**Inverclyde Council**

**Annual Complaints Report**

**1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022**

Contents

[1. INTRODUCTION 3](#_Toc115863487)

[2. THE COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE 3](#_Toc115863488)

[3. SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT HANDLING PERFORMANCE 4](#_Toc115863489)

[3.1. Indicator 1: the number of complaints received per 1,000 of the population. 4](#_Toc115863490)

[Table: Number of Complaints received per 1,000 of the population 4](#_Toc115863491)

[3.4. Indicator 2 the number of complaints closed at each stage of the complaint handling procedure. 4](#_Toc115863492)

[Table: Percentage of complaints closed at each stage of the procedure 4](#_Toc115863493)

[Table: Total number of complaints received by each area 5](#_Toc115863494)

[Table: Total number of complaints received by each area at stage 1 5](#_Toc115863495)

[Table: Total number of complaints received by each area at stage 2 5](#_Toc115863496)

[Table: Total number of complaints received by each area at escalated stage 2 5](#_Toc115863497)

[Table: Breakdown of closed complaints by service areas each quarter Q1 & Q2 6](#_Toc115863498)

[Table: Breakdown of closed complaints by service areas each quarter Q3 & Q4 6](#_Toc115863499)

[Chart: Annual complaint volumes received 2021/22 7](#_Toc115863500)

[3.11. Indicator 3 – Outcome of Complaint Investigations 7](#_Toc115863501)

[Chart: Complaint Investigation Outcome by each complaint stage 8](#_Toc115863502)

[3.14. Indicator 4 – average timescales for resolving complaints 8](#_Toc115863503)

[Table: Collective complaint handling – average timescale for resolving complaints 8](#_Toc115863504)

[Table: Inverclyde Council’s Consolidated Performance – average timescale for resolving complaints 9](#_Toc115863505)

[Table: Inverclyde Council Only Performance – average timescale for resolving complaints 10](#_Toc115863506)

[Table: HSCP Complaint Handling Performance – average timescale for resolving complaints 10](#_Toc115863507)

[Table: Inverclyde Leisure Performance \*\*\* – average timescale for resolving complaints 11](#_Toc115863508)

[Table: Riverside Inverclyde \*\*\*\* – average timescale for resolving complaints 11](#_Toc115863509)

[3.20. Indicator 5 – Performance against timescales for Stage 1 Complaints: 11](#_Toc115863510)

[Table: Number of complaints closed within timescale and percentages stage 1 11](#_Toc115863511)

[3.22. Indicator 5 – Performance against timescales for Stage 2 Complaints: 12](#_Toc115863512)

[Table: Number of complaints closed within timescale and percentages stage 2 12](#_Toc115863513)

[3.24. Indicator 5 - Performance against timescales escalated stage 2 complaints: 12](#_Toc115863514)

[Table: Number of complaints closed within timescale and percentages escalated stage 2 12](#_Toc115863515)

[3.26. Indicator 6 – Extensions to Complaint Timescales: 12](#_Toc115863516)

[4. Indicator 7 – Customer Satisfaction Survey 13](#_Toc115863517)

[5. Indicator 8 – Learning from Complaints 13](#_Toc115863518)

[6. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN (SPSO) – RIGHT OF REVIEW 13](#_Toc115863519)

[Table: Complaints received by the SPSO for a review 13](#_Toc115863520)

[Table: SPSO breakdown by reviews by stage and outcomes for Inverclyde Council 14](#_Toc115863521)

[Table: SPSO breakdown by reviews by stage and outcomes for HSCP 15](#_Toc115863522)

[7. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 15](#_Toc115863523)

[8. POSITIVE COMMENTS 15](#_Toc115863524)

[9. TRAINING 16](#_Toc115863525)

[10. CONCLUSION 16](#_Toc115863526)

# INTRODUCTION

1.1 Inverclyde Council, along with all other Scottish Local Authorities, follows a model complaint handling procedure (MCHP) which was created by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). This report demonstrates how Inverclyde Council has performed against the 8 key performance indicators that are set by the SPSO and provides an overview of improvements made to services along with positive feedback from service users.

