

CORPORATE COMMITTEE 02 DECEMBER 2021

Report title: Complaints, Members' Enquiries and Freedom of Information Act requests

Wards: All

Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Councillor Andrew Wilson

Report Authorised by: Bayo Dosunmu, Strategic Director for Resident Services

Contact for enquiries: Karen Sullivan, AD Resident Experience ksullivan@lambeth.gov.uk

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides Corporate Committee with an overview of Complaints, Members' Enquiries (MEs) and requests made under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act and the Data Protection Act ('information requests') from April 2021 to September 2021 (previous report presented to Committee in May 2021 covering period October 2020 to March 2021)

FINANCE SUMMARY

There are no financial implications arising as a direct result of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the contents of the report.

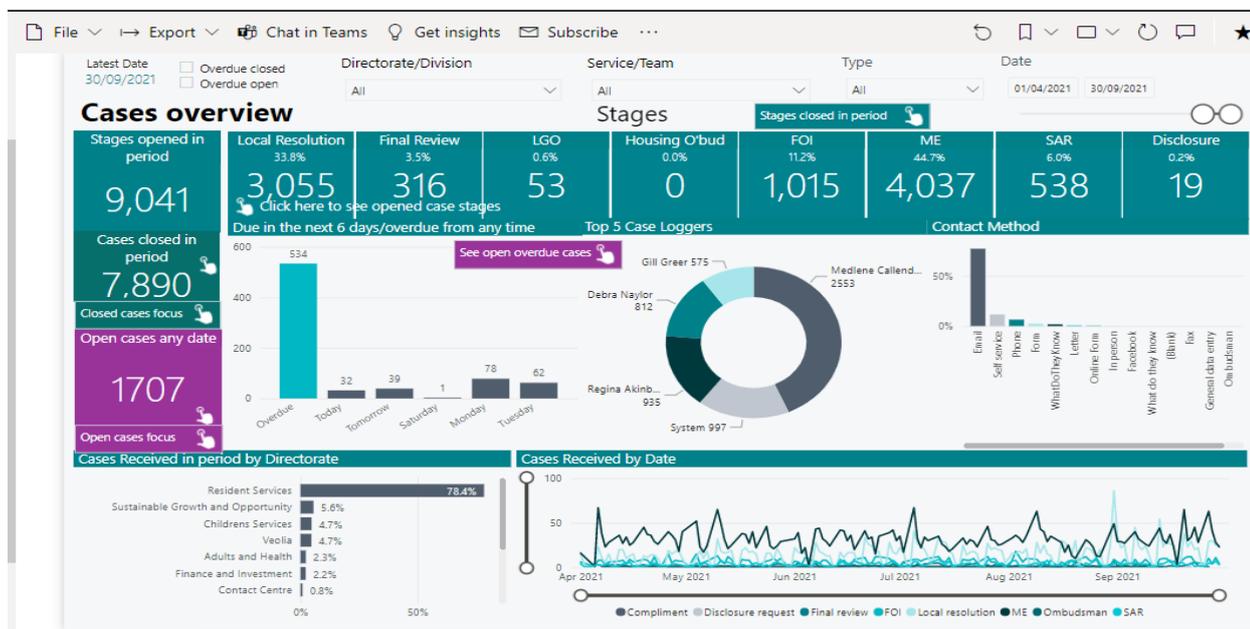
1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report for Corporate Committee provides an overview of complaints, Members' Enquiries and information requests (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 2018) received by the Council during the second six months of 2021/22.
- 1.2 To note Members asked for a trend comparison for the previous period, which is contained throughout the report.
- 1.3 In May 2021, members were pleased with how the report was shaping up and asked for the next report to continue in the same format;
 - To build on the previous well rounded report on the Corporate Complaints Unit's Improvement Plan
 - To continue to provide a comprehensive study of Member's Enquiries.
 - To continue to provide details of lessons learnt as a result of case management
 - To provide feedback and benchmarking from other local authorities (LA's). Reporting numbers (benchmarking) and the LACS group (Local authority customer service) has taken a back seat during Covid-19, and data sharing has not been forthcoming
- 1.4 Members are also asked to note that the design of target operating model for customer experience is completed. The service is now in delivery phase. This enables the service vision and culture to better align towards the borough plan and members aspirations.

