

OPEN

Audit & Governance Committee

28 July 2025

Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2024-25

**Report of: Karen Grave, Director of People and Customer
Experience**

Report Reference No: AG/04/25-26

Ward(s) Affected: All

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report provides a summary and analysis of complaints and compliments received by the Council during the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.
- 2 The report highlights any areas of concern and examples of good practice. It provides assurance that matters raised as complaints by customers are being addressed; that action has been taken to rectify issues and that information arising from complaints has informed service improvements. Responsibility for services rests with the relevant service committee and members may wish to seek additional assurances from those service committees.
- 3 The report supports the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 to become an open and enabling Council and specifically supports the objectives of the Council's Customer Experience Strategy 2021-25. A new Customer Experience Strategy for 2025-29 is currently being developed.

Executive Summary

- 4 The Council provides the facility for customers to report compliments and complaints in relation to Council services in an accessible and consistent way. Improvements have been made to the processes for these customer engagements following the introduction of the Customer Experience Strategy in 2021. Following the introduction, the Committee receives updated performance information bi-annually.
- 5 The Council provides in the region of 500 different services across a population of almost 400,000 residents. These range from place-based services, such as waste collection and highways management which are universal, to individual services such as social care and housing.
- 6 The Council received 4,314 complaints and 935 compliments in 2024/25. 1% of the total contact received by the Council during the 12-month period. Total contact includes telephony and email contact (online forms are not included).
- 7 In addition to the complaints addressed within the briefing sections of this report, the Council received and recorded 35 multi-departmental complaints. These complaints arose from residents expressing dissatisfaction with the Council Tax charge increase in Cheshire East, combined with general dissatisfaction with the service provided by the Council. Specifically, 25 of these complaints were related to the proposed 9.99% increase in Council Tax. None of the 35 multi-departmental complaints were upheld.
- 8 In 2024/25, 4,314 complaints were received compared to 3,051 in 2023/24. This is an increase of 41% some of which correlates with changes in policy or service delivery. In terms of compliments, 936 were received in 2024/25, compared with 824 in 2023/24. This is an increase of 14%. Of the 4,314 complaints received in 2024/25, 323 were rejected, withdrawn or not pursued; and the remaining 3,991 were processed as official complaints. Of the 3,991 processed complaints, 205 were Stage 2 complaints and 0 were Stage 3 complaints.
- 9 The Council has a two-stage complaints procedure. Most complaints are resolved at Stage 1 where a complaint is investigated and responded to by a manager from the service being complained about. The council's Customer Charter sets a standard of 10 or 20 days to respond to a complaint (depending on the stage and whether statutory or non-statutory). The customer will generally receive a written response within 10 workings days, unless the matter has been resolved, and the customer has been contacted directly by the service via telephone or email. It should be noted that the statutory complaints

process for Children's Social Care has the option to go to Stage 3 if required.

- 10 If the customer remains unhappy following the Stage 1 response and outcome, they can request that the complaint is considered at Stage 2. At this stage a review of the complaint is carried out by a manager who has not previously been involved with the complaint.
- 11 Of the 3,936 complaints that had received a response at the time of writing, 53% were upheld, 14% were partly upheld and 33% were not upheld.
- 12 Customer feedback is very important in the future development of services and this report provides data and activities related to feedback in the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, focusing on those services which received a comparatively high volume of complaints (compared with other services in the same committee); or where complaint volumes have significantly increased for a service.
- 13 Once a complaint has been resolved, Customer Feedback Team send a Complaints Customer Satisfaction Survey to the resident. The data from the survey can be found in Appendix 3.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit and Governance Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the complaints and compliments data, and the briefing material in this report relating to 2024/25.
2. Note the issues raised and improvements made in respect to the management of complaints across the Council contained within the briefing material in this report.
3. Note the Council's compliance with the Corporate Complaints Policy, and with the recommendations of the Ombudsman.

Background

- 14 The Council has a Corporate Complaints Policy covering all complaints about Council services other than Adults & Health and Children's Social Care complaints, which each have separate statutory complaints process.
- 15 The Policy provides for members of the public to contact the Council in several different ways. Most complaints are received either by email, via

the Customer Contact Centre or are self-logged via the Council's website.

- 16 The Local Government Act 1974 established the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. It empowers the Ombudsman to investigate complaints against councils and adult social care providers and to provide advice and guidance on good administrative practice. Once a complainant has exhausted the Council's Complaints procedure, their next recourse, should they remain dissatisfied with the Council's response, is to contact the Ombudsman.
- 17 The Ombudsman will assess the merits of each case escalated to them and seek clarification from the Council as necessary before making the decision to investigate a complaint. Once the Ombudsman decides to investigate, they will try to ascertain if maladministration/Fault has occurred and whether there has been any resulting injustice to the complainant because of the maladministration/Fault.
- 18 In instances where maladministration/Fault with Injustice is found, the Ombudsman will usually make non-legally binding recommendations which they consider to be appropriate and reasonable. Although not legally binding, refusal to accept the Ombudsman's recommendation(s) will trigger a Public Report. A Public Report is a detailed account of the complaint, outlining the failures by the Council in the investigation.
- 19 All complaints are a useful indicator of performance and provide the Council with an opportunity to review the quality of service provided and to make improvements. The Customer Relations Team within Customer Services reports the volume, outcome and time taken to resolve complaints to each Directorate on a quarterly basis. The volume of compliments, overall customer contact and, where appropriate, areas of concern and potential for service improvements are also reported. The Customer Relations Team attends directorate management team meetings to go through the report and answer any questions.
- 20 It has been agreed that as of 2025/26 onwards, any upheld or partly upheld complaints regarding staff conduct will be shared with Human Resources Business Partners.
- 21 In October 2023, the Complaints Team introduced a 'themes tracker' to assist in understanding the root of complaints. This is referenced in the Briefing section below.
- 22 Data provided within this report relates to the 'static' SLAs – which are set out by the Charter. Three services (SEND, Waste Commissioning and Development Management) currently have temporary Stage 1 complaint SLAs of 20 working days rather than 10 working days; and on

occasion, services may agree a different SLA with the complainant / correspondent. The Briefing section for each committee gives details of both the static SLA data and the 'non-static' SLA data – SLAs which have been agreed between the complainant and the responder which may fall outside the Charter's SLAs.

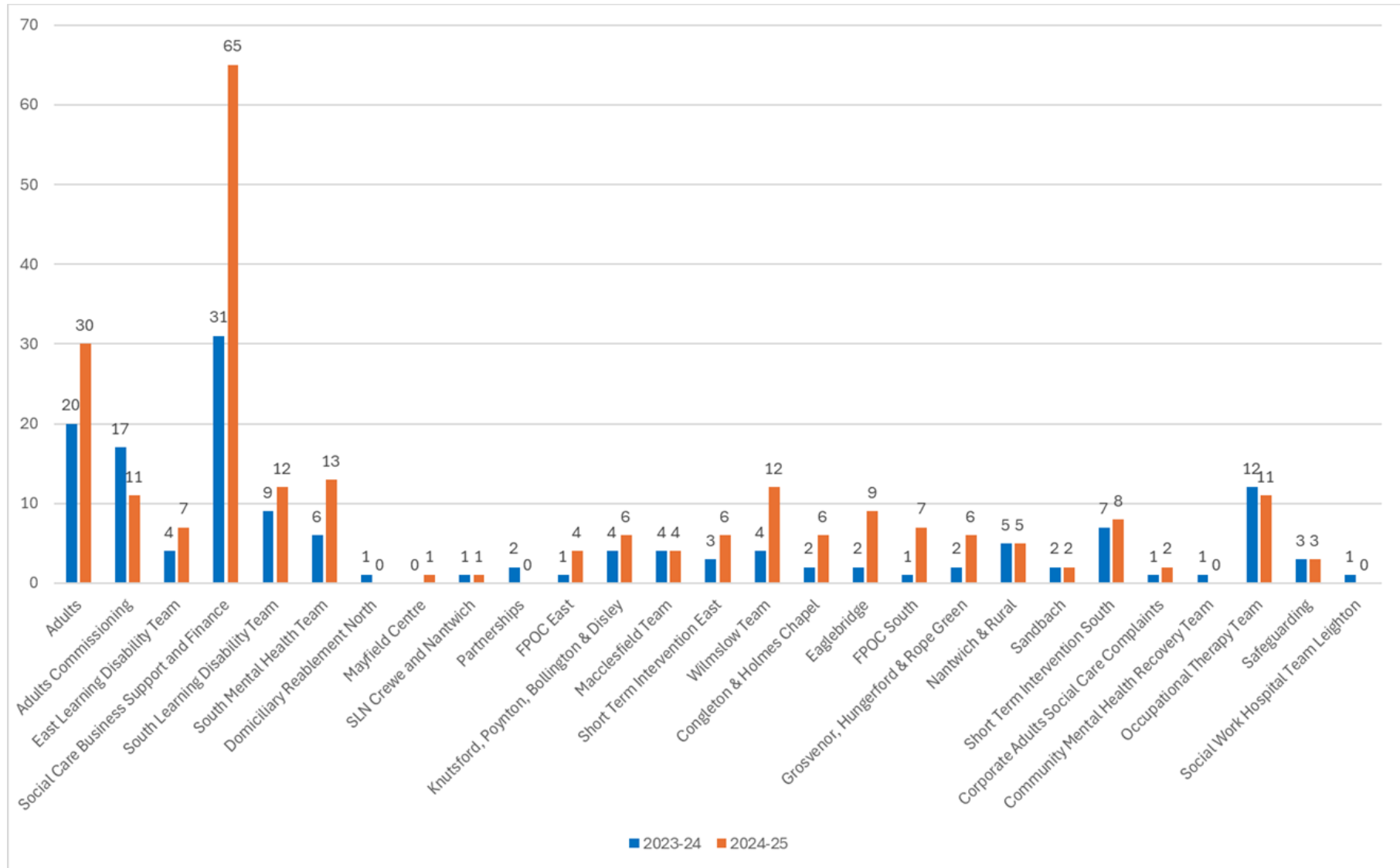
- 23 NB The Stage 2 option in the Adult Social Care Policy has been removed. Instead, further work at Stage 1 – including the offer of a meeting and a further written response – will be completed where deemed necessary to provide further clarification to the complainant. They will then be referred to the Local Govt & Social Care Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied.
- 24 It is noted that the LGSCO has launched a new Complaints Handling Code. The Ombudsman believes that a single code that applies to all councils in England will make it easier for customers to know what to expect in terms of how their complaint is going to be dealt with; and that it will improve complaints handling and standards, resulting in better services. The code will officially go live on the 1st of April 2026; we are currently awaiting approval of the revised Corporate Complaints Policy to fall in line with the code.
- 25 During 2024/25 Cheshire East Council received 3,785 pieces of Formal Correspondence. These currently have an SLA of 8 working days. It is our intention to change the SLA for Formal Correspondence to 5 working days for acknowledgement and 10 working days for response – which will bring the SLA for Formal Correspondence into line with the proposed SLA for Stage 1 complaints (as per the revised Corporate Complaints Policy awaiting approval).
- 26 The council's Special Contact Measures Policy requires that the Audit & Governance Committee are updated annually regarding the number of special contact arrangements that have been put into place during the year. During 2024-2025, nine Stage 1 warning letters were issued. None of these progressed to Stage 2 where a special contact arrangement would be implemented. This does show that the warning at Stage 1 does usually have the desired effect on moderating a customer's behaviour where it is becoming unreasonably persistent. There are two other customers who remain in Stage 2 special contact measures due to their continued unreasonably persistent communications, one in relation to parking and one in relation to the Environmental Services site in Middlewich.

Complaints Information by Committee

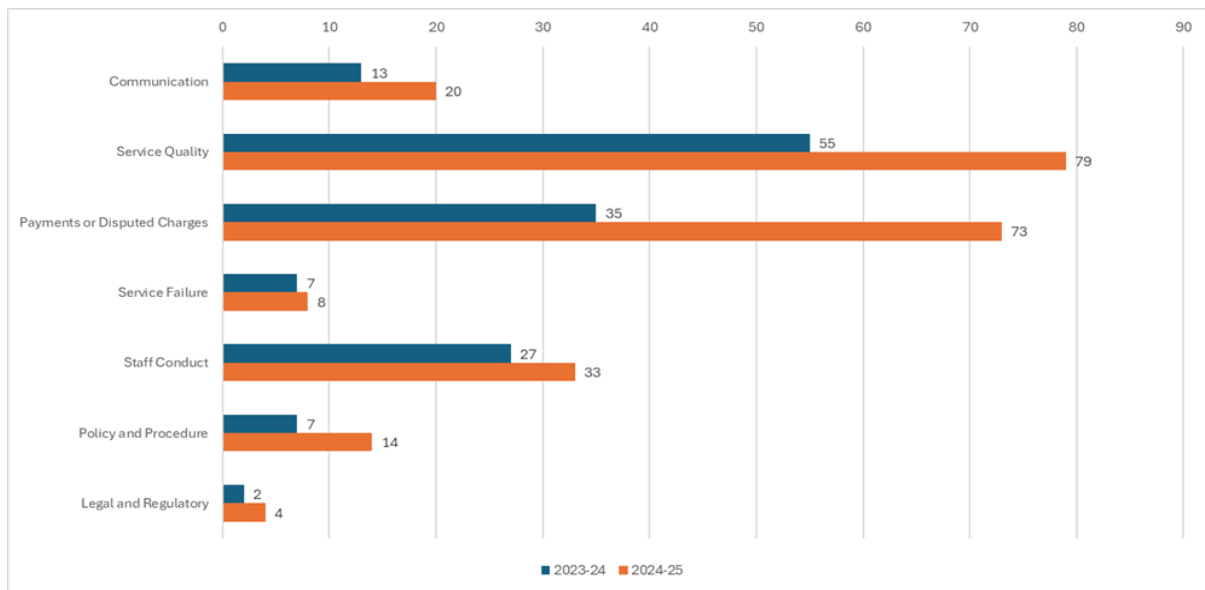
Adults and Health

- 27 Adults and Health received 231 complaints in 2024/25, 5% of the total received by the council. Of these, 55 complaints were rejected, withdrawn, or not pursued; the remaining 176 were processed as official complaints.
- 28 2024/25 saw a 52% increase in processed complaints compared with 2023/24 (116). There was 1 Stage 2 complaint processed in 2024/25.
- 29 Adults and Health received 472 compliments in 2024/25.

