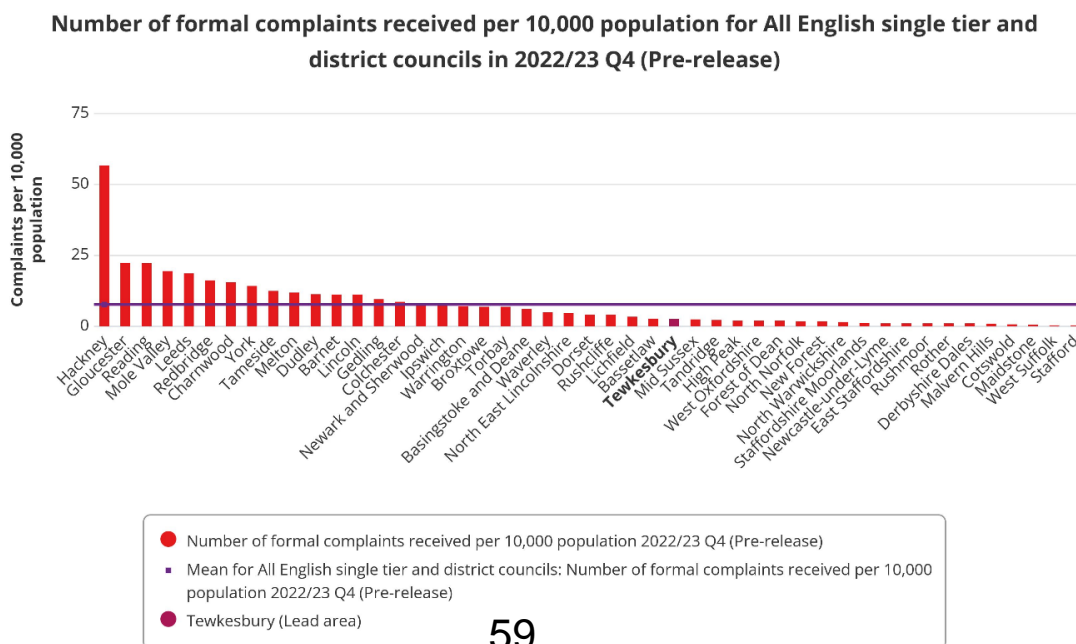


- 19 stage two complaints were received during 2022/23 - a slight increase compared to 15 in the previous year.
- Three of the 19 stage two complaints were justified, in line with the performance of last year.
- Two complainants were offered ex-gratia payments where fault was found, together totalling to £2,050. These complaints related to Building Control and Revenue and Benefits.

How are we performing compared to other local authorities?

On a quarterly basis, outturn figures are reported to LG Inform. LG Inform is a dedicated database provided by the Local Government Association (LGA) and it includes a benchmarking tool. One of the indicators reported upon is the number of complaints received per 10,000 population.

The graph below shows how we compare other local authorities. The mean is recorded at 7.68 per 10,000 and Tewkesbury is significantly lower at 2.72 per 10,000.



59

5. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman complaints

If complainants remain dissatisfied after the second stage of our formal complaints procedure, they can escalate their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The LGSCO deal with complaints against all local government authorities in England (except parish and town councils) and certain other bodies.

On an annual basis, every council receives an Annual Review Letter from the LGSCO, which sets out the number of complaints it has received in the year and the decisions made. These decisions are published on its website at <https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/tewkesbury-borough-council/statistics> but can also be found attached at appendix one.

In 2022/23, the LGSCO investigated six complaints relating to our services –

- Two were referred to the council for local resolution as they had not been through the council’s complaints process.
- Two were closed after initial enquiries.
- One had insufficient information to proceed.
- One was fully investigated, and a justified decision was made. Details of this investigation can be found on the LGSCO website.

6. Lessons learnt

We consider a ‘lesson learnt’ to be when ‘knowledge or understanding is gained by an experience’. This could be as a direct result from a positive or negative experience. When it’s positive, we will look to see if it can be applied elsewhere, and when it’s negative, we want to ensure that the issue is not repeated.