2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

- 2.1 The Council has a two-stage complaints process. The first stage is dealt with by the service that has been complained about (Local Resolution) and the second stage (or Final Review) is investigated independently by the Corporate Complaints Unit. If the customer feels their complaint has not been resolved after the second stage, they can escalate their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).
- 2.2 For the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021, we received 9,041 new cases (up from 7323 during the previous reporting period). Local Resolution made up 33.8% (previously 25.4%) of the total number of cases received. Resident Services received 6,743 cases (previously 5,430), 78.3% of the total number of cases received into the Council. Annually we received 13,974 cases for 20-21 up from 12,446 cases for the period 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020.
- 2.3 However, Member Enquiries generated the largest volume of enquiries over the six-month period where we received 4,037 requests (previously 3,534 for the previous period and 3,637 for the same time last year) totalling 44% of overall cases received.

Case-management Volumes 1st April 2021- 30 September 2021



Performance comparison April 2021-September 2021 v's October 20-March 21

Cases	Volume Apr 21-Sept 21*	% Total	Volume Oct 20-Mar 21*	% Total	Volume Apr 20- Sept 20	% Total
Local Resolution	3,055	33.80%	1,861	25.40%	1,480	22.30%
Final Review	316	3.50%	210	2.90%	189	2.80%
LGO	53	0.60%	35	0.5	31	0.5
FOI	1,015	11.20%	1,235	16.90%	934	14.10%
Member Enquiries	4037	44.70%	3,534	48.30%	3,627	54.60%
Subject Access Requests	538	6.00%	424	5.80%	353	5.30%
Disclosure Requests	19	0.20%	17	0.20%	25	0.30%

*Rag indicates direction of travel on volumes, whereby increased volumes are red

2.4 At the first stage of our complaints process 3,055 of our residents were unhappy with the level of service the Council provided over the 6-month period (up from 1,861 cases during the previous period and 1,480 for the same time last year). 2,574 residents were due for a response within this time, and we achieved a response rate of 85.94% against a target of 90%. Performance has improved by 1.6% on the previous period, despite the increase in volume.

Top 5 Complaint Reasons

Our top 5 complaint reasons changed when compared to the last period. The top root cause was related to service requests with 381 cases raised (previously 168 cases), the 2nd root cause with 218 cases was complaints against council decision and policy, which is a new top 5 root cause. The 3rd area with 207 cases recorded was failure to deliver a service (up from 175 cases). In 4th

place we received 198 cases under “not to the quality expected” and in 5th place with 173 cases was failure to do something (up from 106 cases).

In the UK, an emerging trend during the pandemic for customer care is an increase in customer expectation. As services have evolved and changed, so has customer expectation. This seems to reflect in the complaints against council decision, which is a new top root cause and complaints about the quality of service not being up to expectation. The council, through its customer experience strategy, will look to improve this position.

124 stage 1 cases related to events, a growing commercial area for the council. There are further trends recorded below around noise and nuisance, which provides further insights. Again, there seems to be a parallel with coming out of lockdown during the summer and an increase in borough activity. Covid previously featured in a top root cause and increased activity may be representative of resident’s anxiety, which was also noted in the most recent resident survey.

For all case management a new lesson learnt field has been surfaced into reports. Whilst the volume recorded is low but increasing, we can glean some insights from the 37 lessons learnt, 50 compensation outcomes and 7 compliments recorded:

- 27% of improvements have been to make additional information available to customers
- 20% of actions have focused on a review and refresh of staff training
- 16% of cases has led to additional inspections taking place
- 11% of cases has led to a review of resources
- 10% has seen a review in literature, information or service
- 9% of cases have been discussed at team meetings for lessons learnt
- 5% has led to a change in partner working
- 2% were resolved with an effective apology
- Additionally, 50 cases of compensation were recorded to a value of £6,027. Of these, 45% was related to a delay in service provision, 43% as a gesture of goodwill, 8% in relation to time and trouble, 1% reimbursement and 1% recorded as other.
- 7 compliments were recorded during this time: 3 recognising the quality of service, 1 for customer care, 1 for cleanliness, 1 for availability of the service and 1 for the quality of service provided

2.5 At the second stage of our complaints process we received 316 final review complaints (up from 210), and made 236 decisions during this period, achieving a response rate of 88.39% intime against a target of 90%. Performance has decreased by 0.9% on the previous period, which should be viewed in the light of the 50% increase in volumes received.