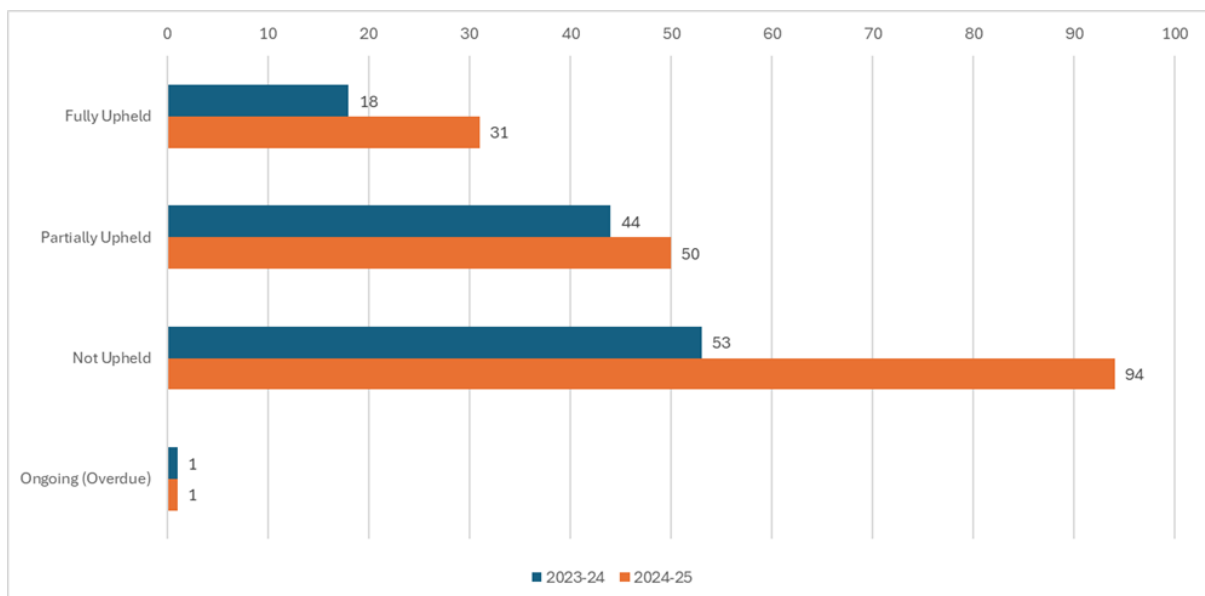
30 **Table 1: Complaint Volumes received by Service**



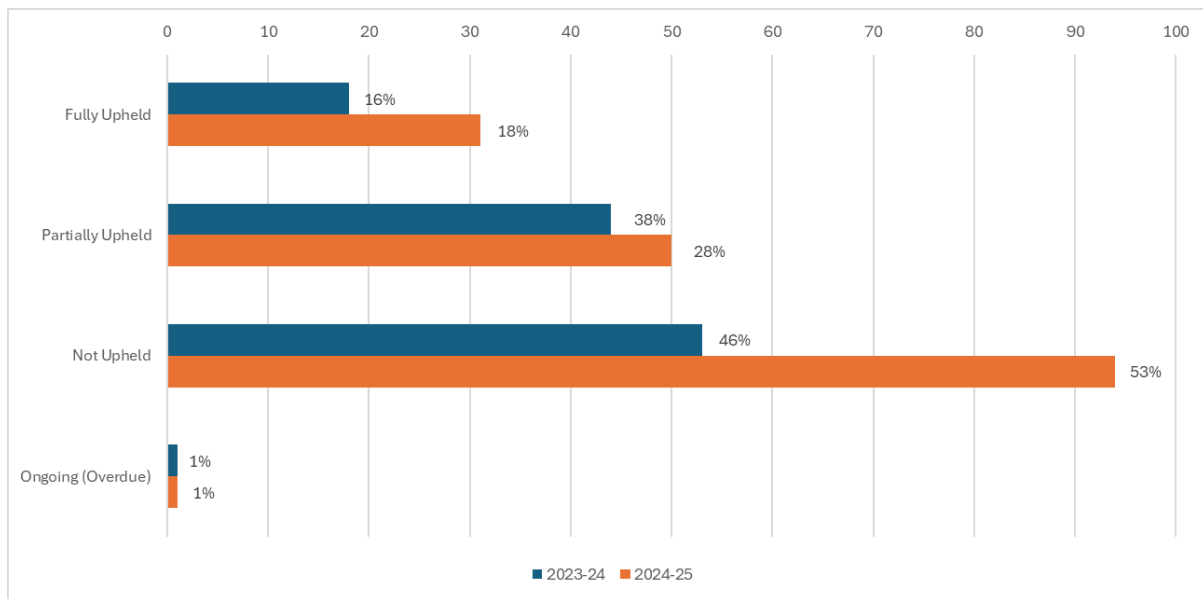
31 **Table 2: Complaint Primary Causes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 (Received)**



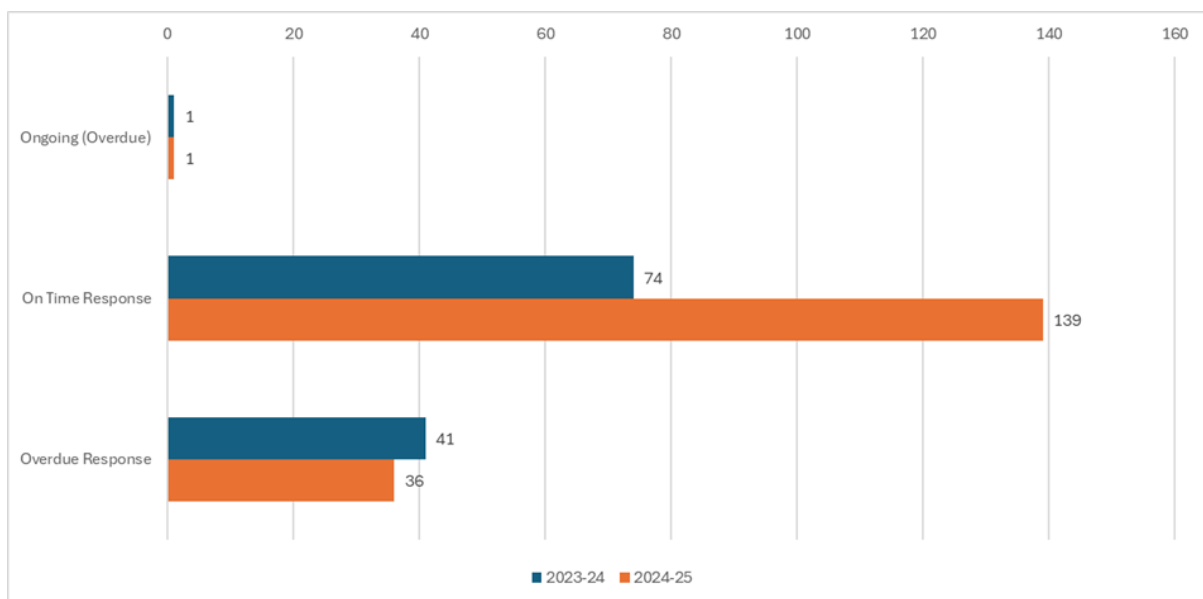
32 **Table 3: Complaints Outcomes – Numbers**



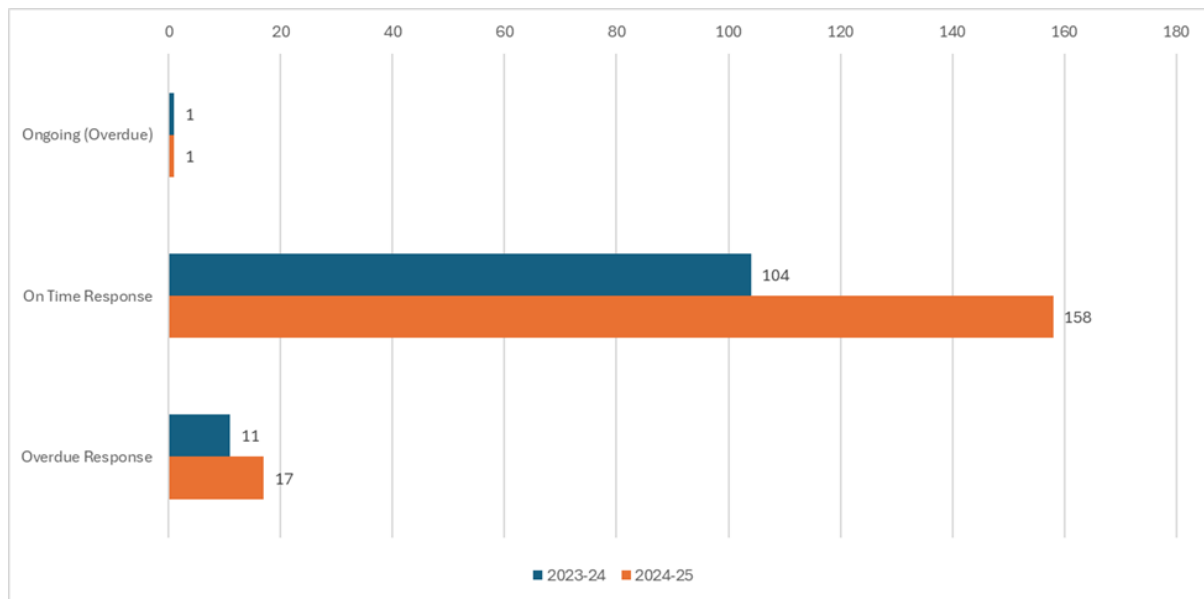
33 Table 4: Complaints Outcomes – Percentage



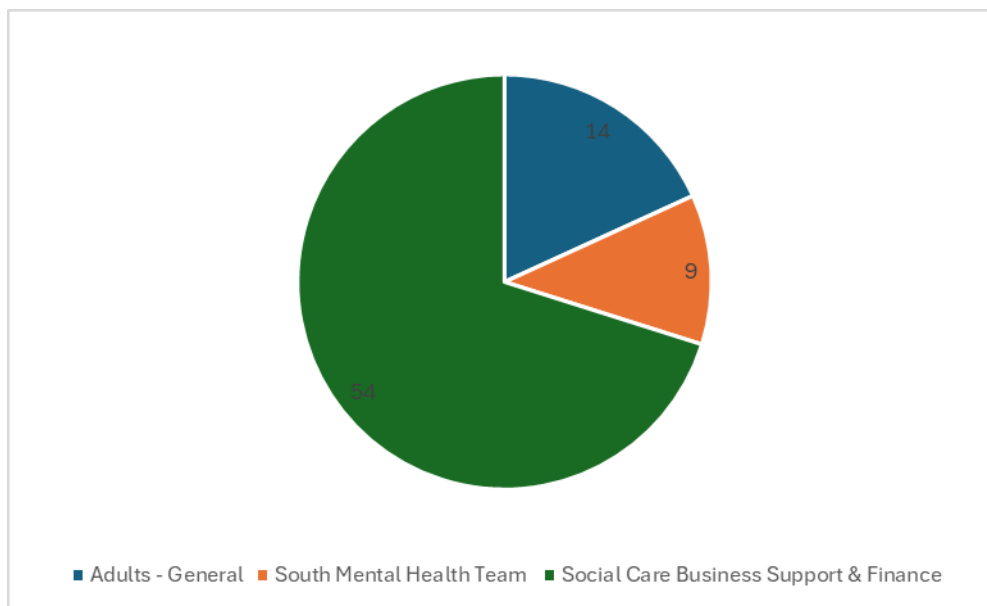
34 Table 5: Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Static (answered within 10 working days)



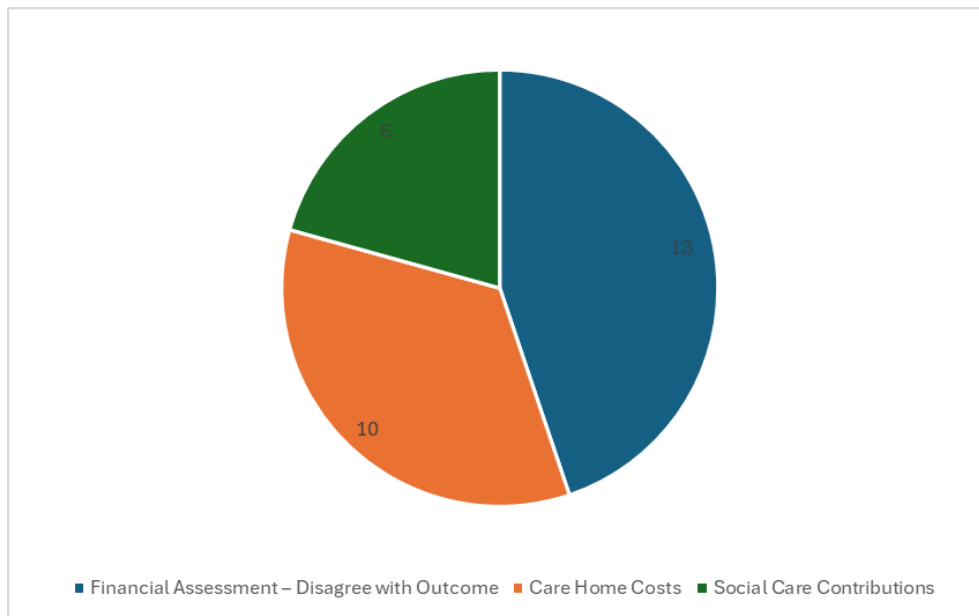
35 **Table 6:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Non-Static



36 **Table 7:** Themes Tracker – Top 3 Services (processed complaints)



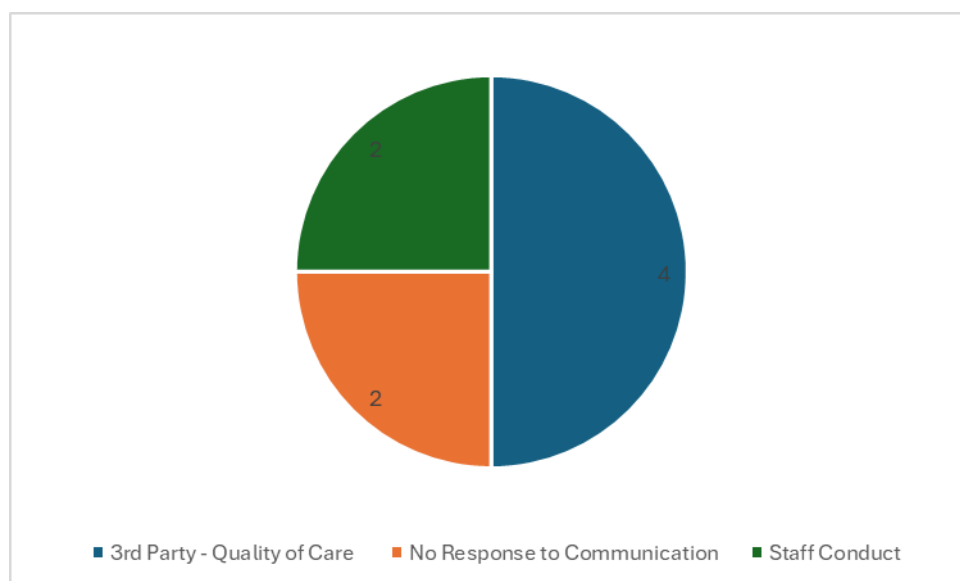
37 **Table 8:** Themes by Service – Social Care Business Support & Finance (processed complaints)