# THE COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

* 1. Inverclyde Council co-ordinates the reporting of complaints to the SPSO and this includes the HSCP, Inverclyde Leisure and Riverside Inverclyde. Each area is responsible for recording their own complaints and providing their management information to Inverclyde Council to enable the consolidated statistical report to be produced quarterly and annually.
  2. The procedure provides a quick, simple, streamlined process with a strong focus on local, early resolution. This enables issues or concerns dealt with close to the event, which gave rise to the service user making the complaint. As far as possible, the complainant should be actively and positively engaged with the process from the outset.
  3. Stage one of the complaint handling procedure should be attempted where there are straightforward issues potentially easily resolved with little or no investigation. This should be completed within 5 working days. If the service user remains unhappy following the stage one complaint investigation, they can request that their complaint be escalated to stage two of the procedure.
  4. Stage two of the complaint handling procedure should be used for those matters, which are complex, or for serious issues where a thorough investigation will be undertaken. It should also be used for complaints that cannot be resolved at the stage one of the procedure. This typically requires a more thorough investigation in order to establish facts prior to reaching conclusion. The complaint points and resolution outcome sought is agreed with the complainant. This complaint should be completed within 20 working days. Should the service user remain unhappy with the investigation of the stage 2 complaint they can exercise their right of review and request the SPSO to look at the issues raised and determine whether they can investigate the matter further.
  5. Escalated stage two: Where the service user remains dissatisfied with the way the Council dealt with their complaint at frontline resolution, the complainant can request a detailed investigation under stage two of our complaints handling procedure. This must be undertaken before the complainant can take their complaint to the SPSO to review.
  6. The Scottish Public Service Ombudsman reviews complaint outcomes that are referred to them by the service user and decide whether they should investigate the complaint.

# SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT HANDLING PERFORMANCE

# Indicator 1: the number of complaints received per 1,000 of the population.

* 1. To allow a fair comparison to be made across all 32 Scottish Local Authorities, this indicator looks at the figure of “Complaints per 1,000 of the population”. The total number of complaints received per 1,000 of the population in Inverclyde Council during the reporting period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 was 4.1 complaints. This reflects an increase of 0.6 when comparing the indicator to the same period last year. The population of Inverclyde Council is estimated to be at around 77,060 residents.
  2. This means that there were 4.1 complaints per 1,000 of the population, or roughly one resident in 243 made a complaint about services. A comparison of this indicator over the past 3 years is shown in the table below.

### Table: Number of Complaints received per 1,000 of the population

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **No of Complaints** | **Complaints Per 1,000 of the population** |
| **2021/22** | **317** | **4.1** |
| **2020/21** | **269** | **3.5** |
| **2019/20** | **389** | **5.0** |

## Indicator 2 the number of complaints closed at each stage of the complaint handling procedure.

* 1. In the reporting period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 Inverclyde Council, Inverclyde Leisure and the HSCP received and handled 317 complaints and closed 315 complaints. It should be noted that Riverside Inverclyde did not receive any complaints. The table below shows the percentage of complaints received at each stage of the complaint procedure.

### Table: Percentage of complaints closed at each stage of the procedure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Stage 1 % of all closed complaints | Stage 2 % of all closed complaints | Esc stage 2 % of all closed complaints |
| Inverclyde Council | 79.5% | 12.2% | 8.1% |
| HSCP | 34.5% | 65.5% | 0% |
| Inverclyde Leisure | 58.3% | 41.7% | 0% |
| Riverside Inverclyde | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Collective Performance | 70.4% | 23.1% | 6.3% |

* 1. The tables below show the number of complaints received and closed in total, as well as at each stage of the complaint handling procedure for each area over the last 5 years for comparison

### Table: Total number of complaints received by each area

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| Inverclyde Council | 244 | 213 | 274 | 256 | 288 |
| HSCP | 61 | 39 | 73 | 44 | 55 |
| Inverclyde Leisure | 12 | 14 | 40 | \*29 | 8 |
| Riverside Inverclyde | 0 | 0 | 2 | 13 |  |

\*Inverclyde Leisure had a loss of data for the data covering the period 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2018 which will have will have impacted the extent of complaints finally recorded in 2018/19 the collective reporting of complaint

### Table: Total number of complaints received by each area at stage 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 |
| Inverclyde Council | 195 | 162 | 220 | 214 | 225 |
| HSCP | 20 | 25 | 39 | 17 | 33 |
| Inverclyde Leisure | 7 | 13 | 40 | 29 | 7 |
| Riverside Inverclyde | 0 | 0 | 2 | 12 |  |

### Table: Total number of complaints received by each area at stage 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 |
| Inverclyde Council | 30 | 24 | 20 | 8 | 17 |
| HSCP | 38 | 10 | 27 | 22 | 26 |
| Inverclyde Leisure | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Riverside Inverclyde | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |  |

### Table: Total number of complaints received by each area at escalated stage 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 |
| Inverclyde Council | 20 | 12 | 21 | 13 | 21 |
| HSCP | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Inverclyde Leisure | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Riverside Inverclyde | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |

* 1. The Council actively published information on the Council’s website and on social media for residents to understand the implications of potential delays, which could be encountered, with the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19). In particular, specific messages were shared on the Council’s complaint handling website pages to manage the expectations of service users and to explain that the Council may have to apply extended timescales for complaint handling. In addition to this the Council encouraged service users to refrain from submitting complaints about the following matters:
* Delays with processing complaints,
* Delays with complaint responses,
* Matters which were likely to resolve themselves within the next few weeks/months,
* Delays in service delivery which were the result of organisations having to cope with COVID-19 and which were non-essential.
  1. Emphasis was placed on the Council’s appreciation of service user’s patience whilst the Council worked through these unprecedented circumstances, particularly if the service received had fallen below expectations or if the response to a complaint had taken the Council longer than the stated timescale. The Council also signposted service users to the additional information published on the SPSO’s website on the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on complaints.
  2. The tables below provide a monthly breakdown of complaints closed and the percentage of complaints received within each service each quarter covering the reporting period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. For Inverclyde Leisure, Riverside Inverclyde and HSCP the breakdown is only provided for the annualised volumes.

### Table: Breakdown of closed complaints by service areas each quarter Q1 & Q2

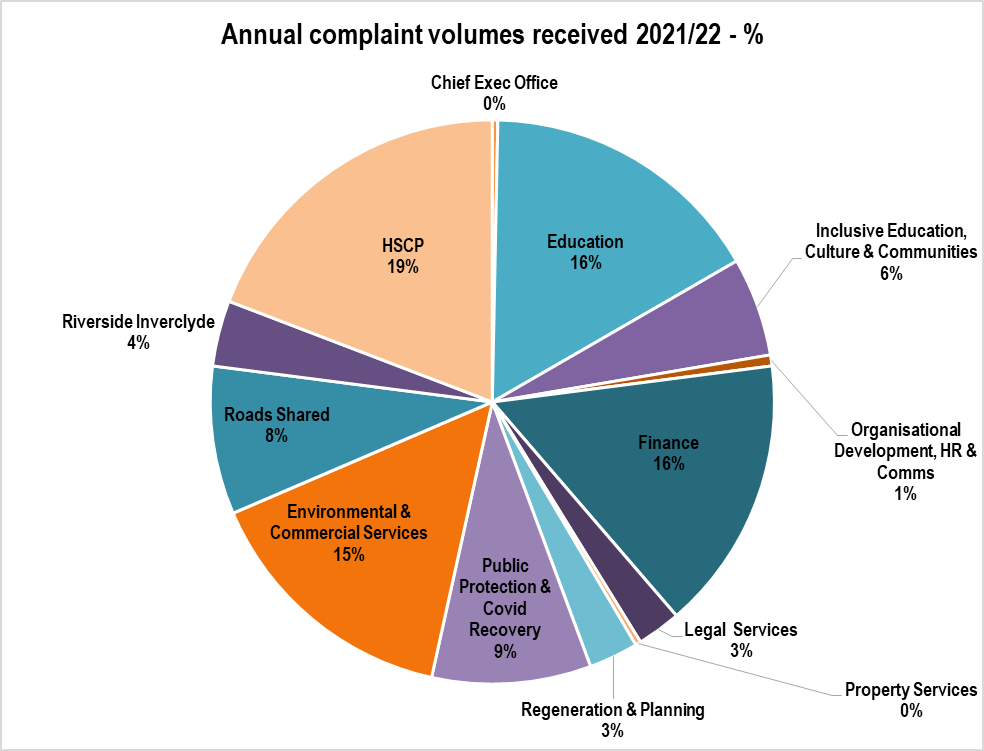
| **Service Area** | **Apr 21** | **May 21** | **Jun 21** | **Qtr. 1 21/22** | **% of complaints** | **Jul 21** | **Aug 21** | **Sept 21** | **Qtr. 2 21/22** | **% of complaints** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chief Exec Office** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | - | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** | **1.4%** |
| **Education** | 5 | 6 | 9 | **20** | 27% | 1 | 3 | 6 | **10** | **14%** |
| **Culture, Comm & Educ Res** | 0 | 0 | 2 | **2** | 2.6% | 2 | 5 | 2 | **9** | **13%** |
| **Org Dev, Policy & Comms** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | - | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | **1.4%** |
| **Finance** | 2 | 1 | 2 | **5** | 6.8% | 3 | 1 | 5 | **9** | **13%** |
| **Legal & Democratic Services** | 0 | 0 | 1 | **1** | 1.3% | 0 | 0 | 1 | **1** | **1.4%** |
| **Property Services** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | 0% | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **0%** |
| **Regeneration & Planning** | 0 | 0 | 4 | **4** | 5.4% | 0 | 1 | 2 | **3** | **4.3%** |
| **Environ & Com Svs** | 4 | 5 | 5 | **14** | 19% | 2 | 5 | 3 | **10** | **14.4%** |
| **Public Protection & COVID Rec** | 1 | 2 | 7 | **10** | 13.6% | 1 | 2 | 2 | **5** | **7.2%** |
| **Roads Shared Service** | 3 | 1 | 5 | **9** | 12.3% | 3 | 0 | 2 | **5** | **7.2%** |
| **Inverclyde Leisure** |  |  |  | **1** | 1.3% |  |  |  | **4** | **4.79%** |
| **7Riverside Inverclyde** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **-** |
| **HSCP** |  |  |  | **8** | 10% |  |  |  | **11** | **15.9%** |
| **Total** |  |  |  | **74** |  |  |  |  | **69** |  |