2.6 There has been a slight increase in the volume of final review complaints received that relate to resident services from 87% to 90% in this period. The top 5 areas included are housing repairs (51), parking services (48), housing needs (37) home ownership 23, and housing management south (22). It should be noted that the volume of final review complaints received represents 10% of the local resolution complaints received which is within the corporate 12% escalation target from local resolution to final review.

We did not uphold 48% of final review complaints (down from 57%), while the volume of upheld cases either wholly or in part, increased from 33% to 44%. This may indicate that further work needs to be conducted at the earlier stages of the complaint process to improve the quality of responses and steps taken resolve complaints effectively. It should also be noted that just under 1/3 of the upheld final review complaints were not upheld at local resolution stage, which indicates that greater attention is needed to ensure that we are reaching the correct decisions at the earliest

possible opportunity. This in turn would reduce escalation and increase customer satisfaction. The remaining cases were either outside jurisdiction or withdrawn because a resolution was achieved with the need for a final review investigation. for decision.

A deep dive into final reviews took place during this period and several improvements were proposed as a result. This includes a fortnightly housing service improvement meeting where feedback is provided on final review and LGO complaints that have been upheld, and lesson learned that have been identified.

2.7 The following is an example of lesson learnt from final review stage:

Homeless prevention UFN3849673

The customer raised concerns with how a homeless prevention assessment was conducted. The customer felt there was a lack of care and compassion shown, leaving them feeling unsupported.

A full apology was issued and the case was allocated to another officer to ensure that the assessment was conducted in a compassionate and professional manner. In addition, further training and advice were provided for staff to ensure that homeless prevention plans are completed in a caring manner in collaboration with customers to ensure that they are informed and engaged at every stage. The service have introduced a clear internal procedure which explains to officers what our statutory duties are and how and when they are administered.

2.8 We received 53 Ombudsman cases (up from 31) for this reporting period, with 41 (77%) concerning Resident Services, as was the case in the previous period. The remaining cases related to Children's Services (13%), with rest being spread across Sustainability & Growth, Adults Services, and Finance & Investment. The volume of ombudsman cases received represents merely 2% of the local resolution complaints received, and only 17% of the final review complaints received, which clearly demonstrates the value in delivering an effective complaint process.

The top 5 service areas were

- Housing Needs
- Parking
- Housing Repairs
- Children's Social Care
- Accessible Transport & Planning

It should be noted that the volume of parking cases was reduced by more than half from 31% to 15%, and of all the parking cases received all but 1 were closed at the assessment stage without the need for an investigation, as the LGO have decided that a formal investigation was not warranted.

LGO Decisions

There were a total of 40 decisions in this period. In 25 (63% up from 56%) cases the LGO decided not to investigate as the matter was either outside jurisdiction or no further action was required as they were satisfied with the outcome. Of the remaining cases 2 were not upheld, with the remaining 11 being upheld in full or in part. The upheld cases accounted for 28% of the decisions received in comparison with 40% in the previous period, which may be indicative that we are getting better at effectively resolving cases internally.

This indicates that our internal complaint process is working effectively to resolve customers' concerns and achieve a suitable resolution in more than half the LGO decisions received. While there has been a marked increase in the volume of final review complaints, there are fewer cases being upheld by the Ombudsman, and through working with the ombudsman, we have more cases passed back to us to consider through our internal process.

Taking a closer look at the upheld cases 64% related to Resident Services. While 18% related to Children's Social Care, and Noise respectively, the remaining cases were spread across a range of council services.

A sample of lessons learned from upheld cases are summarised as:

Public Protection (20 005 845) June 2021

The customer complained that the council had not properly dealt with the noise complaint because, it failed to comply with noise and pollution control enforcement policy, it did not install noise monitoring equipment, and failed to take enforcement action about noise and licencing complaints.

The LGO concluded that the council was at fault because it did not respond to the noise complaints within the right time and did not investigate noise suppression measures. The Council has agreed to assess noise suppression measures within 3 months of the decision.

Children's Social Care (20 013 653) August 2021

The customers complained that the Council has reneged on a promise it made in 2018 to prioritise them for social housing. Their complaints were upheld at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the Council's statutory complaints process, which recommended that the family be supported to secure suitable social housing or affordable private accommodation.

Based on the evidence the LGO concluded that that the council were at fault for not abiding by SGO (special guardianship order) plan which stated that the customers should be prioritised for social housing, however the customers had very specific needs as to the type of property they required. The LGO were satisfied with measures the council had put in place, having awarded the customers the highest priority and providing a list of properties they are able to bid for. The measures put in place prior to the LGO's intervention were sufficient to remedy the fault identified and no further action was required.