38 **Table 9:** Theme by Service outcomes - Social Care Business Support & Finance (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Financial Assessment – Disagree with Outcome	0	0	13
Care Home Costs	1	7	2
Social Care Contributions	1	2	3

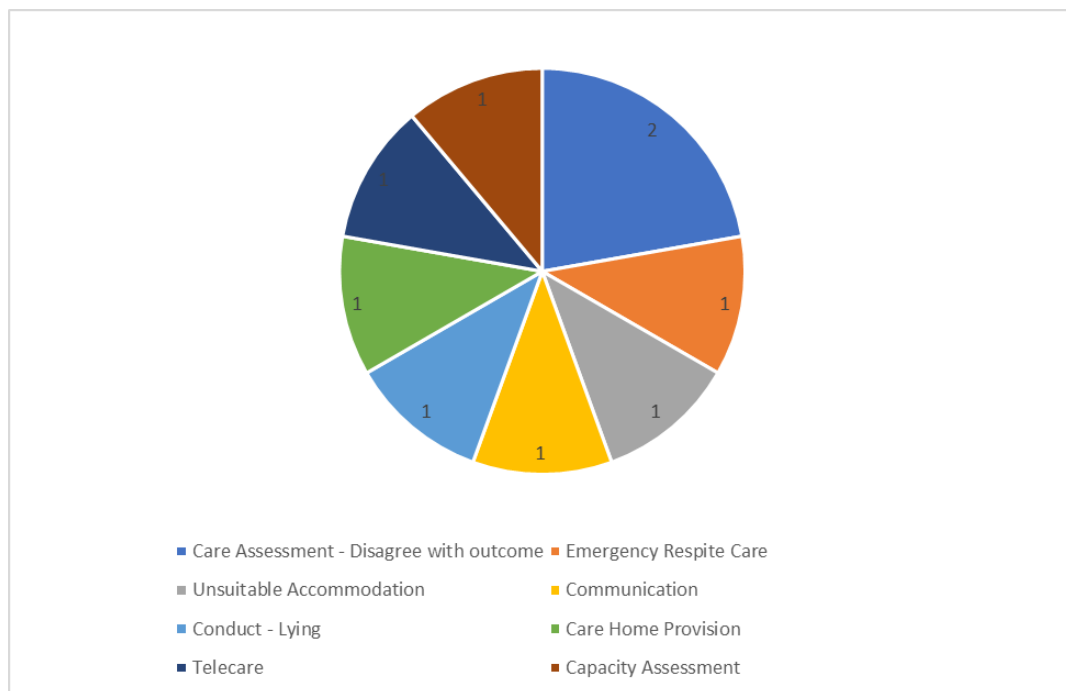
39 **Table 10:** Themes by Service – Adults General (processed complaints)



40 **Table 11:** Themes by Service outcomes – Adults General (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Third Party Quality of Care	1	1	2
No Response to Communication	0	2	0
Staff Conduct	0	0	2

41 **Table 12:** Themes by Service – South Mental Health team (processed complaints)



42 **Table 13:** Themes by Service outcomes – South Mental Health team (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Care Assessment - Disagree with outcome	1	1	0
Emergency Respite Care	1	0	1
Unsuitable Accommodation	0	0	1
Communication	0	0	1
Conduct – Lying	0	0	1
Care Home Provision	1	0	0
Telecare	1	0	0
Capacity Assessment	0	0	1

43 **Table 14:** Adults and Health received 472 compliments in 2024/25, spread across 32 services.

Team	2023-24	2024-25
Adults	27	13
Adults Commissioning	1	1
East Learning Disability Team	0	3
East Mental Health Team	1	0
Social Care Business Support and Finance	4	12
South Learning Disability Team	0	1
South Mental Health Team	1	0
Carter House	2	1
Dementia Reablement North	25	35
Dementia Reablement South	46	63
Domiciliary Reablement North	59	89
Domiciliary Reablement South	54	54
Macclesfield Lifestyle Group	1	0
MH Providers and Reablement North	39	31
MH Providers and Reablement South	15	19
Reablement Congleton	1	0
Reablement Crewe	4	2
Reablement Macclesfield	24	40
Reablement Wilmslow	4	41
Redesmere Centre	1	0
Salinae Centre	6	3
SLN Heather Brae	0	1

Community Resilience	1	0
FPOC East	3	5
Knutsford, Poynton, Bollington & Disley	3	7
Macclesfield Team	6	2
Short Term Intervention East	1	6
Wilmslow Team	0	9
Congleton & Holmes Chapel	0	2
Eaglebridge	5	2
FPOC South	7	11
Grosvenor, Hungerford & Rope Green	1	2
Nantwich & Rural	1	3
Sandbach	7	1
Short Term Intervention South	3	8
Integrated Discharge Team Macclesfield Hospital	1	0
Occupational Therapy Team	5	3
Safeguarding	3	1
Visual Impairment Team	1	1
Public Health & Wellbeing	1	0

44 Examples of Compliments in 2024/25

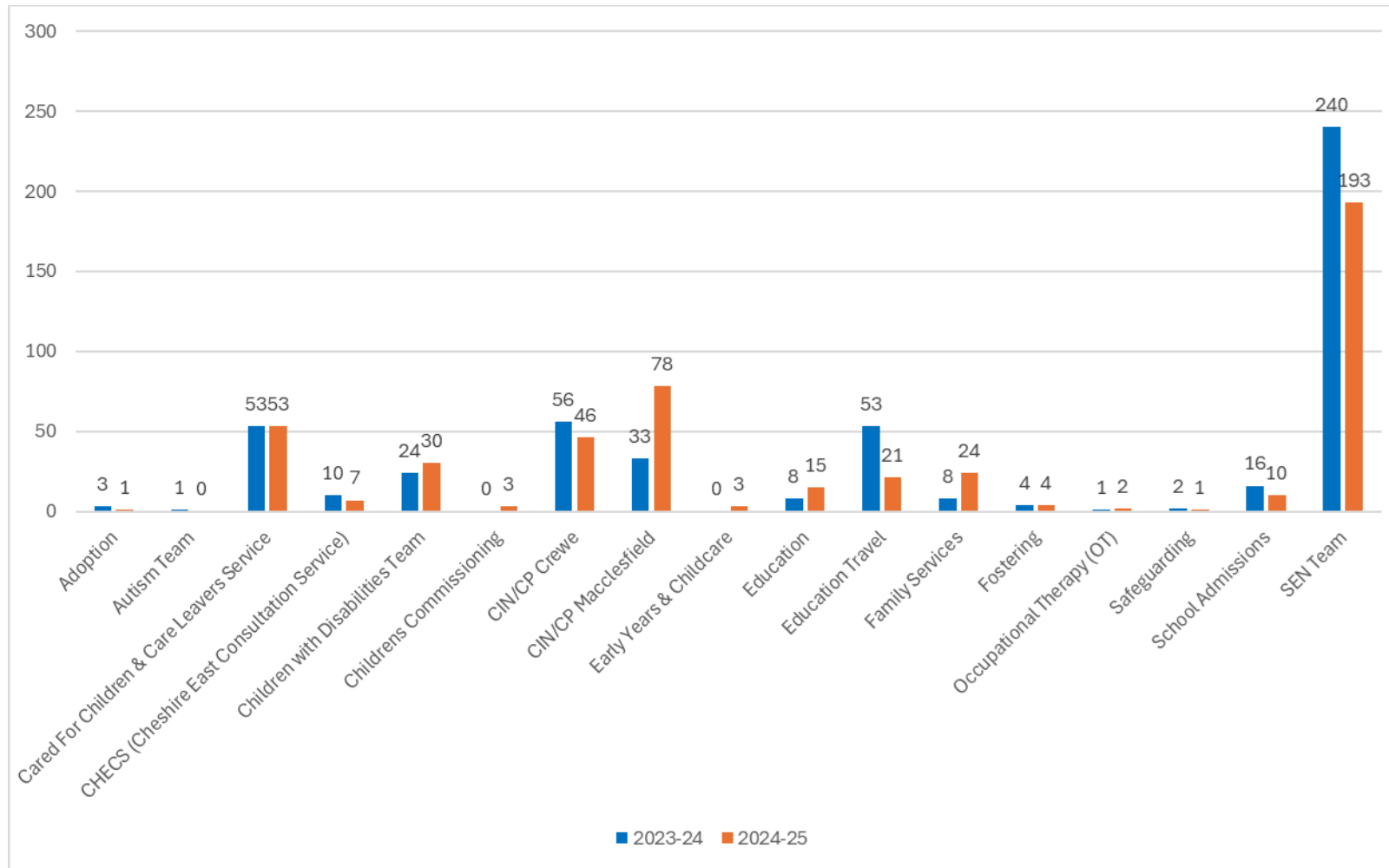
- *When X started visiting, it was like a breath of fresh air. I was at a very low point in my life it was very uplifting to have X visit me with such a positive attitude. She outlined what needed to be done but with an understanding of what my capabilities are at the moment. X has a realistic and sympathetic attitude towards my needs just chatting to X is a positive in my life. I sign off with a big thank you to X and the mental health team from Cheshire East, when needed you were there.*
- *Social worker X, short term discharge support team, later life Sandbach area completed a Care Needs assessment with my Mum. His level of empathy, kindness and engagement with my Mum was a pleasure to observe. He also involved me in the process, speaking to me prior to the assessment, accommodating changes of date for the assessment and informing me that on the day of the assessment he was running 10 mins late. An absolute credit to his team, local authority and profession.*
- *X from the Dementia Reablement Service went above and beyond to facilitate a face-to-face visit to an individual who had received a scam text message to reassure them and check that they were not at risk of abuse. I wanted to formally pass on my thanks to her for her prompt and compassionate response.*

- *I just wanted to say thank you so much for your time on the phone this afternoon. I do appreciate you explaining the complexities of care funding and attendance allowance. This is very new to us, so we feel a bit out of our depth. Your patience and care shines through.*

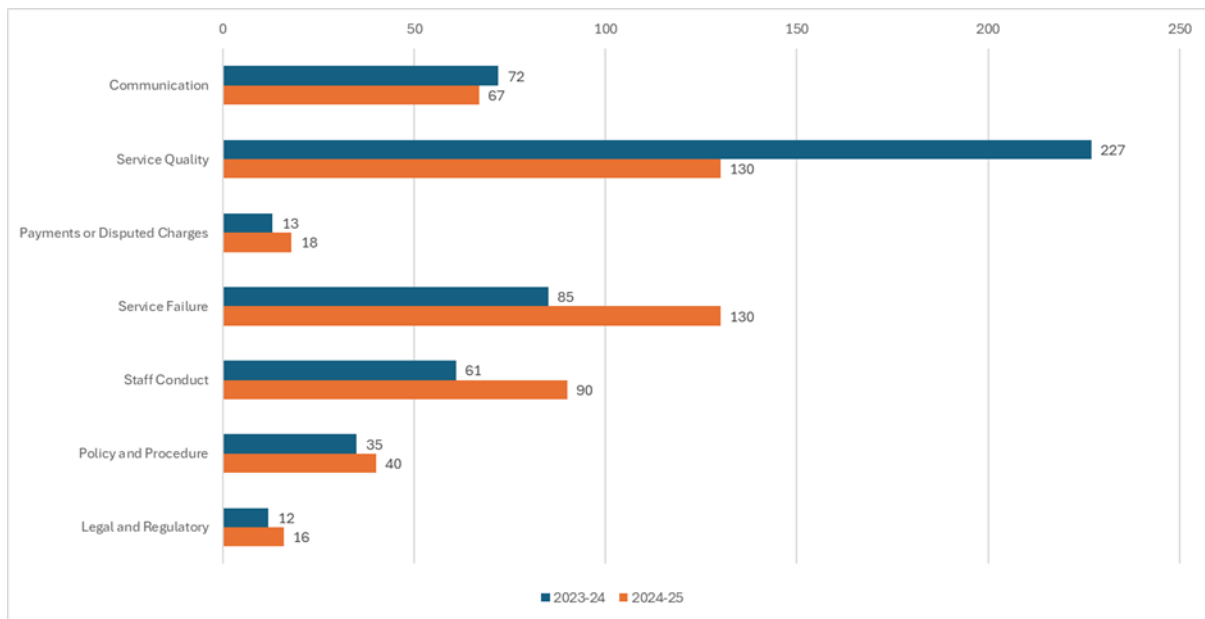
Children and Families

- 45 Children and Families received 491 complaints in 2024/25, 11% of the total received by the council. Of these, 123 complaints were rejected, withdrawn, or not pursued; the remaining 368 were processed as official complaints.
- 46 2024/25 saw a 14% decrease in processed complaints compared with 2023/24 (429). There were 13 Stage 2 complaints and 0 Stage 3 complaints in the 6 months.
- 47 Children and Families received 97 compliments in 2024/25