### Table: Breakdown of closed complaints by service areas each quarter Q3 & Q4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Area** | **Oct 21** | **Nov 21** | **Dec 21** | **Qtr3 21/22** | **% of complaints** | **Jan 22** | **Feb 22** | **Mar 22** | **Qtr. 4 21/22** | **% of complaints** | **21/22 Year End Total** | **%of Complaint** |
| **Chief Exec Office** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **-** | **1** | **0.3%** |
| **Education** | 4 | 2 | 3 | **9** | 15.2% | 3 | 5 | 6 | **14** | **12%** | **53** | **16.4%** |
| **Culture, Comm & Educ Res** | 2 | 0 | 0 | **2** | 3.3% | 0 | 2 | 3 | **5** | **4.3%** | **18** | **5.6%** |
| **Org Dev, Policy & Comms** | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** | 1.6% | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **-** | **2** | **0.6%** |
| **Finance** | 2 | 4 | 2 | **8** | 13.5% | 14 | 5 | 9 | **28** | **24.1%** | **50** | **17.3%** |
| **Legal & Democratic Services** | 1 | 0 | 1 | **2** | 3.3% | 2 | 0 | 2 | **4** | **3.4%** | **8** | **2.5%** |
| **Property Services** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | - | 0 | 0 | 1 | **1** | **0.8%** | **1** | **0.3%** |
| **Regen & Planning** | 2 | 0 | 0 | **2** | 3.3% | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **-** | **9** | **2.8%** |
| **Environ & Com Svs** | 5 | 4 | 1 | **10** | 16.9% | 2 | 3 | 8 | **13** | **12** | **47** | **14%** |
| **Public Protection & COVID Rec** | 2 | 3 | 2 | **7** | 13.5% | 4 | 0 | 2 | **6** | **4.3%** | **28** | **8%** |
| **Roads Shared Ser** | 1 | 0 | 1 | **2** | 3.3% | 2 | 4 | 5 | **11** | **9.4%** | **27** | **8.5%** |
| **Inverclyde Leisure** |  |  |  | **0** | - |  |  |  | **7** | **6%** | **12** | **3.7%** |
| **Riverside Inverclyde** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **-** | **0** | **-** |
| **HSCP** |  |  |  | **15** | **25.4%** |  |  |  | **27** | **23.2%** | 61 | **19.2%** |
| **Totals** |  |  |  | **59** |  |  |  |  | **116** |  | **317** |  |

* 1. Outlined in the chart below is the percentage of complaints received by each service compared against the total number of complaints received for the reporting period. Riverside Inverclyde and the Chief Executive’s Office is the only areas that that did not receive any complaints in the reporting period.

### Chart: Annual complaint volumes received 2021/22



* 1. Indicator 3 – Outcome of Complaint Investigations
  2. The graph below outlines the outcomes of investigations of all complaints at each of the complaint stages. For every complaint the Council investigates, the service user will be contacted and an explanation of the outcome of the complaint investigation will be confirmed as being either upheld, not upheld, partially upheld or resolved.

### Chart: Complaint Investigation Outcome by each complaint stage

* 1. In summary there were:
* 78 complaints were upheld across all complaint stages
* 58 complaints were partially upheld across all complaint stages
* 158 completed were not upheld across all complaint stages
* 21 complaints were resolved across all complaint stages.
  1. Indicator 4 – average timescales for resolving complaints.
  2. The table below outlines the Inverclyde Council’s collective performance measures on timescale management across all stages of the complaint procedure and covering the last 5 years for comparison purposes. The average time taken to close a complaint at each complaint stage has been:
* Stage 1 - 4.1 days;
* Stage 2 - 23.1 days; and
* Escalated stage 2 - 19.8 days.