Test & Trace Payments (20 013 474) September 2021

The customer stated that he was wrongly refused a test and trace support payment, and that the council had imposed a 14-day deadline, which was not mentioned on its website or during the online application process. He felt that the council's refusal and was insulting and raised concerns that his complaint responses did not address all his concerns.

The decision was that the council was not at fault for refusing a COVID-19 test and trace payment to on the grounds his application was late. However, it was at fault for not making it clear to potential applicants that a deadline applied. It has since changed the information on its website to reflect the current Government Guidance. While the complaint response did not specifically refer to a video the customer had provided the LGO were satisfied that, the council provided appropriate information to show why it refused a payment.

Member's enquiries

- 2.9 4,037 Member Enquiry requests were received during the 6-month period compared to 3,534 in the previous 6 months). Of the 4,037 cases received 3,262 were Resident Service-related accounting for 81% (up from the previous period 2883) 311 cases (previous period 272 cases) were raised for the Sustainable and Growth Directorate with 158 for Veolia (previous period 104 cases) and 111 for Children Services (previous period 118 cases). Adults had 118 cases (up from 91 cases), Finance had 46 cases and Legal and Governance 15 cases.
- 2.10 3,948 ME cases were due to be completed in this period and the council achieved a performance of 85.21% cases closed in time. This is up from 78.15% when compared to the last period
- 2.11 65% of these cases were linked to basic request for information or for a service (previously 46%). The increase in this field is due to a previous categorisation, where ME was identified as the root cause on 20% of the cases. This field has been removed. 7% of cases were categorised as a delay in service (previously 6%) and 5% were categorised as council policy.

- 2.12 Taking a deep dive into MEs, housing appear in 8 of the top 10 areas in terms of volume of cases raised and the relevant heads of services and assistant directors have provided the following insights and improvements.
- 2.13 Housing allocations and Voids received 293 cases. The majority of cases related to service and information requests, for example updating a tenant on their transfer application or an applicant enquiring about their status. Casework relating to voids is low, but operational problems continue partly as a result of the pandemic, but primarily because of the transition to the new contractors which resulted in a significant increase in the reletting time. A full report on void property management has been published for the 16 November Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.14 Grounds Maintenance had 244 cases in total of which 184 were service requests. This is a reflection of the Lambeth Landscapes service bedding in and the service changes that have been made. This includes not using glyphosate to control weeds and reducing mowing to improve biodiversity. Much relates to the need to improve communication with residents about the service and to this end a newsletter is being written for delivery before Christmas. Regular performance meetings are held between Housing Services and Lambeth Landscapes to ensure the grounds maintenance service improves.
- 2.14 87 general tenancy enquiries were received during this period with the vast majority being service or information requests – the numbers and types received are similar to those reported in the first period. The plan to hold estate based surgeries continues to be developed and we are currently undertaking risk assessments of identified venues. In the meantime, Neighbourhood Housing Offices are conducting both home and virtual visits, as well as working in partnership with colleagues in other service areas such as responsive repairs, Estate Services, Tenancy Enforcement and Community Works, to ensure residents receive a good level of service
- 2.15 The housing team have shared a number of insights implemented based on the 117 antisocial behaviour (ASB) cases (up from 98) received during this time.

During the summer period, as the temperature rose, we experienced a large increase in reports of ASB/Nuisance, especially noise related. Due to Covid, our noise response service and tenancy enforcement intervention were largely telephone based. This led to a feeling amongst residents that they're missing out on our usual quick and responsive service sending officers promptly to witness and gather data that could be used for enforcement action.

The Covid pandemic also affected and limited the range of enforcement actions we're able to deploy. As the pandemic eases, these restrictions will also ease leading to service improvement.

In terms of lessons learnt, we should have communicated to customers the issues we're experiencing and what we're doing to lessen the impact.

- 2.16 There were 186 general repairs enquiries and 120 floods and leaks reported during this time

Our new repairs contracts went live in July and are being embedded. The contracts through their KPIs and tender model have a strong customer focus aiming to provide a step change in the way we provide repairs services.

Leaks and floods are often complex to resolve involving multiple service areas including different housing teams, contractors and Social Care. There may be access issues requiring legal

intervention or support required to resolve hoarding. To improve our handling of these complaints we are undertaking more detailed process mapping of leak scenarios, with particular focus on situations where more than one contractor may be involved.