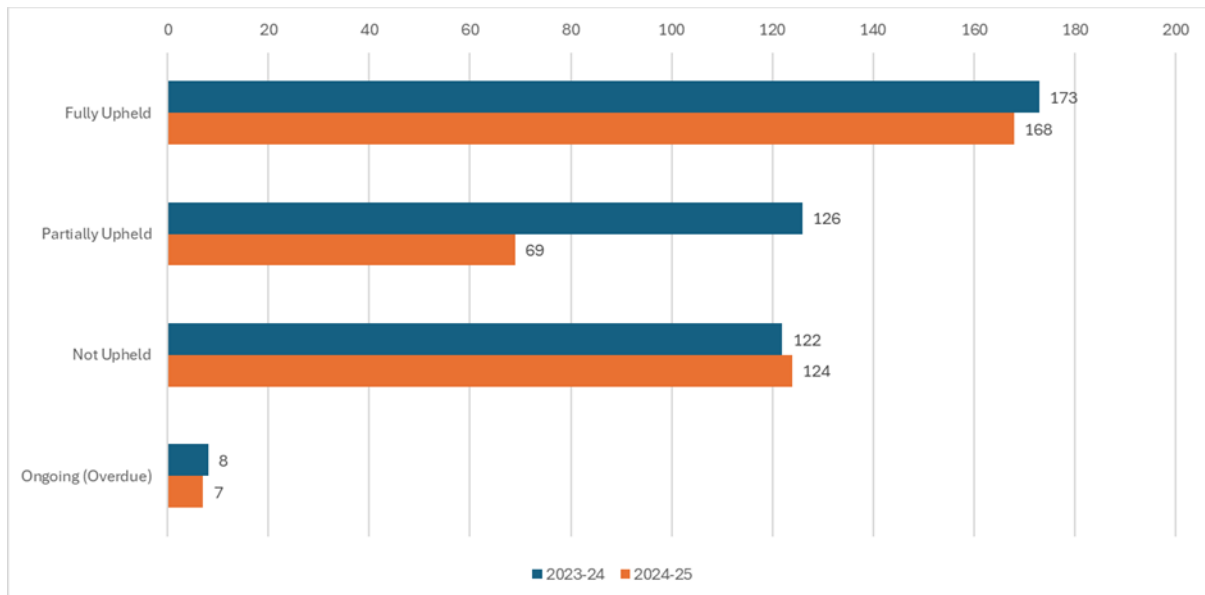
48 **Table 15:** Complaint Volumes received by Service



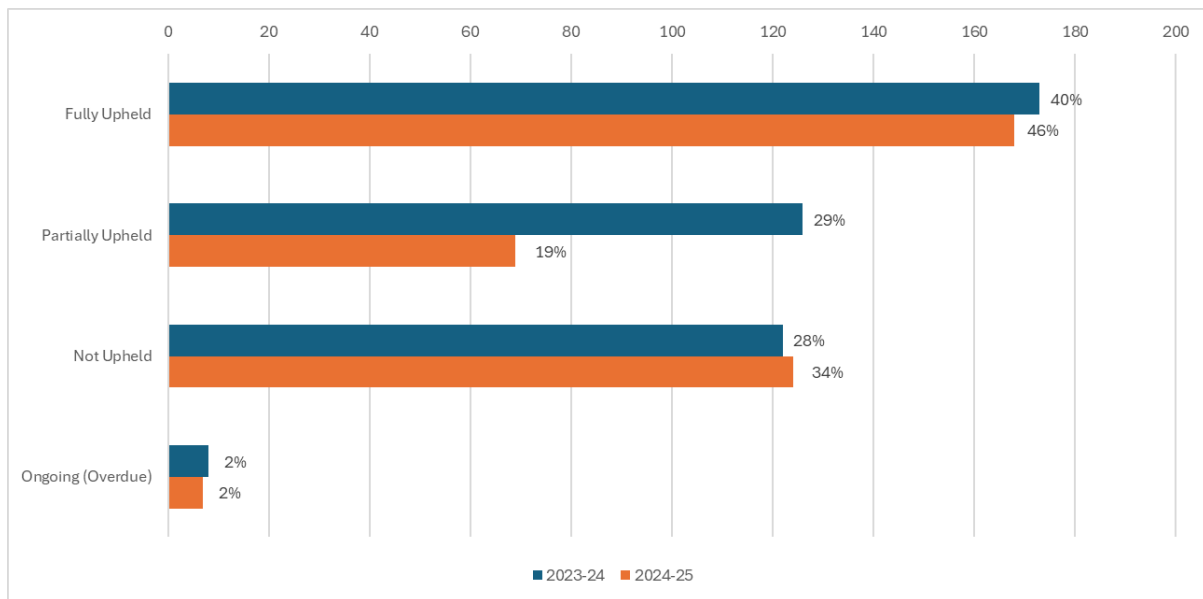
49 **Table 16: Complaint Primary Causes in 2024/25**



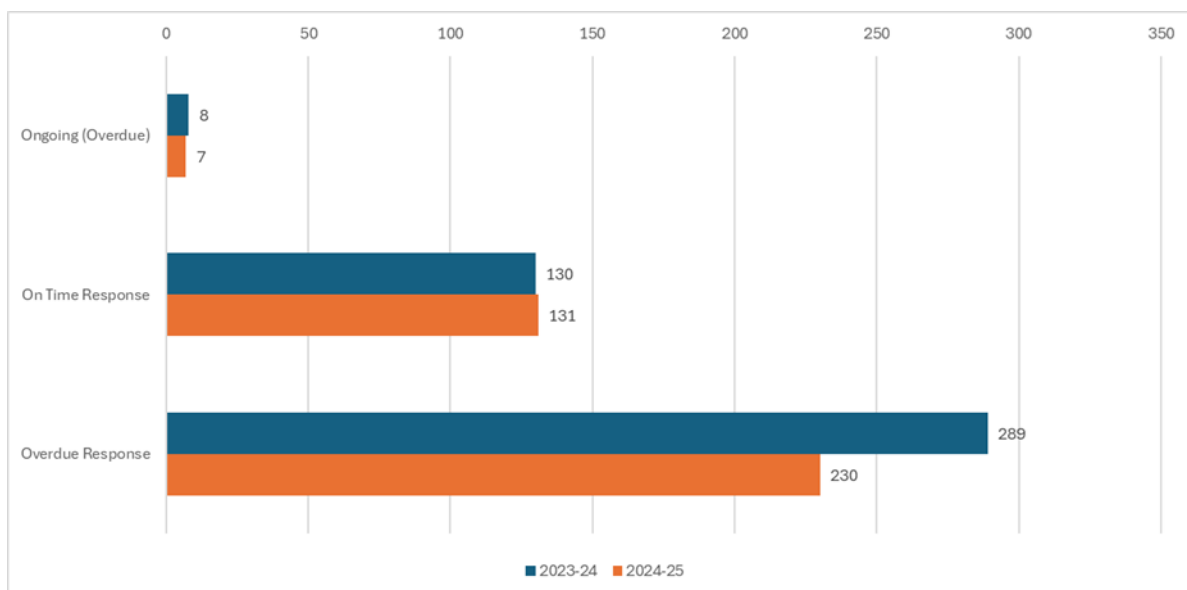
50 **Table 17: Complaints Outcomes – Numbers**



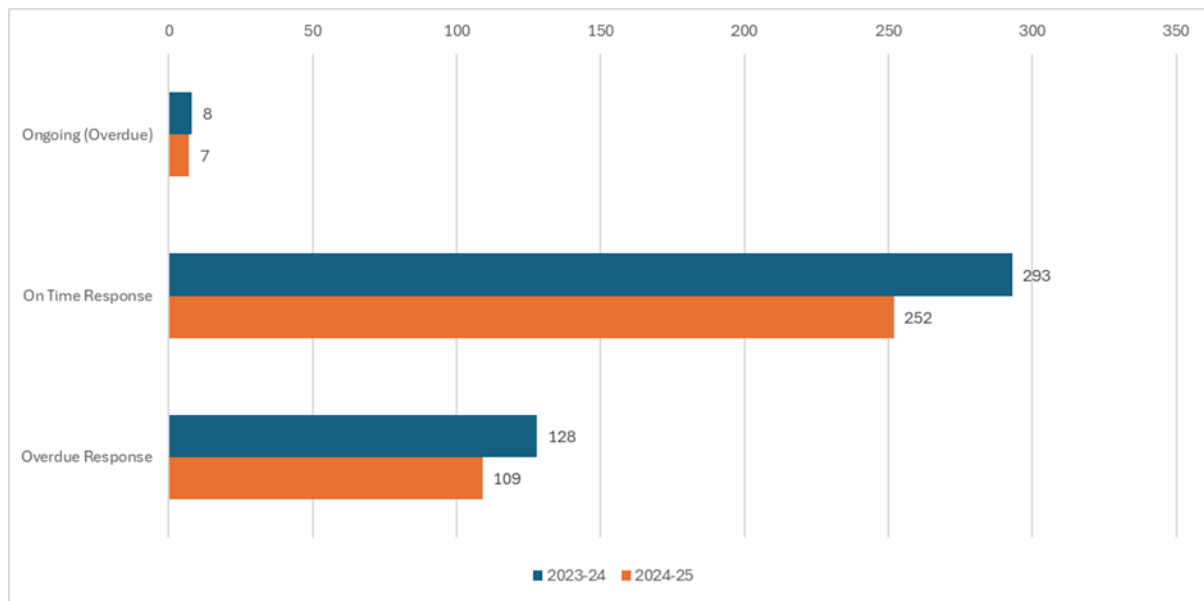
51 Table 18: Complaints Outcomes – Percentages



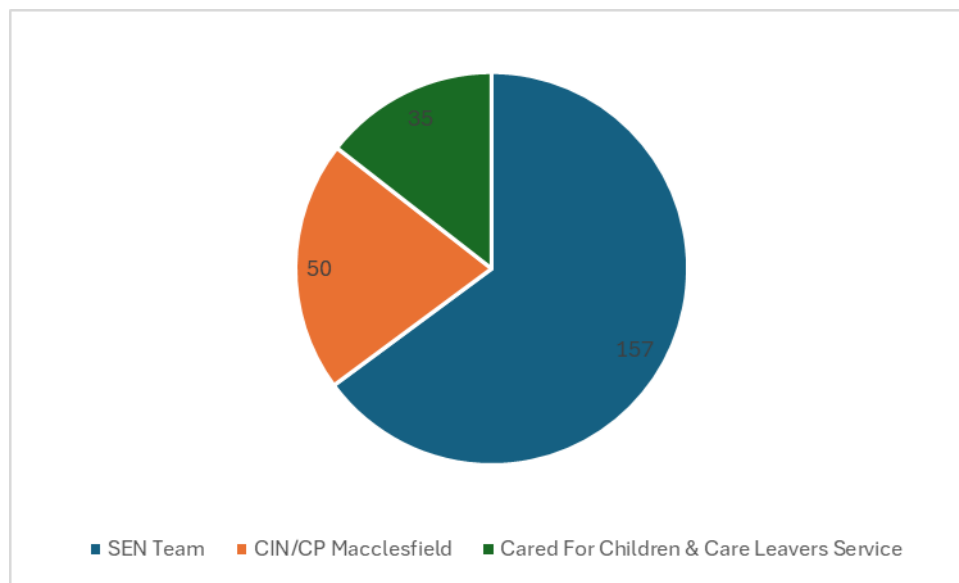
52 Table 19: Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 & 2024/25 – Static (answered within 10 working days)



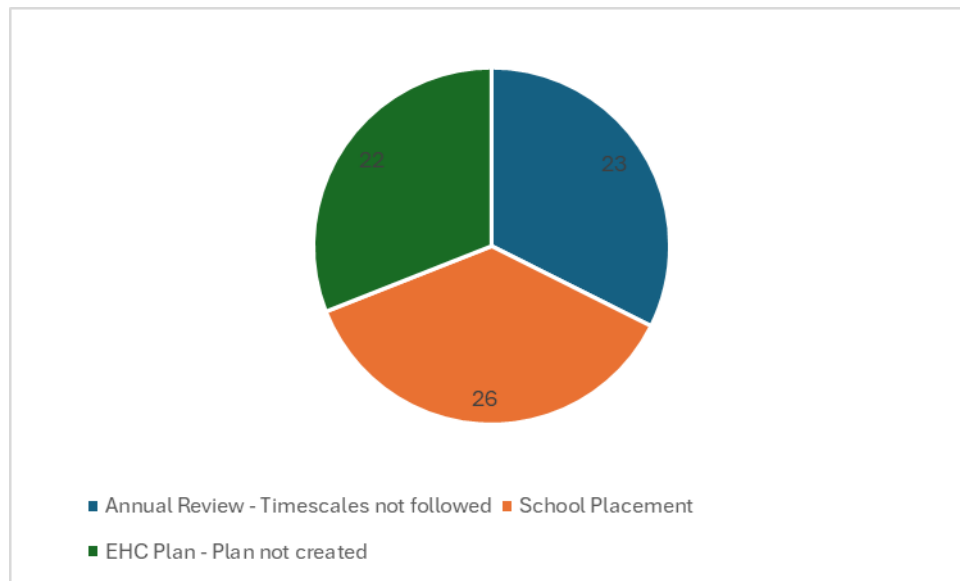
53 **Table 20:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 & 2024/25 – Non-Static



54 **Table 21:** Themes Tracker – Top 3 Services (processed complaints)



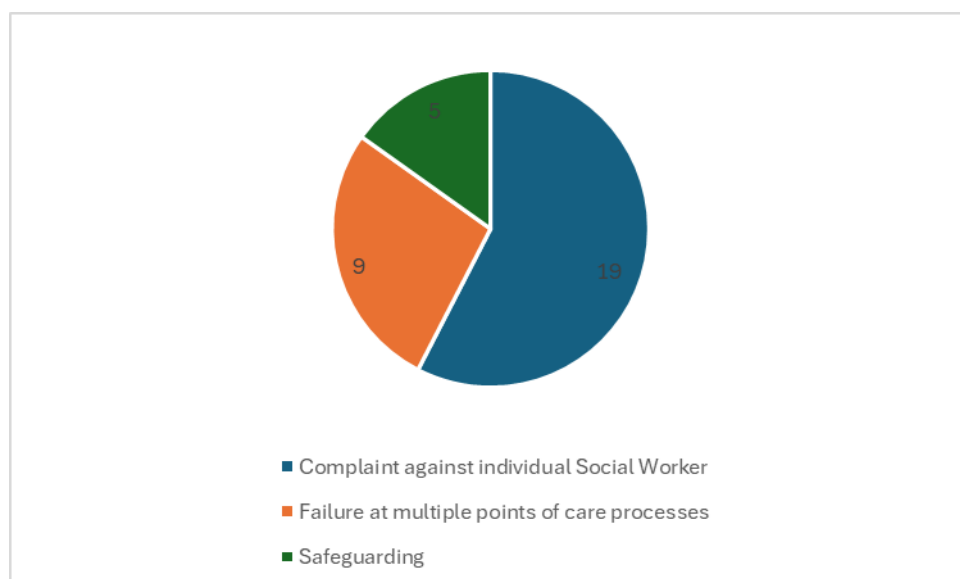
55 **Table 22:** Top 3 themes by Service – SEN Team (processed complaints)



56 **Table 23:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes – SEN Team (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
School Placement	18	6	2
Annual Review - Timescales not followed	19	4	0
EHC Plan - Plan not created	20	1	1

