

# Slough Borough Council Annual Complaints Report

## Summary of complaint activity for adult social care 2020-21

### Introduction

The production of a complaints report is a statutory complaints requirement for adult social care to provide an overview of the complaints received and handled through the Council's statutory complaints procedure. This summary for Slough Borough Council Adult Social Care is designed to meet this requirement of adult social care and is a public document.

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that any individual (or appropriate person acting on their behalf) who wishes to make a complaint about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's social care provision have access to the Adults statutory complaints procedure.

### Statutory Adults Social Care Complaints Procedure

The complaints process aims to be as accessible as possible. Complaints can be made by telephone, in writing, by email or using our online complaints form on the Slough Borough Council website. All complaints received are aimed to be acknowledged within 2 working days and we aim respond or send an update within 10 working days. More complex complaints may be responded to within 20 working days, with the complainant being kept informed during the process.

Our principles for responding to complaints in adult social care are that all complaints are dealt with efficiently.

- Complaints are properly investigated.
- Complainants receive a timely and appropriate response.
- Complainants are told the outcome regarding the investigation of the complaint.
- An apology is given if required.
- Appropriate response is taken where necessary.

The Adults Social Care statutory procedure starts with an internal investigation. A response will be sent from the manager within the service area. In the majority of cases, if a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, an apology will be offered and information will be given to the complainant outlining actions the service will take to ensure the situation does not arise again for the complainant or individuals in the future. The apology would be given by the manager on behalf of the service area complained about.

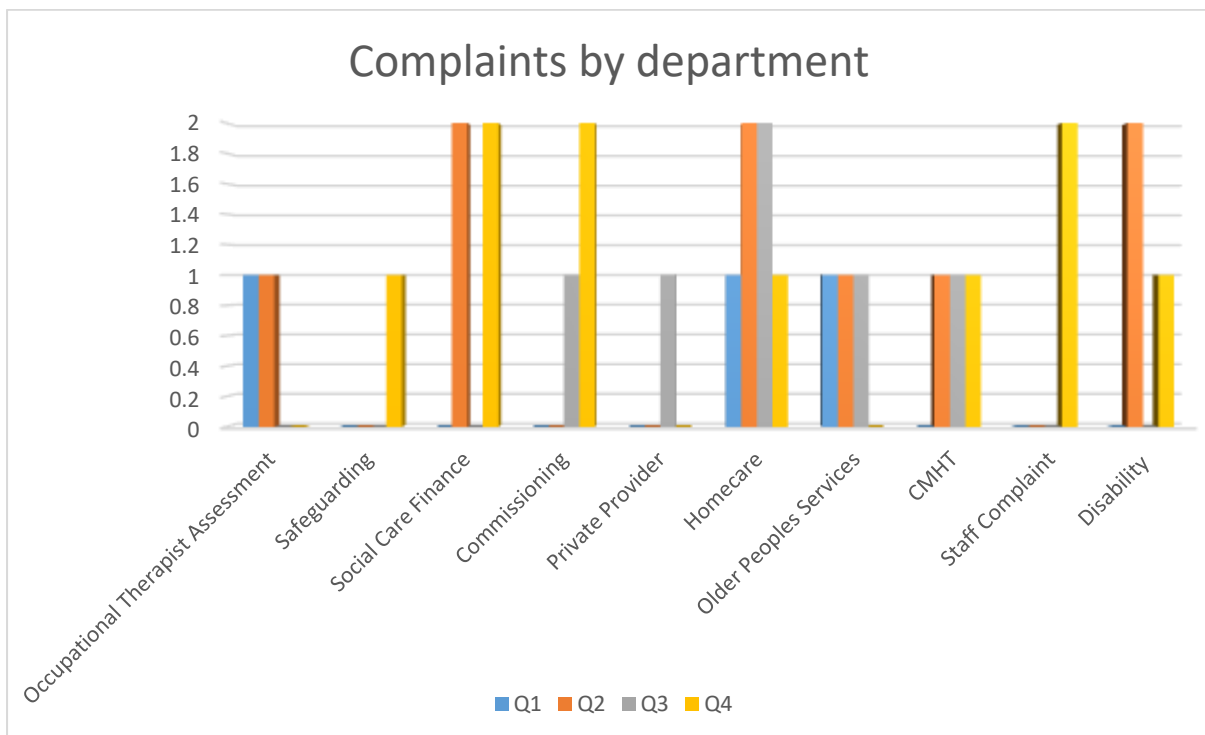
If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of their complaint, they can refer the matter to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for consideration. Representations may be made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) at any time and any member of the public is able to complain to the Ombudsman if they feel there has been maladministration or injustice, however, the LGSCO will not normally accept the complaint until the Council has had a chance to complete the investigation internally first.

## Complaints

There were 28 investigated complaints from 1 April 2020 - 30 March 2021. This is similar to the numbers receive in previous years.