The following are key learning points identified from the outcome of the formal complaints received during 2022/23:

- Communication – most complaints had an element of needing improved communication from the service. (Note, this is not a reflection on the corporate communications team).
- Timely responses – many complaints related to our failure to respond within the customer care standards timescales.

The Audit and Governance team will continually seek assurance that lessons learnt are being implemented. Following an audit that took place in 2022/23, audit found there was assurance that lessons learnt were being implemented.

A recommendation from the audit was to introduce an ability to record lessons learnt through the digital platform and additional training be carried out. This was completed and to ensure continued assurance of lessons being learnt, a 10 per cent sample of the 34 justified complaints, at random, was checked. The following was found:

- Complaint relating to contacting Revenue and benefits team. A new citizen access portal has been purchased which will allow residents and businesses to access their accounts 24 hours 7 days a week to update their own records. This will reduce the number of calls received.
- Repeated missed bins and delay being added to the assisted waste collection service. No further missed bins have been reported. A new in-cab system is also being created which will help with monitoring bin collections and assisted collections to ensure they are added and collected accordingly.

Complaints training

Managers responsible for responding to complaints undertook in-house training in June 2023. Further training sessions will be promoted and undertaken by the appropriate officers on a regular basis.

Complaints policies and procedures

The council's complaints policy is regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects current practices and legislation. The Audit and Governance team will be monitoring the work the LGSCO and Housing Ombudsman are undertaking to create a joint complaint code.

7. What is next?

The LGSCO complaints code is planned to be introduced in April 2024. If, following their consultation the code is applied there will be new measures to carry out to comply with the code such as implementing an annual self-assessment on the councils' complaints. This will be factored in as part of the councils review to the complaints process and policy.

In addition, further training sessions will be organised for those officers who respond to complaints.

A review on the efficiency and effectiveness of the comments and concerns process will also be looked at to ensure it is adequate for all users, the customer and service areas.

We will also continue to report on a quarterly basis to Leadership where necessary providing a summary report for each quarter.

19 July 2023

By email

Mr Cunningham OBE
Chief Executive
Tewkesbury Borough Council

Dear Mr Cunningham OBE

Annual Review letter 2022-23

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2023. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints. As always, I would encourage you to consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. As such, I have sought to share this letter with the Leader of your Council and Chair of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, to encourage effective ownership and oversight of complaint outcomes, which offer such valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

The end of the reporting year, saw the retirement of Michael King, drawing his tenure as Local Government Ombudsman to a close. I was delighted to be appointed to the role of Interim Ombudsman in April and look forward to working with you and colleagues across the local government sector in the coming months. I will be building on the strong foundations already in place and will continue to focus on promoting improvement through our work.

Complaint statistics

Our statistics focus on three key areas that help to assess your organisation's commitment to putting things right when they go wrong:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find fault in an organisation's actions, including where the organisation accepted fault before we investigated. We include the total number of investigations completed to provide important context for the statistic.

Over the past two years, we have reviewed our processes to ensure we do the most we can with the resources we have. One outcome is that we are more selective about the complaints we look at in detail, prioritising where it is in the public interest to investigate. While providing a more sustainable way for us to work, it has meant that changes in uphold rates this year are not solely down to the nature of the cases coming to us. We are less likely to carry out investigations on 'borderline' issues, so we are naturally finding a higher proportion of fault overall.

Our average uphold rate for all investigations has increased this year and you may find that your organisation's uphold rate is higher than previous years. This means that comparing uphold rates with previous years carries a note of caution. Therefore, I recommend comparing this statistic with that of similar organisations, rather than previous years, to better understand your organisation's performance.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for organisations to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the organisation upheld the complaint and we were satisfied with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit organisations that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your organisation with similar authorities to provide an average marker of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data, and a copy of this letter, will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), on 26 July 2023. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

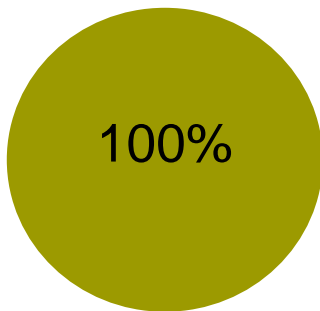
I know that complaints offer organisations a rich source of intelligence and insight that has the potential to be transformational. These insights can indicate a problem with a specific area of service delivery or, more broadly, provide a perspective on an organisation's culture and ability to learn. To realise the potential complaints have to support service improvements, organisations need to have the fundamentals of complaint handling in place. To support you to do so, we have continued our work with the Housing Ombudsman Service to develop a joint complaint handling code that will provide a standard for organisations to work to. We will consult on the code and its implications prior to launch and will be in touch with further details.