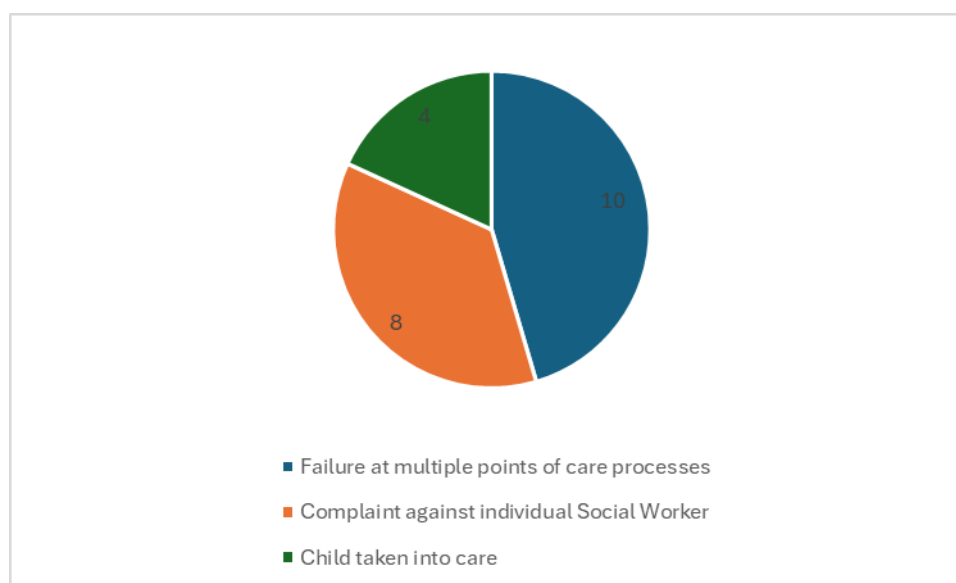
57 **Table 24:** Top 3 Themes by Service – CIN/CP Macclesfield Team (processed complaints)



58 **Table 25:** Top 3 Themes by Service outcomes – CIN/CP Macclesfield Team (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Complaint against individual Social Worker	6	3	10
Failure at multiple points of care processes	2	4	3
Safeguarding	1	1	3

59 **Table 26:** Top 3 themes by Service – Cared For Children & Care Leavers Service (processed complaints)



60 **Table 27:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes – Cared For Children & Care Leavers Service (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld	Ongoing
Failure at multiple points of care processes	3	2	4	1
Complaint against individual Social Worker	2	0	6	0
Child taken into care	3	0	1	0

61 **Table 28:** Children and Families received 97 compliments in 2024/25, spread across 10 services

Team	2023-24	2024-25
Adoption	0	1
Autism Team	0	3
Cared For Children & Care Leavers Service	6	4
Children with Disabilities Team	1	8
CIN/CP Crewe	1	0
CIN/CP Macclesfield	5	3
Education	8	11
Education Travel	3	3
Emergency Duty Team (EDT)	0	0
Family Services	71	11
Fostering	0	2
Occupational Therapy (OT)	1	0
School Admissions	1	0
SEN Team	70	51

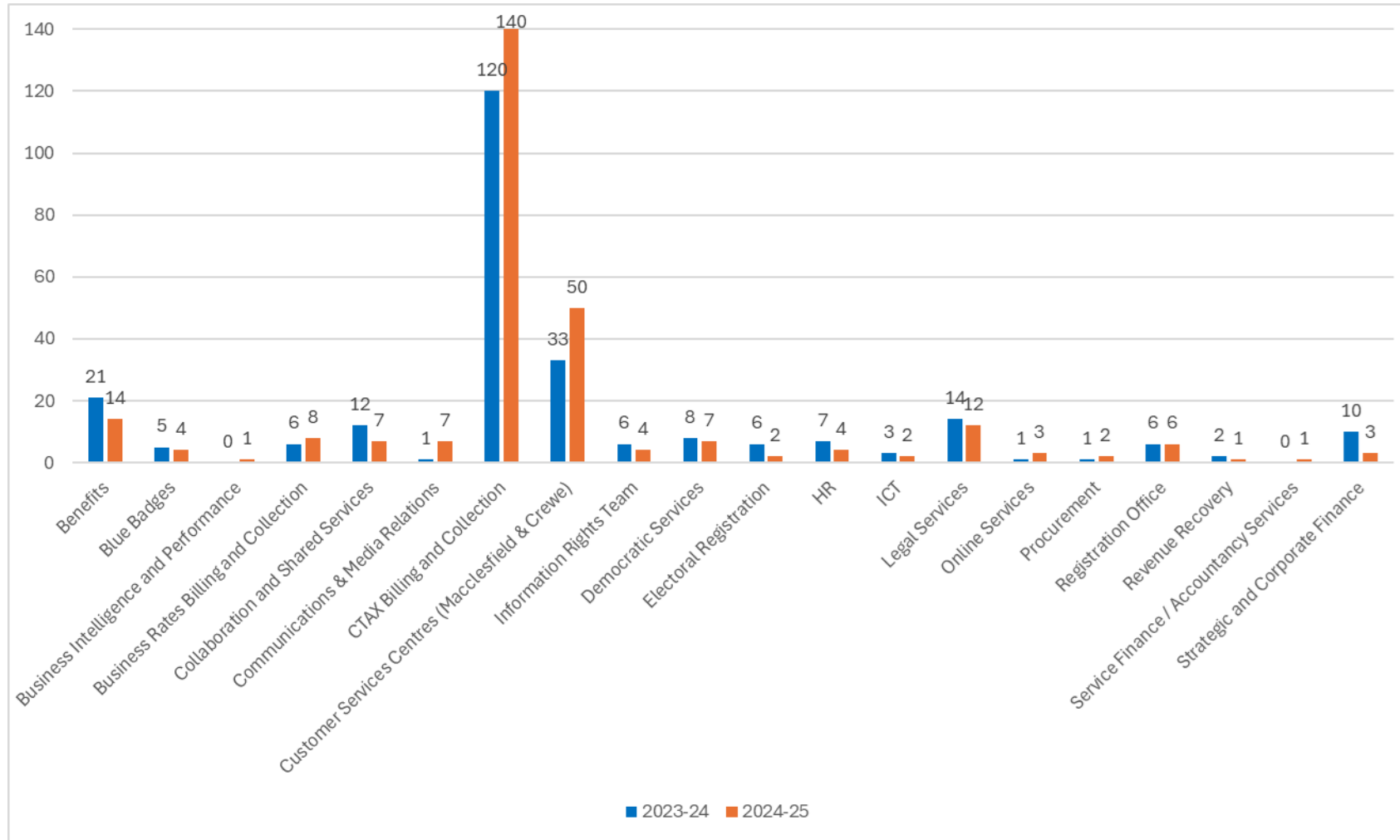
62 Examples of Compliments in 2024/25

- *I just wanted to take a moment to express how truly kind and helpful she has been. Her warmth, understanding, and dedication have made such a difference, and we are incredibly grateful for all the support she has provided.*
- *It was such a positive meeting, X was amazing with the parent, she listened, was reassuring but realistic and professional. She ensured that the meeting was an extremely positive one. I know that the parent was grateful and fed that back to X after the meeting finished, but I just wanted to let you both know too! It was very much appreciated.*
- *I would just like to say a big thank you to X at CEIAS and Y and Z on the SEN Team for working so hard to help my daughter, A, gain a place at Springfield School. As a parent, it is difficult to always know what to do on the EHCP and school placement journey, but I have received the help and support needed to keep me sane and provide what A needs.*
- *As we end the year, I wanted to thank you for all you have done to help our students and their families. You have had a real impact with several of our young people, and the fact that they are now attending school in some shape or form is down to you. You have added that extra dimension to the work we do, and it is much appreciated.*

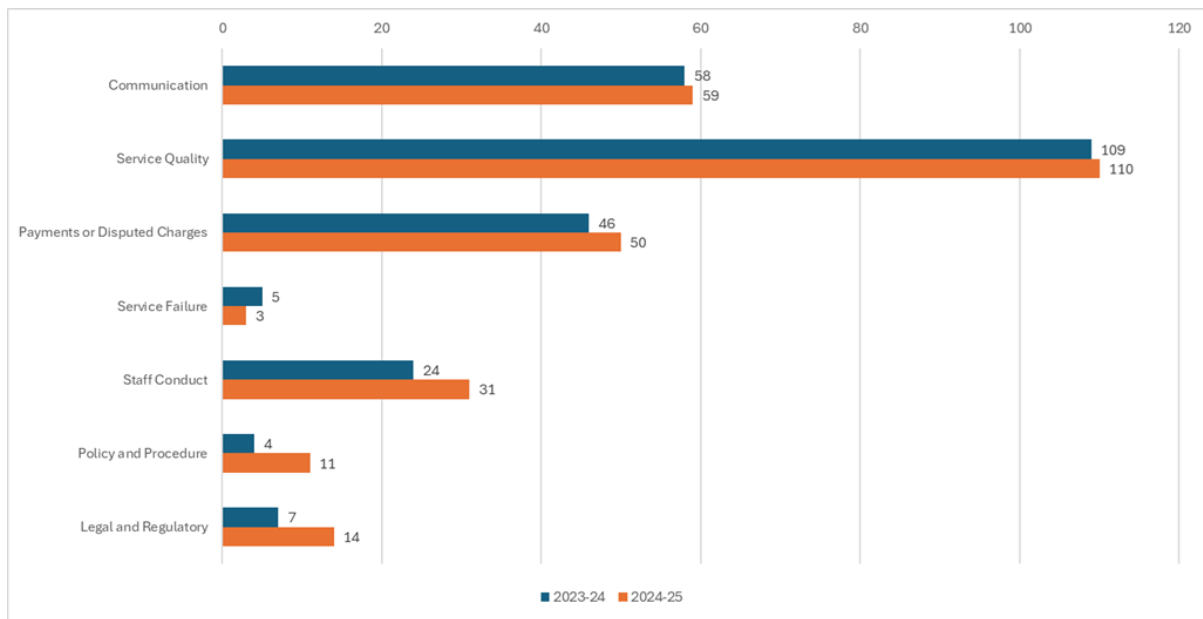
Corporate Policy (including Finance Sub-Committee)

- 63 Corporate Policy received 278 complaints in 2024/25. 6% of the total received by the council. Of these, 21 complaints were rejected, withdrawn, or not pursued; the remaining 257 were processed as official complaints.
- 64 2024/25 saw a 4% increase in processed complaints compared with 2023/24 (248). There were 21 Stage 2 complaints in 2024/25.
- 65 Corporate Policy received 228 compliments in 2024/25.

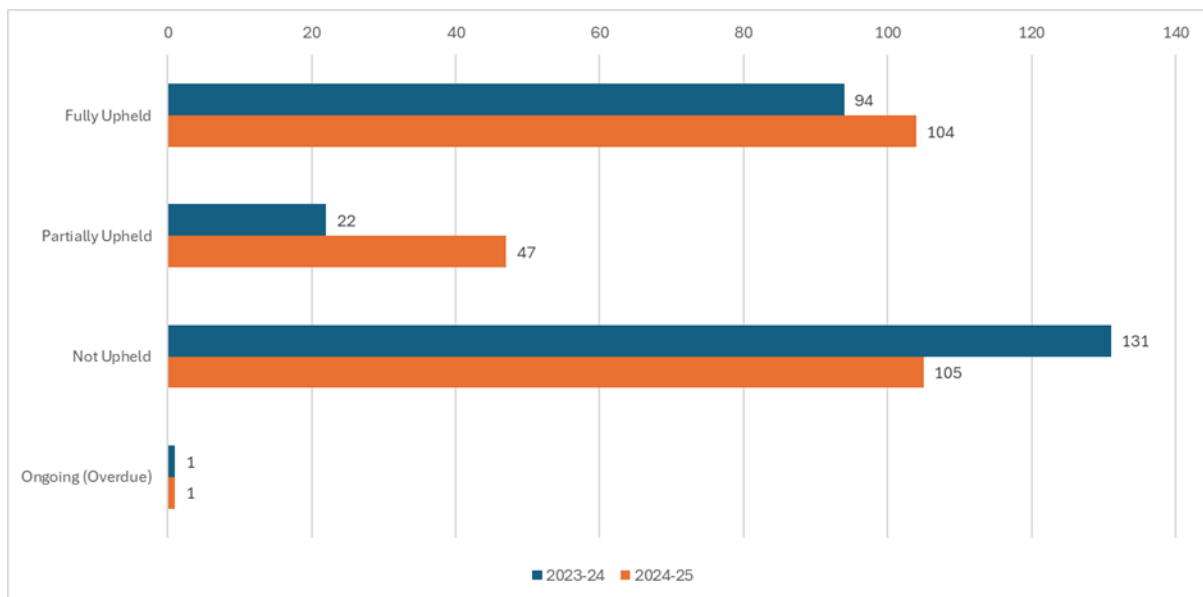
66 **Table 29:** Complaint Volumes received by Service



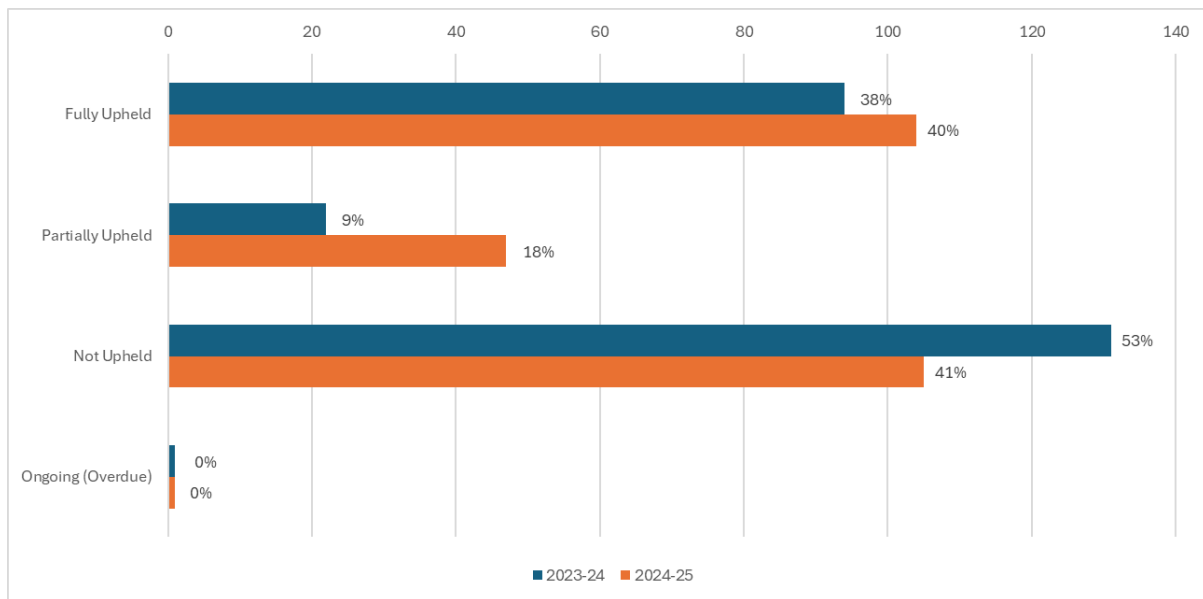
67 **Table 30: Complaint Primary Causes in 2023/24 and 2024/25**