### Table: Collective complaint handling – average timescale for resolving complaints

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1 Frontline Resolution** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints received | 222 | 200 | 287 | 272 | 265 |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 1 within 5 days | 187 | 138 | 229 | 222 | 214 |
| % Complaints meeting timescale (includes complaints that were time extended & completed on time) | 84.3% | 85.2% | 83.6% | 82% | 81% |
| No of complaints closed at stage 1 as a % of all complaints closed | 70.5% | 80% | 80.2% | 86.1% | 81.3% |
| Ave working days taken stage 1 complaints | 4.1 days | 4.6 days | 3.7 days | 4.1 days | 4.4 days |
| **Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints received | 73 | 35 | 47 | 31 | 40 |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 2 within 20 days | 46 | 19 | 34 | 21 | 31 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale (includes complaints that were time extended & completed on time) | 63% | 79.2% | 76.7% | 68% | 76.6% |
| No of complaints closed at stage 2 as a % of all complaints closed | 23.2% | 14% | 13.1% | 9.8% | 12.3% |
| Ave working days taken stage 2 complaints | 23.1 days | 15.2 days | 18 days | 18.1 days | 15.5 days |
| **Escalated Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints received | 25 | 15 | 24 | 13 | 21 |
| No of complaints – closed at escalated stage 2 within 20 days | 13 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 18 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale (includes complaints that were time extended & completed on time) | 65% | 91.7% | 75% | 100% | 85.7% |
| No of complaints closed at escalated stage 2 as a % of all complaints closed | 6.3% | 6% | 6.7% | 4.1% | 6.4% |
| Ave working days taken escalated stage 2 complaints | 19.8 days | 16.6 days | 18.3 days | 14 days | * 1. days |

* 1. The tables below outline the management of complaints within the prescribed timescale for each complaint stage and broken down by each area’s complaint handling performance.

### Table: Inverclyde Council’s Consolidated Performance – average timescale for resolving complaints

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1 Frontline Resolution** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints received | 222 | 200 | 287 | 272 | 265 |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 1 within 5 days | 187 | 138 | 229 | 222 | 214 |
| % Complaints meeting timescale (includes complaints that were time extended & completed on time) | 84.3% | 85.2% | 83.6% | 82% | 81% |
| No of complaints closed at stage 1 as a % of all complaints closed | 70.5% | 80% | 80.2% | 86.1% | 81.3% |
| Ave working days taken stage 1 complaints | 4.1 days | 4.6 days | 3.7 days | 4.1 days | 4.4 days |
| **Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints received | 73 | 35 | 47 | 31 | 40 |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 2 within 20 days | 46 | 19 | 34 | 21 | 31 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale (includes complaints that were time extended & completed on time) | 63% | 79.2% | 76.7% | 68% | 76.6% |
| No of complaints closed at stage 2 as a % of all complaints closed | 23.2% | 14% | 13.1% | 9.8% | 12.3% |
| Ave working days taken stage 2 complaints | 23.1 days | 15.2 days | 18 days | 18.1 days | 15.5 days |
| **Escalated Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints received | 25 | 15 | 24 | 13 | 21 |
| No of complaints – closed at escalated stage 2 within 20 days | 13 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 18 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale (includes complaints that were time extended & completed on time) | 65% | 91.7% | 75% | 100% | 85.7% |
| No of complaints closed at escalated stage 2 as a % of all complaints closed | 6.3% | 6% | 6.7% | 4.1% | 6.4% |
| Ave working days taken escalated stage 2 complaints | 19.8 days | 16.6 days | 18.3 days | 14.0 days | * 1. days |

* 1. The tables below outline the management of complaints within the prescribed timescale for each complaint stage and broken down by each area’s complaint handling performance. The comparable data is not available for Inverclyde Leisure, as they have adopted the reporting of complaints within the period 2017/18.

### Table: Inverclyde Council Only Performance – average timescale for resolving complaints

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1** | **2021 /22** | **2020 /21** | **2019/20** | **2018 /19** | **2017 /18** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 1 within 5 days | 167 | 138 | 172 | 171 | 182\* |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | 87.4% | 85.2% | 87% | 80% | 78% |
| Ave working days taken stage 1 | 3.6 days | 4.6 days | 3.9 days | 4.4 days | 3.8 days |
| **Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 2 within 20 days | 23 | 19 | 14 | 7 | 9\*\* |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | 76.7% | 79.2% | 80% | 88% | 90% |
| Ave working days taken stage 2 | 17 days | 15.2 days | 16.1 days | 18.4 days | 16.3 days |
| **Stage 2 Escalated Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints – closed at esc stage 2 within 20 days | 13 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 18 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | 68.4% | 91.7% | 81.8% | 100% | 86% |
| Ave working days taken esc stage 2 | 20.8 days | 16.6 days | 15.7 days | 14 days | 13.8 days |

\*One complaint has been included within stage one resolution as time extension was granted allowing 10 days for the complaint to be resolved and reported within timescales.