We are about to appoint a new Strategic Asset Partner, who will be embarking on a programme to stock condition surveys. This combined with insight brought by an analysis of our repairs data will give us a much better picture of our stock and where the investment priorities should be enabling investment to be better targeted and help reduce complaints.

- 2.17 Over the course of the past 6 months Lambeth Homelessness Prevention Service has taken approximately 2400 applications from residents seeking housing advice and assistance. We have successfully prevented the homelessness of 70% of all customers owed the Prevention Duty in Quarter 1 and 75% in Quarter 2; both results significantly above the London average of 60%.

Demand at Lambeth continues to be significantly higher than the pre-Covid 19 average and indications are Lambeth is one of three Local Authorities most significantly impacted in London. To manage this increase in demand we have made significant changes to our administration in recent months, creating a small team of 5 junior officers led by a team leader tasked with the administration of appointments, responding to correspondence and giving basic advice. This has significantly improved our backlog of cases and this is perhaps demonstrated by the 3 MEs relating to delays when put into context of 2400 applications over the period.

Of the 84 MEs, 34 are service requests which reflects Members knowledge of our statutory responsibilities. The 28 information requests are varied and demonstrate the complexity of the homelessness legislation and its impacts, particularly on Council tenants. For all Homelessness Applications a formal decision must ultimately be made within the statutory framework and timescales. Some customers are dissatisfied with the outcome of timescale of the decision but all decisions have a statutory right to independent review and in most cases, customers will be directed to this process.

Lambeth Homelessness Prevention is currently undergoing recruitment for three posts which it is hoped will further improve the Service provided to residents. Across Housing Needs we are currently reviewing how we can change the way we are structured in order to further improve customer service and improve the outcomes we achieve.

- 2.18 For temporary accommodation 48 cases were service requests - This is expected given that we have over 3000 households in temporary accommodation and approx. 400 new approaches for housing advice each month. The majority of these requests relate to; repair requests, further housing advice and residents requesting to move to alternative accommodation.

28 cases were information requests. Applicants are entitled to request a review of their temporary accommodation, which will often result in them requesting information from their housing file. Information requests are also received regarding alternative housing options and the housing allocation scheme.

26 cases relate to a delay, a failure to do something and inadequate service delivered by a third party. It is challenging to meet applicants' expectations due to the level of demand, which the Housing Crisis causes. With a high number of people residing in temporary accommodation, as a percentage, this is less than 0.2% of the cohort. Applicants are often dissatisfied with the:

- Their TA's location,
- the length of time they must wait in TA before being made a permanent offer.

19 cases relate to council policy – there are several policies that residents in temporary accommodation will not agree with; however, they are essential tools that assist us in meeting our legal obligation under the homeless provisions. Our housing allocation policy is notable, which doesn't place applicants in temporary accommodation into the High Priority Band. This policy will be reviewed and updated before the end of the financial year

2.19 Noise captured under environmental issues appears in the top 10 classifications of the highest volumes for the 1st time. This period noise cases were at 97 case of which 90 are service request, 5 are information requests, 1 failure in doing something and 1 case unclassified.

Requests for information and services make up the bulk of the cases and analysis has shown, during the varying restrictions in lockdown, perceptions of adherence to rules caused an influx of cases. The team have worked hard and flexibly during this period to respond to cases of noise nuisance and implement enforcement measures where necessary.

Freedom of Information Requests

2.20 We received 1014 new FOI cases from Apr 21-Sept 21, similar to previous years (Apr 20- Sept 21) volume at 930 which may have been slightly lower due to Covid. As part of the new iCasework solution we now can publish our FOIs seamlessly as part of the ICO Transparency agenda. We are currently working on improvements to the website and publication of further FOI responses which aims to increase transparency, improve the customer experience and reduce FOI volumes.

2.21 During the reporting period 54 FOIs were escalated to Internal Review. Common themes for escalated FOIs were Housing Services and Parking/enforcement. These service areas are highest primarily because both tend to include FOIs which are linked with related complaints.

2.22 The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is responsible for upholding information rights in the public interest. Part of this includes improving the information rights practices of organisations by gathering and dealing with concerns raised by members of the public.

2.23 We received 17 cases from the ICO for review; 14 of which are ongoing/awaiting ICO Decision, 3 of which have been resolved informally.