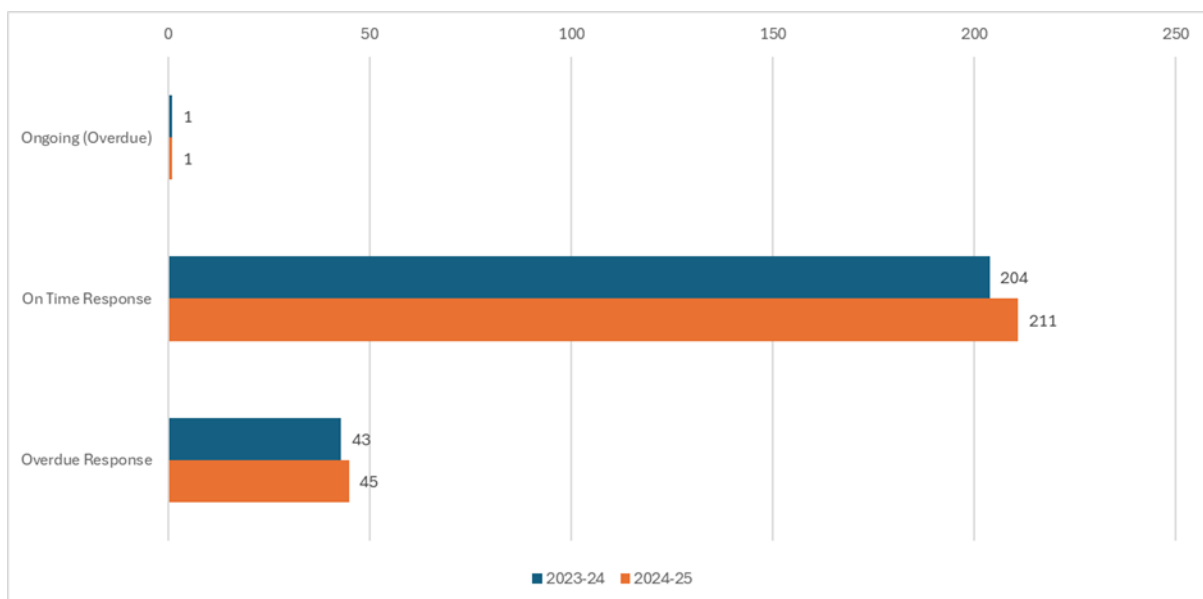
68 **Table 31: Complaint Outcomes – Numbers**



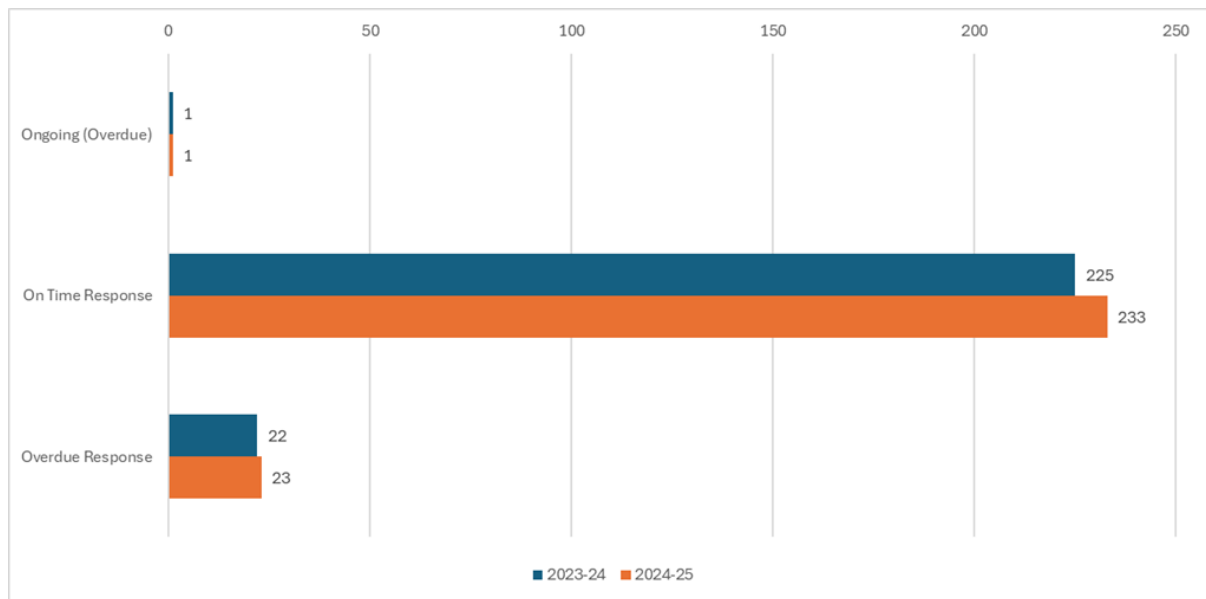
69 **Table 32: Complaints Outcomes – Percentages**



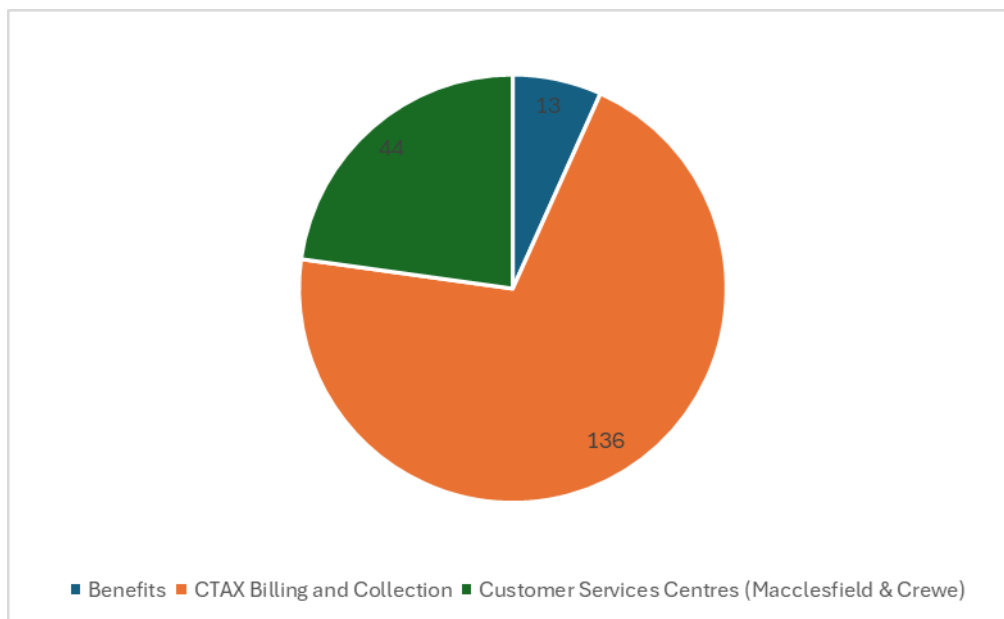
70 **Table 33: Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Static (answered within 10 working days)**



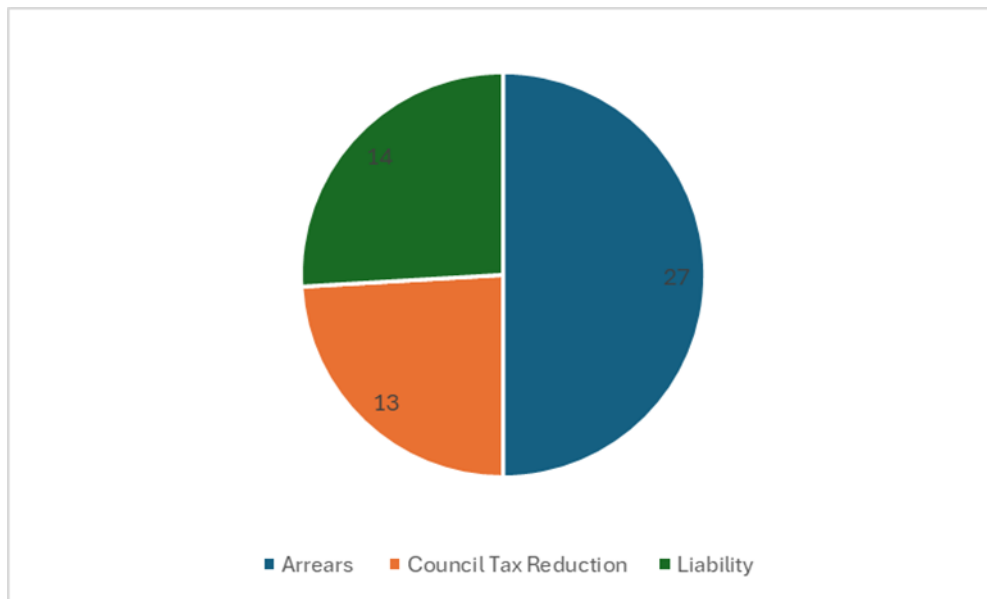
71 **Table 34:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Non-Static



72 **Table 35:** Themes Tracker – Top 3 Services (processed complaints)



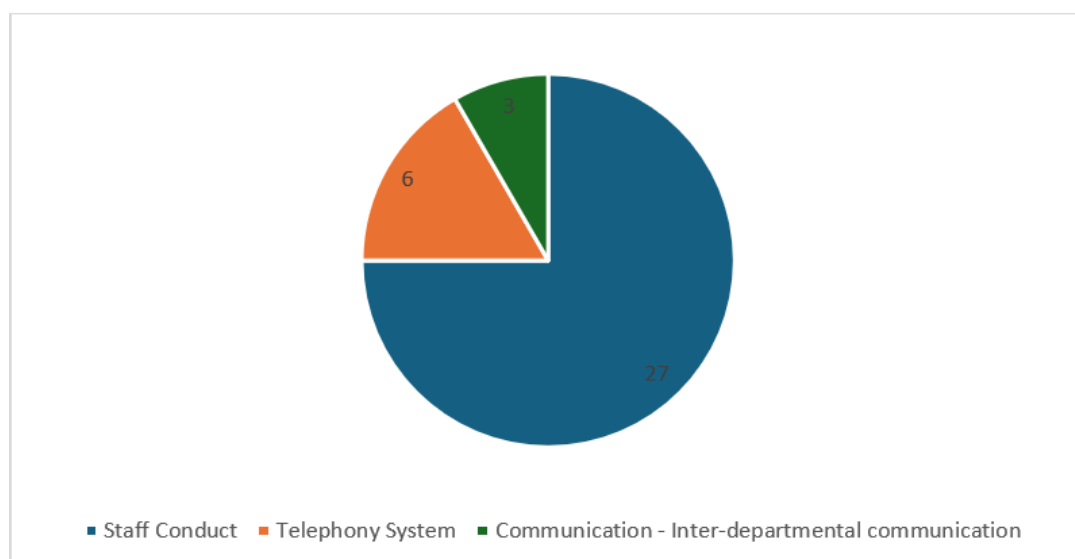
- 73 **Table 36:** Top 3 themes by Service – CTAX, Billing and Collection (processed complaints)



- 74 **Table 37:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes – CTAX, Billing and Collection (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Arrears	3	9	15
Council Tax - Council tax reduction	4	3	6
Liability	6	3	5

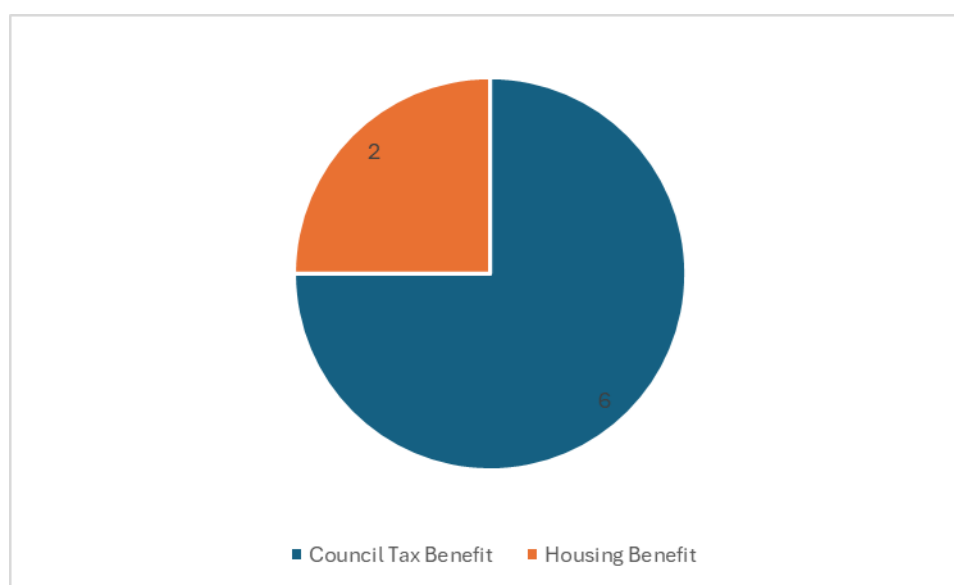
- 75 **Table 38:** Top 6 Themes by Service - Customer Services Centres (Macclesfield & Crewe) (processed complaints)



76 **Table 39:** Top 3 Themes by Service outcomes - Customer Services Centres (Macclesfield & Crewe) (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Staff Conduct	17	5	5
Telephony System	6	0	0
Communication - Inter-departmental communication	2	0	1

77 **Table 40:** Top 2 Themes by Service – Benefits (processed complaints)



78 **Table 41:** Top 2 Themes by Service outcomes – Benefits (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Benefits - Council Tax Benefit	3	0	3
Benefits – Housing Benefit	1	0	1

79 **Table 42:** Corporate Policy received 228 compliments in 2024/25 across 5 services