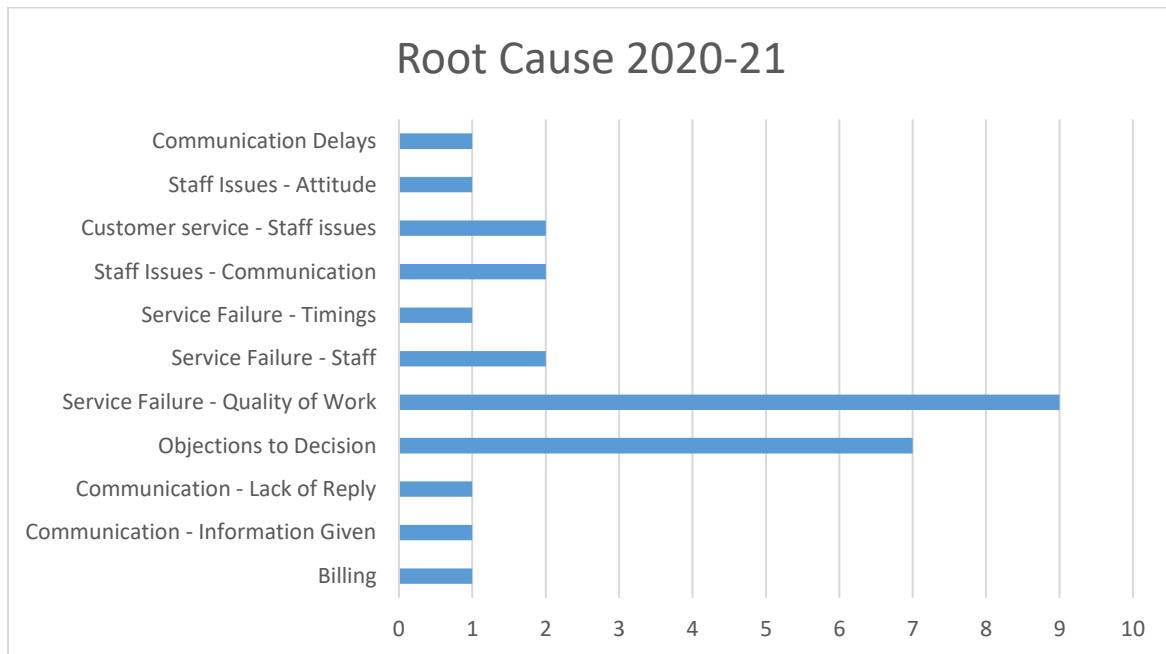
Year	Number of complaints
2018-19	26
2019-20	28
2020-21	28

### Complaint numbers by department for each quarter



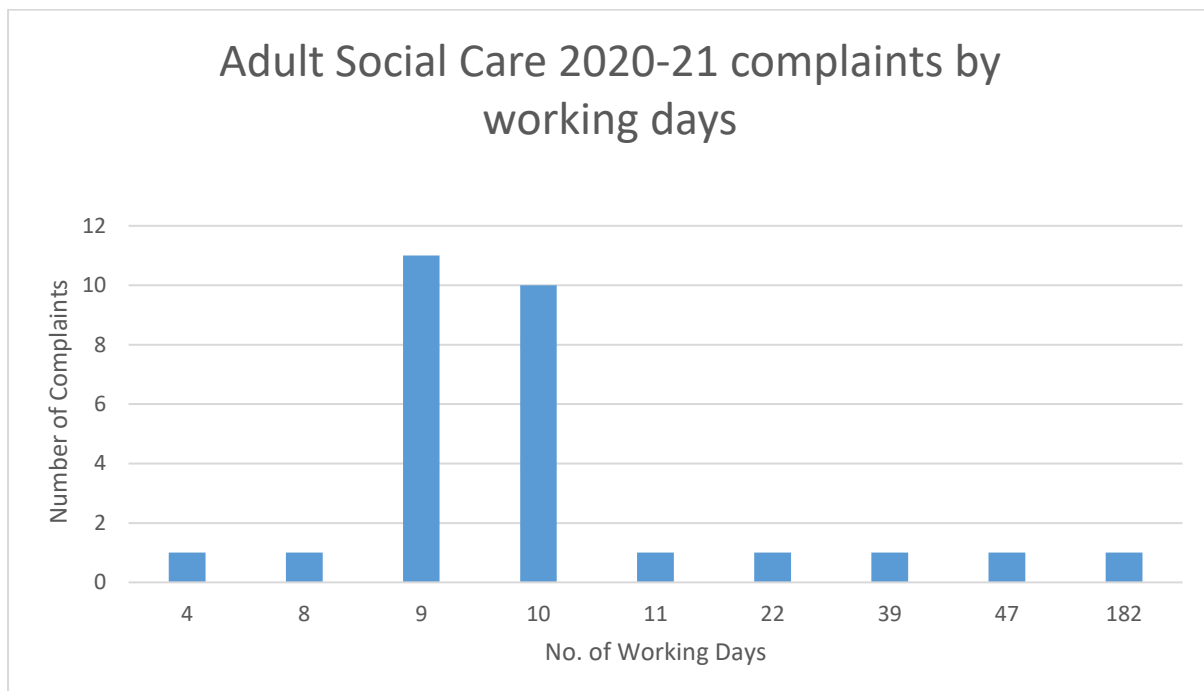
As with the previous year, most of the complaints received and investigated this year were in the last half of the financial year, with 17 of the 28 complaints investigated across Q3 and 4. The most complained about departments/areas were Home Care (6), and Social Care Finance (4). This is somewhat reflective of the previous years, as Homecare continues to be the leading source for complaints to the service. A notable change from previous years is the reduction in staff complaints with only 2 of the 28 being attributed to this area.