\*\* Two complaints have been included in the stage two resolutions as time extension was granted allowing 25 days for the complaint to be resolved and reported within timescale

### Table: HSCP Complaint Handling Performance – average timescale for resolving complaints

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1** | **2021/22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018/19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 1 within 5 days | 15 | 14 | 39 | 12 | 22 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | 75% | 56% | 72% | 71% | 88% |
| Ave working days taken stage 1 | 4.4 days | 9.3 days | 5.3 days | 7.5 days | 4.1 days |
| **Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021 /22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018 /19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 2 within 20 days | 20 | 6 | 27 | 13 | 18 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | 52.6% | 60% | 74% | 59% | 79% |
| Ave working days taken stage 2 | 30.8 days | 22.3 days | 19.5 days | 18.2 days | 18.2 days |
| **Stage 2 Escalated Investigation** | **2021 /22** | **2020/21** | **2019/20** | **2018 /19** | **2017/18** |
| No of complaints – closed at esc stage 2 within 20 days | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | - | 0% | 0% | 0 | N/A |
| Ave working days taken esc stage 2 | - | 27 days | 31 days | 0 | 0 |

\*\*\* Inverclyde Leisure data only available from the period 2017/18

### Table: Inverclyde Leisure Performance \*\*\* – average timescale for resolving complaints

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1** | **2021/22** | **2020 /21** | **2019/20** | **2018 /19** | **2017 /18** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 1 within 5 days | 6 | 13 | 40 | 29 | 5 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale | 85.7% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 83% |
| Ave working days taken stage 1 | 1 day | 1 day | 1 day | 1 day | 3 days |
| **Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020 /21** | **2019/20** | **2018 /19** | **2017 /18** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 2 within 20 days | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale | 100% | 100% | 0 | 0 | 67% |
| Ave working days taken stage 2 | 10 days | 10 days | 0 | 0 | 13.3 days |
| **Stage 2 Escalated Investigation** | **2021/22** | **2020 /21** | **2019/20** | **2018 /19** | **2017 /18** |
| No of complaints – closed at esc stage 2 within 20 days | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Ave working days taken esc stage 2 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

### Table: Riverside Inverclyde \*\*\*\* – average timescale for resolving complaints

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage 1** | **2021 /22** | **2020/21** | **2019/ 20** | **2018 /19** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 1 within 5 days | 0 | 0 | 2 | 12 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | - | N/A | 2 | 100% |
| Ave working days taken stage 1 | 0 | N/A | 2 days | 1.6 days |
| **Stage 2 Investigation** | **2021 /22** | **2020/21** | **2019/ 20** | **2018 /19** |
| No of complaints – closed at stage 2 within 20 days | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | - | N/A | 0 | 100% |
| Ave working days taken stage 2 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 14 days |
| **Stage 2 Escalated Investigation** | **2021 /22** | **2020/21** | **2019/ 20** | **2018 /19** |
| No of complaints – closed at esc stage 2 within 20 days | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| % Complaints Meeting timescale inc those time extended | - | N/A | 0 | 0 |
| Ave working days taken esc stage 2 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 |

\*\*\*\*Riverside Inverclyde data only available from the period 2018/19

* 1. Services must maintain focus on ensuring complaints received are recorded and that officers follow the complaint handling procedure. Particular attention should be given to the timescales for resolving complaints at stage one and stage two. When comparing in isolation the Council’s complaint handling performance it is noted that the timescales taken to resolve complaints have increased at all stages, which affects the average days reported. Most of the delays have been during periods when services were under considerable pressure responding to the COVID19 pandemic.
  2. The average days taken to resolve complaints in all stages of the complaint procedure have increased in HSCP’s complaint performance. Most of the delays have been during periods when HSCP services were under considerable pressure responding to the COVID19 pandemic and also as a result of the availability of management resources. This will be an area for focus in the coming year.
  3. Indicator 5 – Performance against timescales for Stage 1 Complaints:
  4. The Council aims to close all stage 1 complaints within 5 working days. In 2021/22 the Council closed 222 complaints, with 186 of these closed within timescale which equates to 83.8% response within timescale. 7 (3.2%) complaints were closed after an extension was agreed with the service user.

### Table: Number of complaints closed within timescale and percentages stage 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reporting period** | **No of complaints closed** | **Within timescale** | **%** | **No with extension** | **%** |
| **2021/22** | 222 | 186 | 83.8% | 7 | 3.2% |
| **2020/21** | 200 | 169 | 84.5% | 5 | 2.5% |
| **2019/20** | 287 | 229 | 79.8% | 27 | 9.4% |
| **2018/19** | 272 | 222 | 82% | 21 | 7.7% |
| **2017/18** | 265 | 214 | 80.8% | 9 | 3.4% |

* 1. Indicator 5 – Performance against timescales for Stage 2 Complaints:
  2. The Council aims to close all stage 2 complaints within 20 working days. In 2021/22, the Council closed 73 complaints, with 46 of these complaints being closed within timescale, which equates to 63% response within timescale. 5 complaints (6.8%) were closed after an extension was agreed with the service user.