Team	2023-24	2024-25
Blue Badges	1	0
Business Rates Billing and Collection	29	21
CTAX Billing and Collection	98	42
Customer Services Centres (Macclesfield & Crewe)	39	163
Information Rights Team	1	0
Registration Office	1	1
Revenue Recovery	0	1

80 Examples of Compliments in 2024/25

- *I was able to speak to a lady who was most understanding of my needs and helped tremendously and pointed me in the right direction and made me feel there is hope to continue with my applications. The good old fashioned telephone conversation could not be improved upon in my experience today.*
- *I wanted to say thanks so much for all your help, advice and the great service you have given me. I know you have gone out of your way for me, even checking the library opening times for me regarding the scanning. It's really helped ease some of the stress we are under at the moment and greatly appreciated. Massive thanks.*
- *The Board formally asked us to pass on their appreciation of what they view as outstanding work undertaken by the CEC Business Rates Team in preparing and issuing the BID Levy bills and collecting the BID levy.*
- *The lady I talked to was just the person I needed to talk to. She listened to the predicament I found myself in. She looked into my council tax record and went on to explain in detail how she could reschedule my council tax payments that would help me. She is a credit to the council I cannot praise her enough. Thank you.*

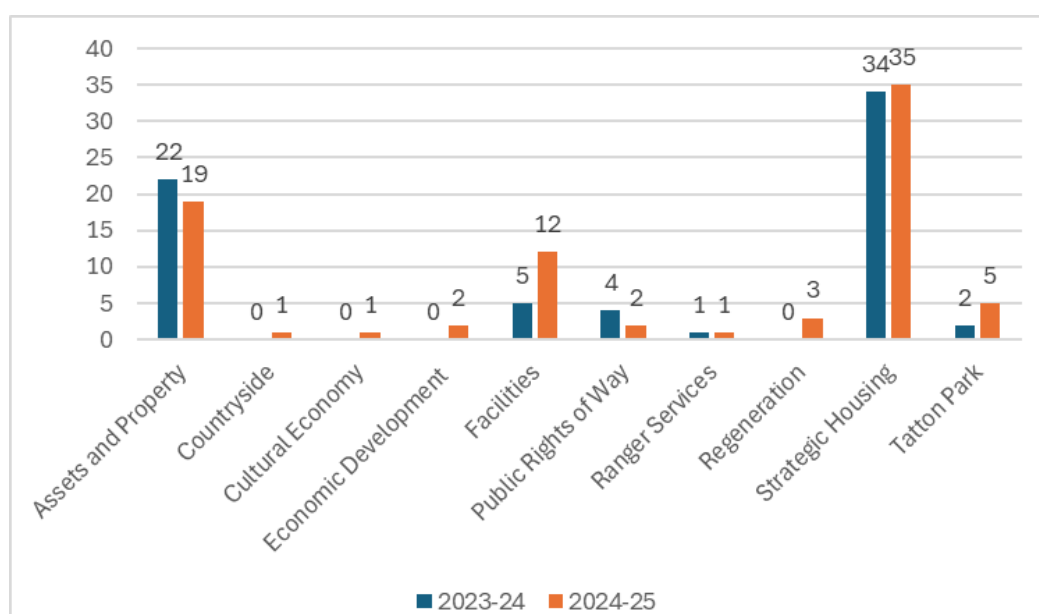
Economy and Growth

81 Economy and Growth received 81 complaints in 2024/25. 2% of the total received by the council. Of these, 10 complaints were rejected, withdrawn, or not pursued; the remaining 71 were processed as official complaints.

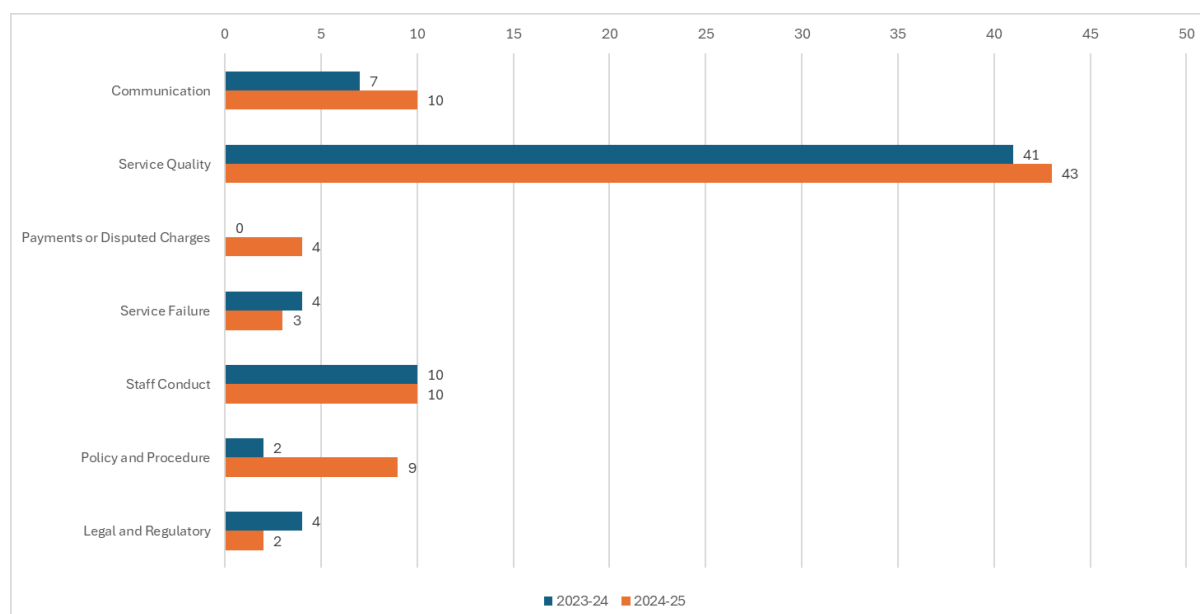
82 2024/25 saw a 16% increase in processed complaints compared with 2023/24 (61). There were 7 Stage 2 complaints in 2024/25.

83 Economy and Growth received 3 compliments in 2024/25.

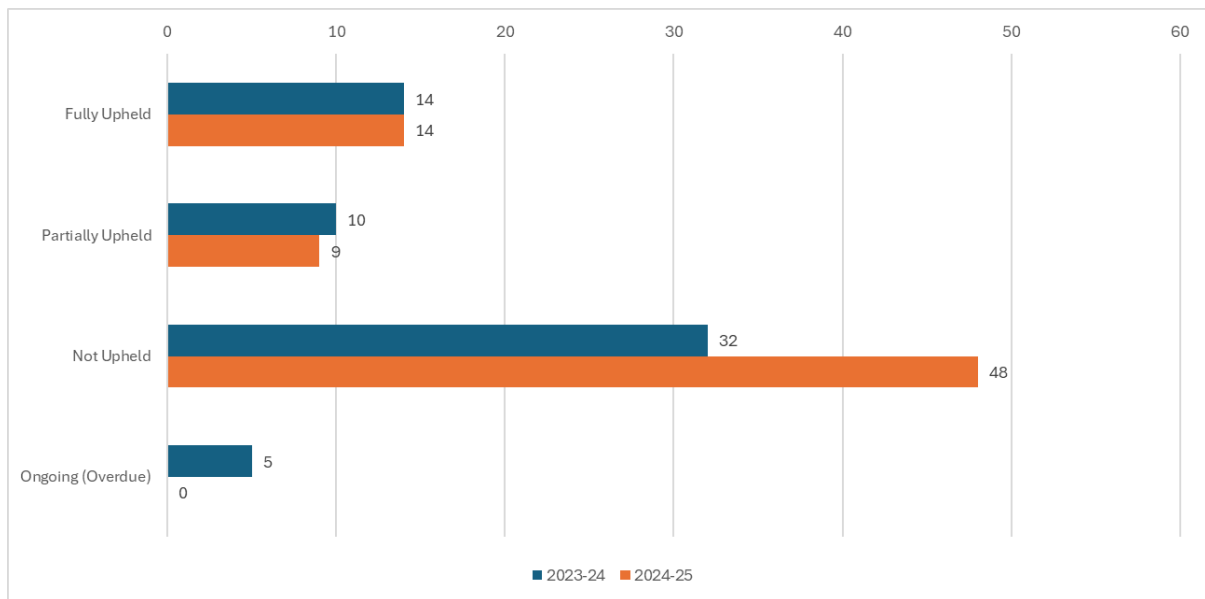
84 **Table 43:** Complaints Volumes received by Service



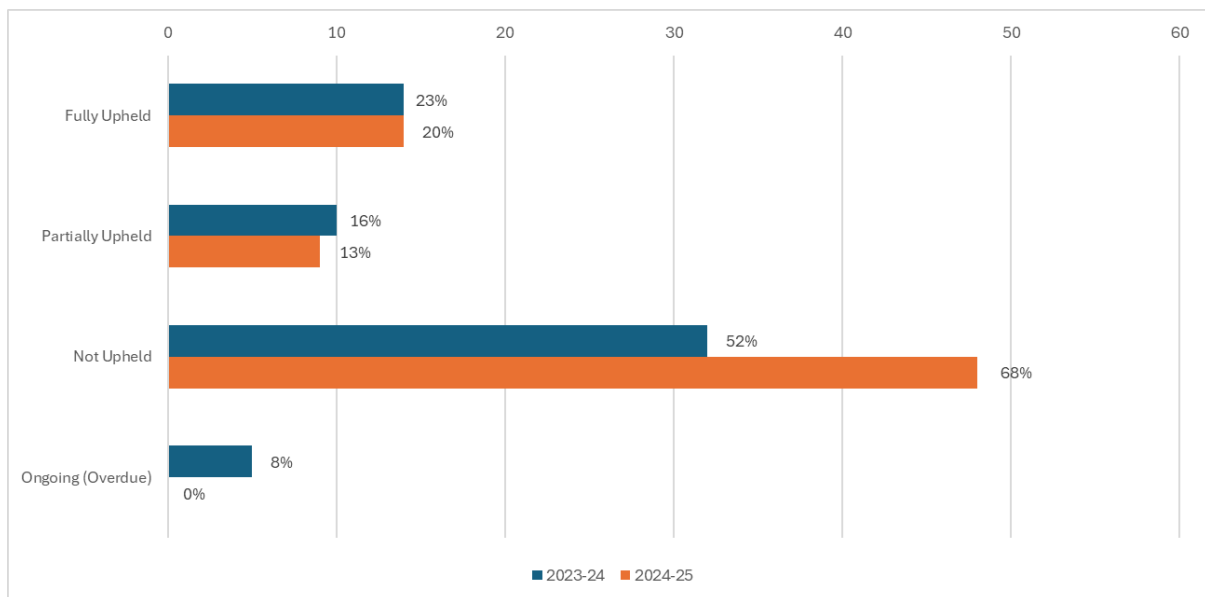
85 **Table 44:** Complaint Primary Causes in 2023/24 and 2024/25



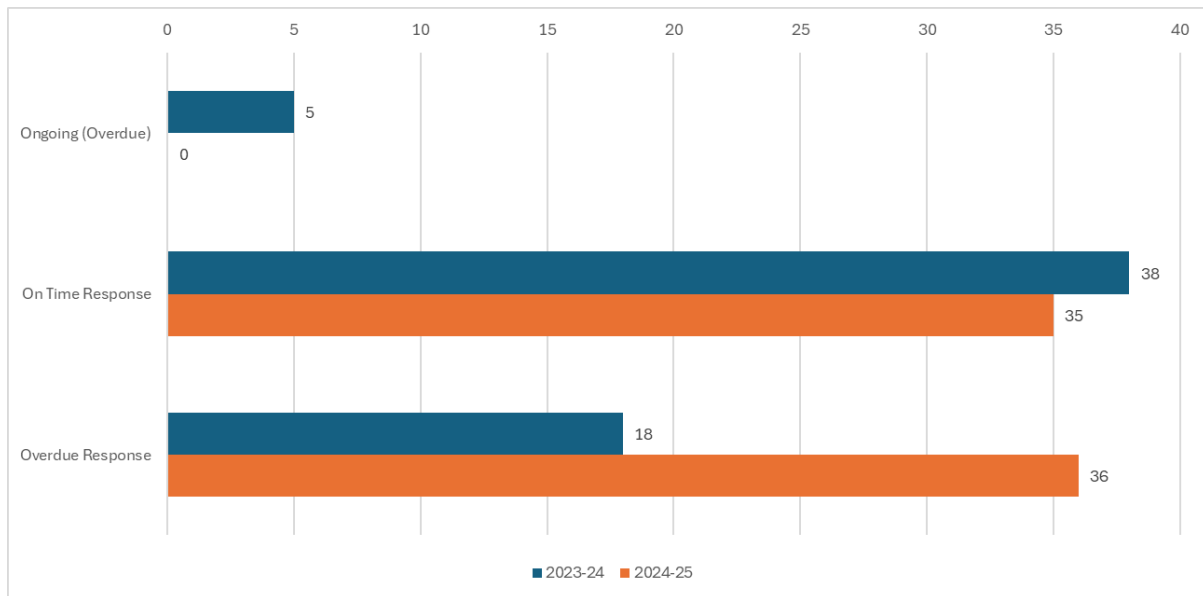
86 Table 45: Complaints Outcomes – Numbers



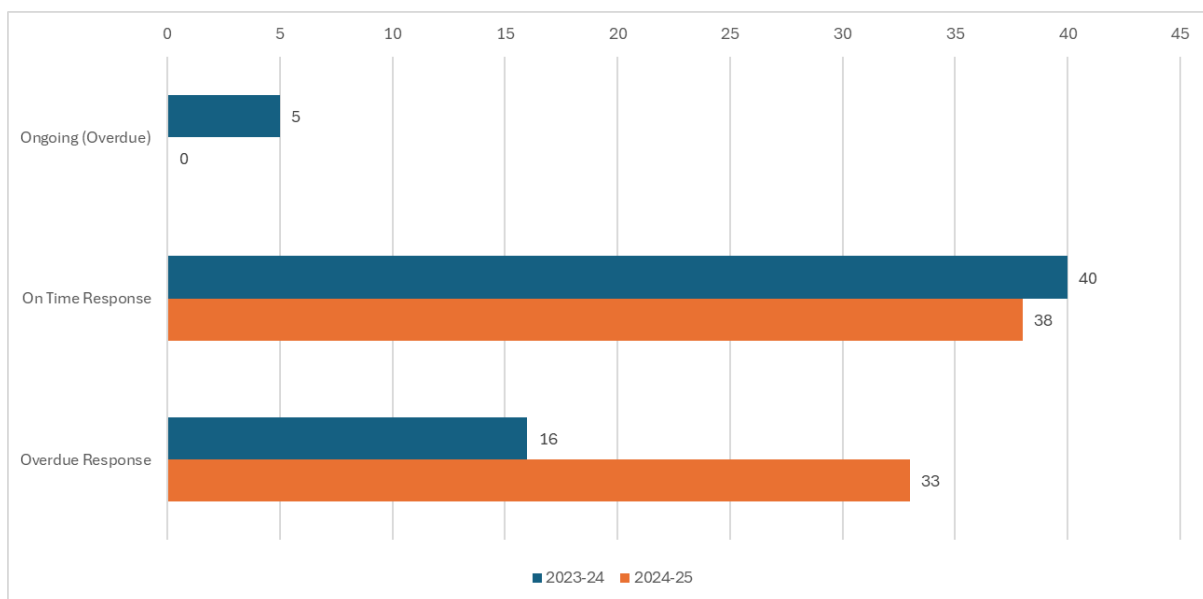
87 Table 46: Complaints Outcomes – Percentages