Subject Access Requests (SARs)

2.24 We received 538 SAR requests during the reporting period (up from 424 in the previous reporting period). Corporately 75.29% all cases were closed on time (up from 57.2% in the previous period). Information Governance colleagues are leading on an action plan and working with services across the organisation to deliver ICO recommendations. There is an additional focus group for housing to target sar performance. There has been a marked improvement in performance and significant training undertaken with services. The performance dashboards are being used by colleagues in all services. From 1st November 2021, the corporate complaints unit (CCU) will take responsibility Sar performance across the organisation.

2.25 An ME assurance board was constructed in Dec 2020 and is chaired by the strategic director of resident services, the board meet fortnight and then moved to monthly. A deep dive was conducted with members and officers to understand areas of issue and concern. As a result of an improvement plan the follow actions are noted:

- A ME feedback form continues capture members feedback on officer responses. Of the 26 items of feedback received from members, 81% are rated as very good, good, or neutral (up from 71%) and the remaining 19% are rated as poor (5 cases). Of these 5 cases, 3 required further follow up as the response wasn't satisfactory. In 1 case, the service user had not been contacted and in the remaining case the information was incorrect or delayed.
- ME link officers continue to sign off responses, ensuring quality and timeliness of responses and anecdotal feedback is that the quality of response has improved.
- A new collaborative offer has been developed where the service improvement team, working closely with the CCU, complete deep dives within services. The 1st pilot within housing is almost complete and improvements have been identified with 3 broken processes which was making customer contact difficult.
- 91% of MEs are logged within 24 hours of receipt (up from 90% and against a target of 48 hours) ensuring services have additional time to respond.

2.26 An Improvement plan was designed within the corporate complaints unit and has four themes looking at Customer transformation, training, customer standards and improving performance.

Customer Standards

2.27 The new customer standard commitment launched in June 2021, with 6 pledges. This refocused our delivery and behaviour to be more customer centric. This work is part of the wider Customer experience strategy, and is one of the pillars of delivery, ensuring change embeds and sticks, becoming part of our new operating model. The 1st phase is focused on the services and partners with the highest volumes of contact with phase 2 focused on the remaining services, which completes in Oct 2021. The customer strategy and customer standards both have measures around customer satisfaction, improved service processes, business plan delivery and collaborative design with customers and partners.

Customer Transformation

2.28 To support the delivery of the customer experience strategy and to build on the customer journey, we are looking at innovation as one of the strategic objectives to enhance delivery. To this end the digital customer platform (DCP) has become one of the key programmes of work transforming the customer journey. As a key 2nd pillar of the customer experience strategy, providing customers with channels of choice, the DCP will enable 24/7 access to services whilst also maintain traditional channels for those that need them. Work in the 1st half of this year involved delivery of the new my account platform. During Q3& Q4 we will look at delivering 4 single sign on services, expanding the customer account and provide more joined up services online.

The website is a key enabling tool of the DCP journey and January 2021 saw the relaunch of the website on a new platform and meeting accessibility requirements. Since then, through incremental improvement the web site has moved from bottom 10% of websites to the top 10% of LA websites, as measured independently by Sitemorse. This is part of an ongoing journey for the website and incremental improvements will be built throughout the rest of the financial year.

Finally, the intranet refresh will start in Q4 20-21, to ensure staff comms and ways of working are shared in the most effective manner.

Training

2.29 Several training initiatives have been identified at a local, departmental and organisational level. To support departmental performance training has taken place around reports, complaints refresh, creating templates and active feedback from the ME link officers.

The complaints network was set up with departments in January 2021, has continued to grow in strength and services continue to meet monthly to promote learning, best practise and collaboration, giving services the opportunity to also liaise on complex cases. Learning is shared from the ICO and ombudsman.

Additionally, in 2021 a deep dive took place into housing ombudsman cases to identify where improvements could occur. This has been in partnership with the ombudsman and the outcomes have been achieved. A report from the ombudsman is expected in Q3.

We received our LGO annual assessment in Aug 2021, which showed improvement on the previous year. We are focused on reducing the level of cases upheld at stage 2, which is on par with the industry, but an area for improvement, nonetheless.

Finally, on an organisational level, the customer standards project will complete with 10 customer focused training sessions, available to all. This is also supported by the workforce transformation strategy and the customer standards will embed into induction material for new staff.

Improving performance

2.30 Whilst the ME assurance board is 1 element of case-management, significant work has been undertaken on all case-management types, of which detail has extended towards training, reporting, collaboration and introducing lessons learnt.