### Complaints by root cause



The root cause of the complaints received were varied, 43% (12) however, can be attributed to service factors. Of the 28 complaints received and investigated, 25% (7) were attributed to an objection to decisions made and a further 18% were attributed to staff related factors (attitude, customer service and communication) The remaining 14 % (4) were related to communication (3) or billing (1).

### Response times



Slough Borough Council Adult Social Care services received and investigated 28 complaints in 2020-21. Of these, 18% (5) were responded to on or after 20 working days. This timing

was necessary as there were complex investigations required, 3 of these in particular exceeded 30 working days with 1 taking more than 100 days to be satisfactorily resolved.

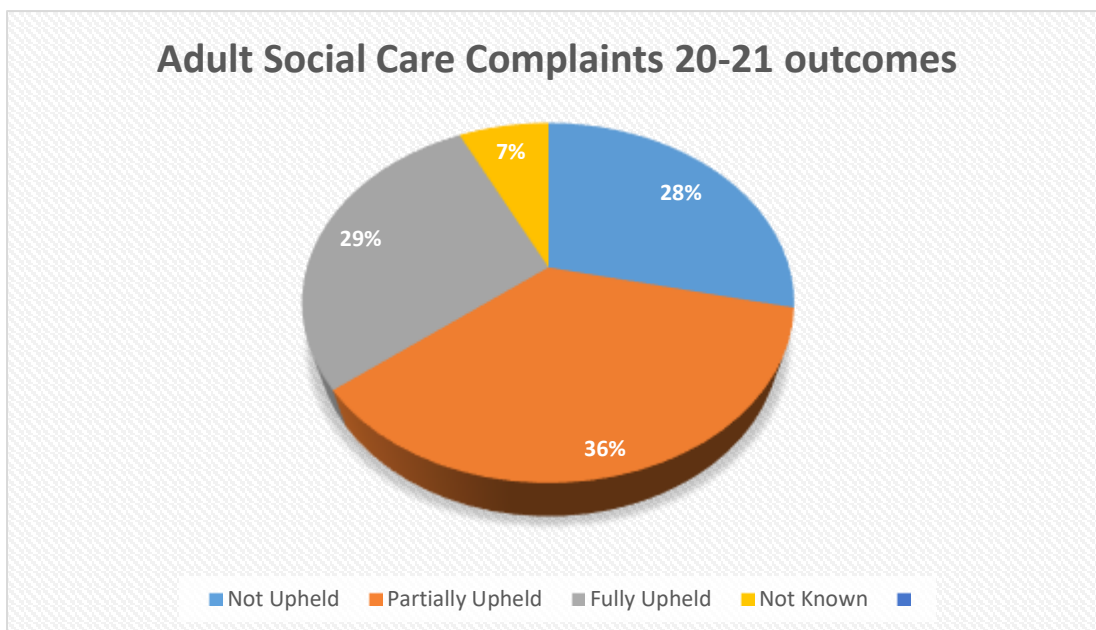
36% (10) were responded to by the 10<sup>th</sup> working day, however 46% (13) were responded to in under 10 working days, and overall 82% responded to within/by the 10<sup>th</sup> working day.

### Provider complaints

Complaints regarding a commissioned service received directly by the council, are logged and processed in accordance with the statutory complaints procedure and referred to the Adult Social Care management. These do not include complaints by 'self-funders' who are able to complain directly to the care provider and/or Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

There were three complaints in relation to the attitude of a care provider.

### Complaint outcomes



65% of the complaints received were fully/ partially upheld, with 28 % not being upheld and 7% closed with no defined indication as to whether upheld or not.

### Ombudsman complaints

A complainant reserves the right to refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman at any time. However, in most instances, the Ombudsman will seek to ensure that the Local Authority has been provided with the opportunity to respond to the complaint in accordance with the Council's statutory complaints process.

Slough Borough Council received 1 Adult Social Care enquiries & complaints from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman in 2020-21. This was closed by the Ombudsman after their initial enquiries.

### Learning

Complaints learning is a key component of service improvement and quality assurance for the department. Complaints provide valuable information to improve services for the future.

Year on year the learning for adult social care complaints was in the strengthening / improvement of their Customer Service skills.

End of report