In addition, our successful training programme includes practical interactive workshops that help participants develop their complaint handling skills. We can also offer tailored support and bespoke training to target specific issues your organisation might have identified. We delivered 105 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1350 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training or get in touch at training@lgo.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Najsarek
Interim Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Interim Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld



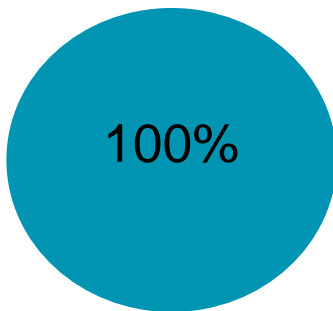
100% of complaints we investigated were upheld.

This compares to an average of **59%** in similar organisations.

1
upheld decision

Statistics are based on a total of **1** investigation for the period between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations



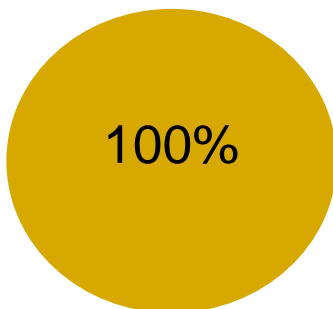
In **100%** of cases we were satisfied the organisation had successfully implemented our recommendations.

This compares to an average of **100%** in similar organisations.

Statistics are based on a total of **1** compliance outcome for the period between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

- Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An organisation with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the organisation



In **100%** of upheld cases we found the organisation had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

This compares to an average of **15%** in similar organisations.

1
satisfactory remedy decision

Statistics are based on a total of **1** upheld decision for the period between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update – 10 October 2023

News:

- New respiratory and frailty virtual wards for winter.
- New community neurology team to support return to home earlier.
- Working with South West Ambulance Service on rapid response to home direct pathway to save visits to hospital – Glos is the highest performing in South West.
- Industrial action and hot September weather has caused challenges on elective delivery dates.

Winter flu/Covid modelling:

- Southern hemisphere hasn't had a remarkable flu season so not too worried here.
- Small wave of COVID compared to last year but we still don't have a seasonal pattern for COVID to work from.
- ICU bed use remains low, people are being admitted to hospital with COVID rather than because of it.
- New variant hasn't turned out to be worse than seen previously and high infection rates now are good to boost immunity and decrease transmission into more vulnerable winter period.
- Vaccination offer remains for vulnerable and over 65s. This decision is based on the time spent on the vaccination programme versus the benefit to reducing the rate in the community.
- National policy is not to recommend testing, need to bring COVID in line with other respiratory diseases. Government currently deem level of severity to be manageable so not recommending testing.

Other:

- 96.8% of cancer referrals seen within 2 weeks.
- Adult and Child Mental Health still too many out of area placements.
- Still 672 young people on CAMHS waiting list, although this is an 18% decrease on last year 40% of these have been waiting over one year. There is a real term decrease in core staff as some of the staff team have been redeployed to community settings.
- HOSC has agreed to set up a working group to look into children and young people's mental health care in the county.
- Primary care appointments were reorganised last year so that more appointments were available for same day urgent appointments. This does have a knock on impact on availability of routine appointments and HOSC asked if waiting times varied across county. Data will be subsequently provided to show waiting times.
- An issue with appointment letters arriving late so now if appointments are being issued within two weeks then NHS staff will also email/phone to confirm. Funding has just been awarded to create a patient portal to link with the NHS app so patients will be able to see all appointments in the app.
- Balance/frailty prevention has been piloted in Tewkesbury but in 23/24 will roll out to all areas. 'We can move' charity have been commissioned to get 30000 more people active & information will be provided to Councillors at HOSC for them to share in their communities.

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