During this period there were further improvements and insights delivered, notably:

- In July 2021 phase 1 of the digital customer platform was delivered, with phase 2 delivering by the end of Q4, increasing customers capability online.
- The customer experience strategy and standards launched In June 2021 and is an integral enabling strategy, complimenting council wide delivery. Significant work is taking place around communicating our measure to customers.
- Member engagement for the requirements of the members portal will took place in Q2 and direction taken on improvements to make member administration easier including an integrated form which is in development and reporting request which is in design
- A new culture programme will launch in Q4, centring around customer and brilliant basics
- The resident experience and digital team is overseeing new projects around the call centre and increasing telephony capability, to enable better a better customer experience. A new access model has been designed which will address some of the challenges customers face when contacting the council. This is a medium term programme which brings new processes, technology and service improvements together to deliver the next phase of the customer experience strategy.

Member training

2.31 Member training was previously offered in early 2020 but was postponed due to Covid-19. Member training was noted as not required currently but preferred in the run up to May 2022. Planning has already commenced on member training and an induction/refresh for members.

3. FINANCE

3.1 There are no financial implications arising as a direct result of this report.

4. LEGAL AND DEMOCRACY

4.1 The powers and duties of the Local Government Ombudsman are contained in the Local Government Act 1974. If the Ombudsman is of the opinion that an injustice has been caused as a result of maladministration, he shall issue a formal report and it shall be the duty of the authority to consider the report and to notify the Ombudsman of the action that it has taken or proposes to take, including making a compensation payment.

- 4.2 The Housing Ombudsman Scheme is approved by the Secretary of State under the Housing Act 1996. The Act requires social landlords to be members of an approved scheme. The purpose of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme is to enable tenants and other individuals to have complaints about members investigated by a Housing Ombudsman. The Scheme came into effect on 1 April 2013. The role of the Ombudsman is to resolve disputes involving members of the Scheme, including making awards of compensation or other remedies when appropriate, as well as to support effective landlord-tenant dispute resolution by others.
- 4.3 The GDPR provides that data subjects should be provided with the contact details of the Data Protection Officer which would then allow for local resolution of non-compliance issues referred to above rather than the matter being escalated to the ICO.
- 4.4 The Data Protection Act 2018 allows the Council to extend the time to respond by a further two months if the request is complex or if it has received several requests from an individual. The Council must let the individual know within one month of receiving their request and explain why the extension is necessary. If this is done, where appropriate, then the response time statistics referred to above would be improved.
- 4.5 There were no further comments from Democratic Services.

5. CONSULTATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 There are no risks noted within this period and for this report. Project risks are picked up as part of project management and reported into the relevant governance boards.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 8.1 Not applicable.

9. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental

- 9.1 Not applicable.

Health

- 9.2 Not applicable.

Corporate Parenting

- 9.3 Not applicable.

Staffing and accommodation

- 9.4 Not applicable.

Responsible Procurement

- 9.5 Not applicable.

10. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 10.1 Not applicable

AUDIT TRAIL

Name and Position/Title	Lambeth Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in paragraph:
Councillor Andrew Wilson	Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance	16.11.21	16.11.21	
Bayo Dosunmu, Strategic Director	Resident Services	15.11.21	16.11.21	
Natasa Patterson, Director of Resident Experience & Digital	Resident Services	12.11.21	15.11.21	
Hamant Bharadia, Finance and Property	Finance and Investment	12.11.21	15.11.21	
Andrew Pavlou, Principal lawyer Legal Services	Legal and Governance	12.11.21	12.11.21	
Chloe Morris, Democratic Services	Legal and Governance	12.11.21	15.11.21	
Neil Euesden, Director, Housing Services	Resident Services	12.11.21	15.11.21	
Neil Fenton, AD, Parking & Enforcement	Resident Services	12.11.21	For info	n/a
Sara Hagley, Head of Assessments and Customer Centre	Resident Services	12.11.21	For info	n/a
Tim Hillman-Brown, Head of Revenues & Benefits	Resident Services	12.11.21	For info	n/a

REPORT HISTORY

Original discussion with Cabinet Member	N/A
Report deadline	19 Nov 2021
Date final report sent	19 Nov 2021
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	No
Date first appeared on forward plan	N/A
Key decision reasons	N/A
Background information	Local Government Act 1974 Housing Act 1996 Data Protection Act 2018
Appendices	N/A