### Table: Number of complaints closed within timescale and percentages stage 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reporting period** | **No of complaints closed** | **Within timescale** | **%** | **No with extension** | **%** |
| **2021/22** | 73 | 46 | 63% | 5 | 6.8% |
| **2020/21** | 35 | 26 | 74.3% | 3 | 8.6% |
| **2019/20** | 47 | 34 | 72.3% | 11 | 23.4% |
| **2018/19** | 31 | 21 | 68% | 10 | 32.3% |
| **2017/18** | 40 | 31 | 77.5% | 10 | 25% |

* 1. Indicator 5 - Performance against timescales escalated stage 2 complaints:
  2. The Council aims to close all escalated stage 2 complaints within 20 working days. In 2021/22, the Council closed 20 complaints, with 13 of these complaints being closed within timescale which equates to 65% response within timescale. 2 (10%) of complaints were closed after an extension was agreed with the service user.

### Table: Number of complaints closed within timescale and percentages escalated stage 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reporting period** | **No of complaints closed** | **Within timescale** | **%** | **No with extension** | **%** |
| **2021/22** | 20 | 13 | 65% | 2 | 10% |
| **2020/21** | 15 | 12 | 80% | 0 | 0% |
| **2019/20** | 24 | 14 | 58.3% | 6 | 25% |
| **2018/19** | 13 | 13 | 100% | 1 | 7.7% |
| **2017/18** | 21 | 18 | 85.7% | 3 | 14.3% |

* 1. Indicator 6 – Extensions to Complaint Timescales:
  2. The complaint handling procedure allows officers to seek an extension to the timescales permitted for stage one and stage two complaint investigations. The maximum period permitted to extend the timescale of a complaint is 5 days for both complaint stages. This indicator reports the number and percentage of complaints at each stage of the procedure, which were closed after an extension to the 5 day, or 20 day timescale was authorised.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Complaint stage** | **No of extemsions agreed** | **% as a total of all complaints** |
| **Stage 1 complaints** | 7 extensions were agreed | 3.2% of total complaints |
| **Stage 2 complaints** | 5 extensions were agreed | 6.8% of total complaints |
| **Escalated stage 2 complaints** | 2 extensions were agreed | 10% of total complaints |

## Indicator 7 – Customer Satisfaction Survey

* 1. The SPSO has recommended that all Local Authorities should be completing customer satisfaction surveys with service users regularly to gain true insight on how well they are handling complaints. This standardised approach has been delayed this year to allow the development of a straight through process within the complaint handling system to support capturing this feedback in an efficient manner. The Council is developing the process to enable a customer satisfaction survey to be automatically issued once a complaint is closed. The survey will seek feedback using a standard set of questions that have been agreed for use by the SPSO as part of the collection of feedback to assist with suggestions and opportunities for improvement. The HSCP, Inverclyde Leisure, Riverside Inverclyde are also required to implement the survey being issued to complainants.

## Indicator 8 – Learning from Complaints

* 1. The Council is committed to reflecting on occasions when it does not get it right in order to highlight opportunities for improvement. As such, where a complaint has been upheld or partially upheld, the service determines what actions are required to support improvement and prevent a repeat of circumstances that led to the complaint.
  2. Service improvement recording commenced in November 2016 for Inverclyde Council only. Service improvement tracking requires to be developed for the HSCP as this is not currently in place, although work is underway to implement this.
  3. The Council shares the outcomes of complaint investigations and a selection of actions taken as a result of complaints on a quarterly basis with the Corporate Management Team.

## SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN (SPSO) – RIGHT OF REVIEW

* 1. Following a stage two investigation and written response, if a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint investigation, they have a right of review through the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The table below outlines the number complaints received at the SPSO for Inverclyde Council and HSCP.

### Table: Complaints received by the SPSO for a review

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 |
| Inverclyde Council | 12 | 7 | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| HSCP | 4 | 3 | 11 | 6 | Not recorded |

* 1. The SPSO reviewed 12 complaints for Inverclyde Council of which 2 complaints were reviewed at the advice stage and these complaint were unable to be taken forward and 10 complaints were reviewed all at the early resolution stage of the procedure the outcome of these reviews were as follows:
* 6 complaints were recognised as examples of good complaint handlling;
* 3 complaints were reviewed and insufficient benefit would be gained from further investigation of the complaint; and,
* 1 case was taken forward prematurely to the SPSO and not progressed.
  1. There were no complaints taken through the investigation stage by the SPSO. Overall this reflects an increase of 7 complaints when comparing data to the same period last year. The table below outlines the SPSO’s published statistics for Inverclyde Council.

### Table: SPSO breakdown by reviews by stage and outcomes for Inverclyde Council

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **STAGE** | **OUTCOME GROUP** | **Inverclyde Council** |
| Advice | Member of the public test not met (s 5 (6)) | 0 |
| Premature | 0 |
| Unable to proceed | 2 |
| Total | 2 |
| Early Resolution | Cause and impact test not met (s 5 (3)) | 0 |
| Discretion – Insufficient benefit would be achieved by investigation | 3 |
| Discretion – alternative action proposed | 0 |
| Discretion – Alternative route used or available | 0 |
| Discretion - Good complaint handling | 6 |
| Discretion – referred back | 0 |
| Discretion - Resolved - both parties satisfied with proposed outcome | 0 |
| Member of the public test not met (s 5 (6)) | 0 |
| Organisation not in jurisdiction | 0 |
| Premature | 1 |
| Right of appeal to court/tribunal/Scottish ministers (s 7 (8)) | 0 |
| Subject matter not in jurisdiction | 0 |
| Time limit (s 10) | 0 |
| Unable to proceed | 0 |
| Total | 10 |
| Investigation | Fully upheld | 0 |
| Not upheld | 0 |
| Outcome not achievable | 0 |
| Resolved | 0 |
| Some upheld | 0 |
| Total | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | | **12** |

* 1. The SPSO reviewed four complaints for the HSCP and no complaints were investigated. Two complaints were reviewed at the advice stage and were referred prematurely to the SPSO. A further 2 cases were reviewed at the early resolution, of which 1 case was recognised as an example of good complaint handling while the other complaint was referred back to the HSCP to look into matters further. Overall this reflects an increase of 1 complaints when comparing data to the same period last year. The table below outlines the SPSO’s published statistics for the HSCP.

### Table: SPSO breakdown by reviews by stage and outcomes for HSCP

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **STAGE** | **OUTCOME GROUP** | **IHSCP** |
| Advice | Discretion – alternative route used or available | 0 |
| Premature | 2 |
| Unable to proceed | 0 |
| Total | 2 |
| Early Resolution | Discretion – Insufficient benefit would be achieved by investigation | 0 |
| Discretion – alternative action proposed | 0 |
| Discretion – Alternative route used or available | 0 |
| Discretion - Good complaint handling | 1 |
| Discretion – referred back | 1 |
| Discretion - Resolved - both parties satisfied with proposed outcome | 0 |
| Organisation not in jurisdiction | 0 |
| Premature | 0 |
| Right of appeal to court/tribunal/Scottish ministers (s 7 (8)) | 0 |
| Subject matter not in jurisdiction | 0 |
| Time limit (s 10) | 0 |
| Unable to proceed | 0 |
| Total | 2 |
| Investigation | Fully upheld | 0 |
| Not duly made or withdrawn | 0 |
| Not upheld | 0 |
| Some upheld | 0 |
| Total | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | | **4** |

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

* 1. The Council reports and publishes its complaint statistics in line with performance indicators published by the SPSO. Some aspects of the indicators are currently being developed and will be included in the core performance indicators applicable to all sectors (similar to those released in the draft MCHP).

## POSITIVE COMMENTS

* 1. Throughout the year the Council receives positive comments and compliments from service users across all services. These recognise where employees have gone above and beyond the normal standard of service delivery and these compliments are shared with the service teams concerned.

## TRAINING

* 1. Complaint handling training forms part of the induction process for all new staff joining the Council. Line managers identify which new staff that require training, which involves completion of the complaint handling procedure e-learning module followed by attendance at a digital or face-to-face training course on the more practical aspects of dealing with complaints using the complaint handling procedure. Each year, the Education Service provides an Induction Training Programme to all relevant staff who will be required to deal with complaints which also includes the use of the complaint handling system training.
  2. Additionally, training was delivered to relevant staff involved in the handling of complaints in preparation for the changes that would be introduced when the new Model Complaint Handling Procedure was introduced on 5 April 2021.
  3. Refresher training is provided on a regular basis by request from service areas and where it is deemed necessary, this includes the use of the complaint handling system too. All training is tracked using personal individual development plans. A total of 93 hours training has been delivered during the course of 2021/22.

## CONCLUSION

* 1. The Council is committed to investigating, learning from and taking action as a result of individual complaints where it is found that standards have fallen below the level expected and where services could be improved. By listening to the views of service users who make a complaint, the Council can improve its services.
  2. In the coming year the key action for services to focus on reducing the time taken to respond to complaints timely at each of the complaint stages where this is possible, particularly where the complexity of complaints has evolved as evidenced in complaints handling during this period and where we exceed the statutory response timescale. The Council will be operating through another challenging period and balancing this alongside all other priorities will be essential whilst managing resources carefully required to support this.