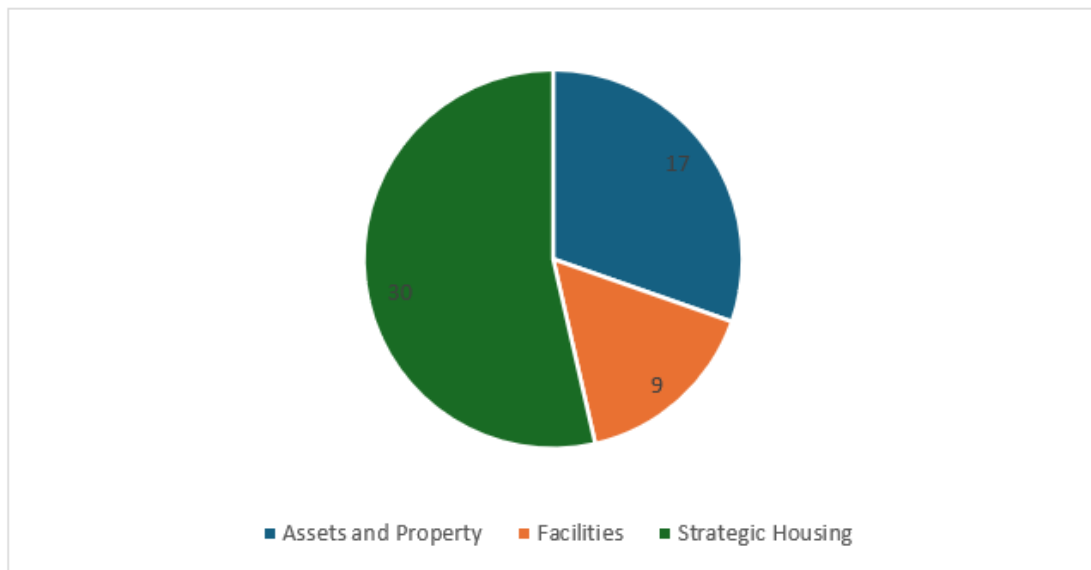
88 **Table 47: Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Static**
(answered within 10 working days)



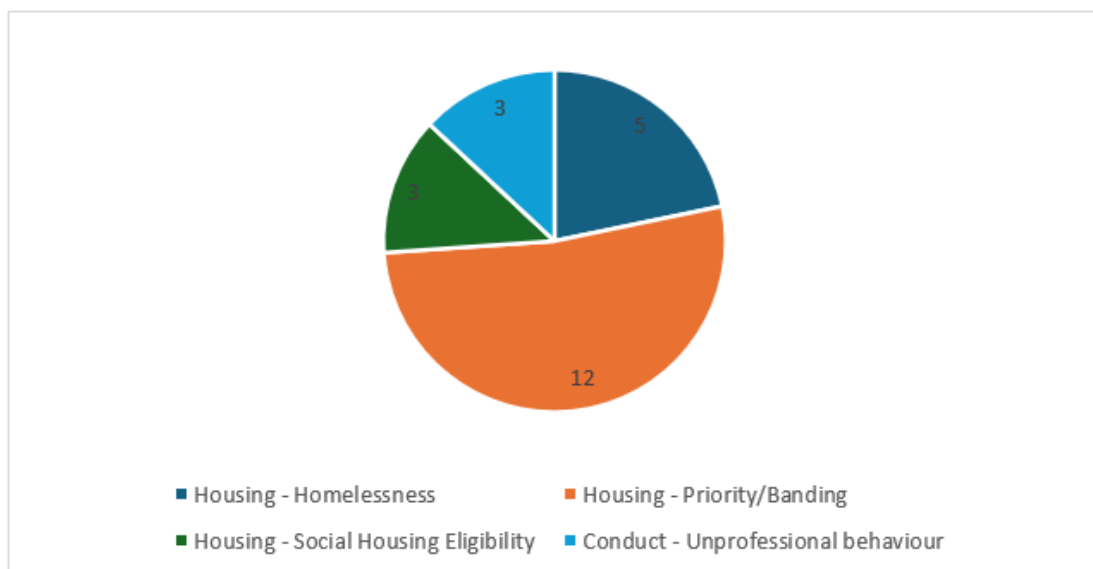
89 **Table 48: Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Non-Static**



90 **Table 49:** Themes Tracker – Top 3 Services (processed complaints)



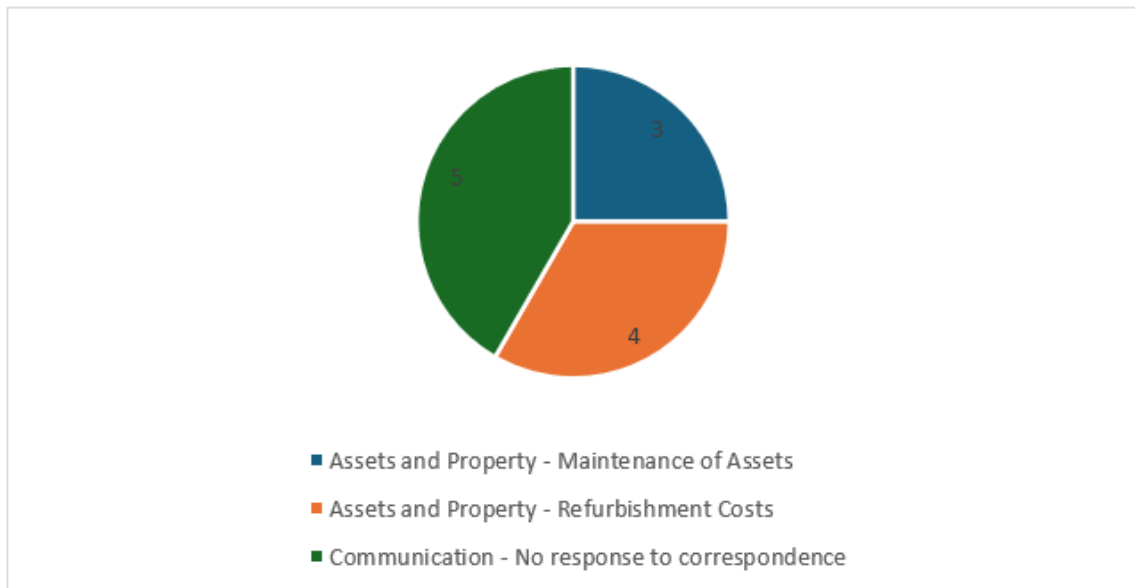
91 **Table 50:** Top 4 themes by Service – Strategic Housing (processed complaints)



92 **Table 51:** Top 4 themes by Service outcomes – Strategic Housing (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Housing - Homelessness	0	1	4
Housing - Priority/Banding	0	0	12
Housing - Social Housing Eligibility	0	1	2
Conduct - Unprofessional behaviour	0	1	2

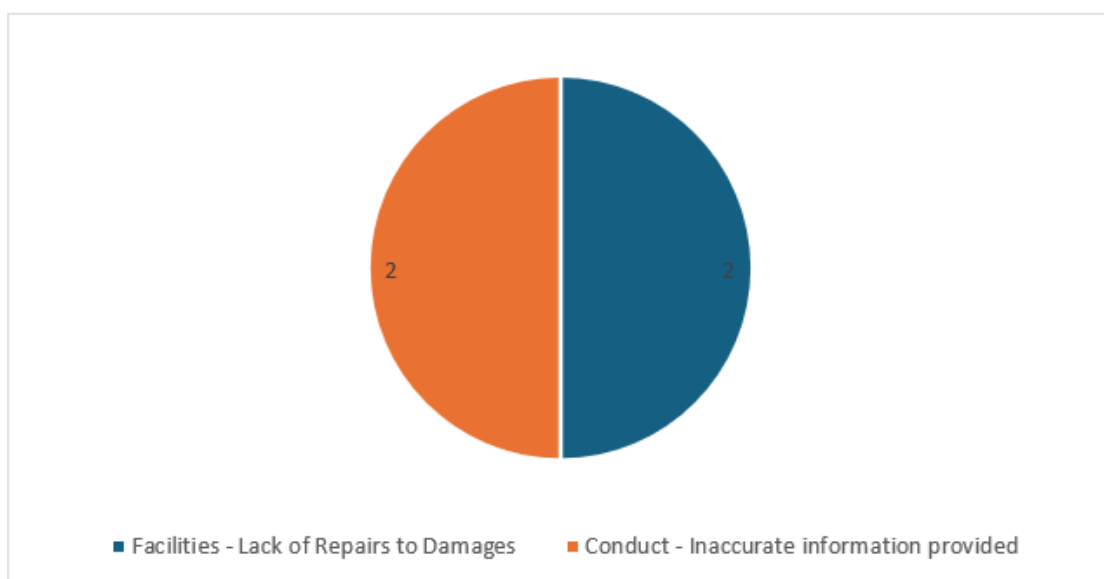
- 93 **Table 52:** Top 3 themes by Service - Assets and Property (processed complaints)



- 94 **Table 53:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes - Assets and Property (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Assets and Property - Maintenance of Assets	1	0	2
Assets and Property - Refurbishment Costs	0	0	4
Communication - No response to correspondence	2	2	1

- 95 **Table 54:** Top 2 themes by Service – Facilities (processed complaints)



- 96 **Table 55:** Top 2 themes by Service outcomes – Facilities (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Facilities - Lack of Repairs to Damages	2	0	0
Conduct - Inaccurate information provided	0	1	1

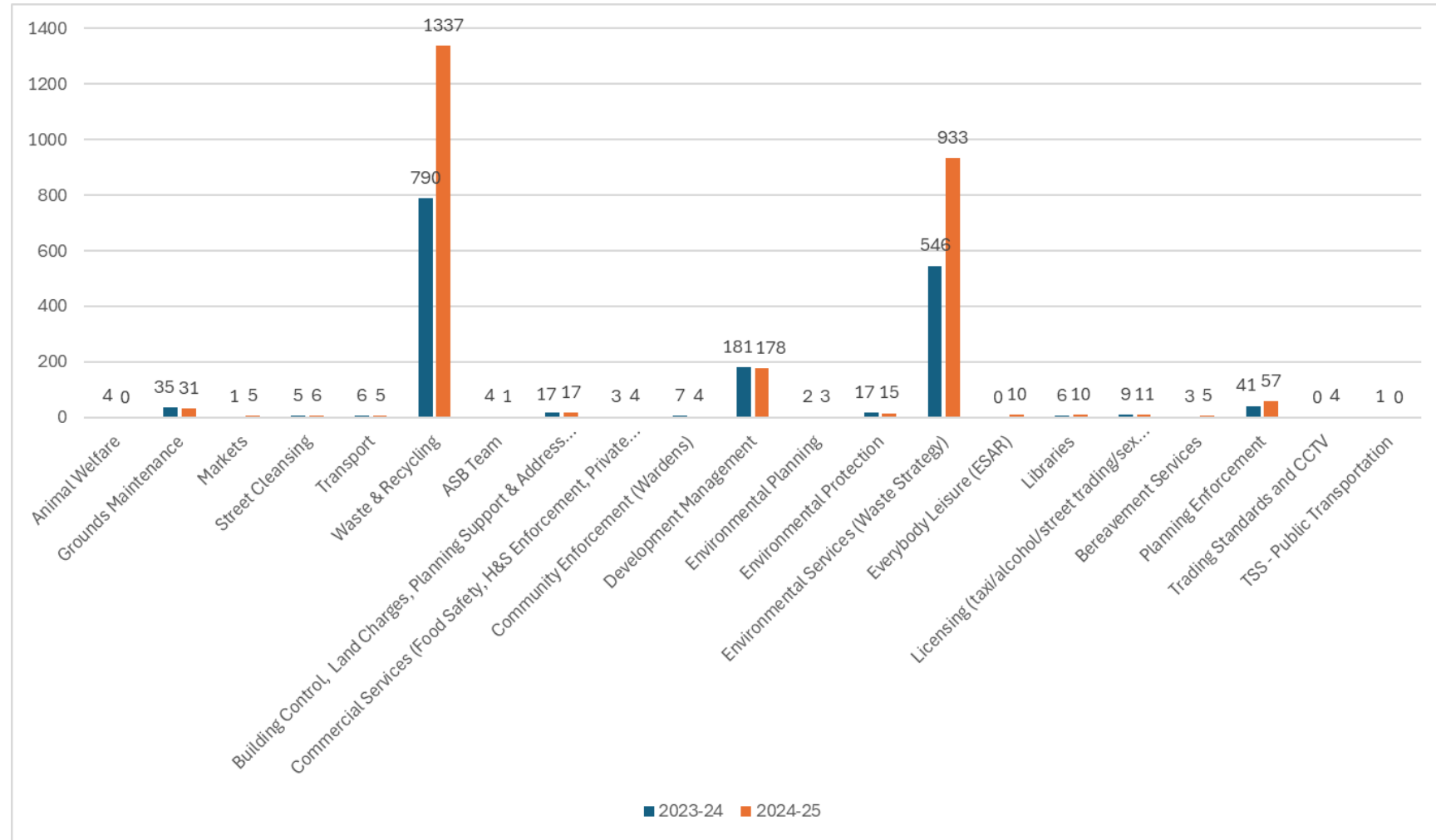
- 97 **Table 56:** There were 3 compliments recorded for Economy and Growth in 2024/25.

Team	2023-24	2024-25
Economic Development	1	0
Public Rights of Way	1	0
Strategic Housing	0	2
Tatton Park	0	1

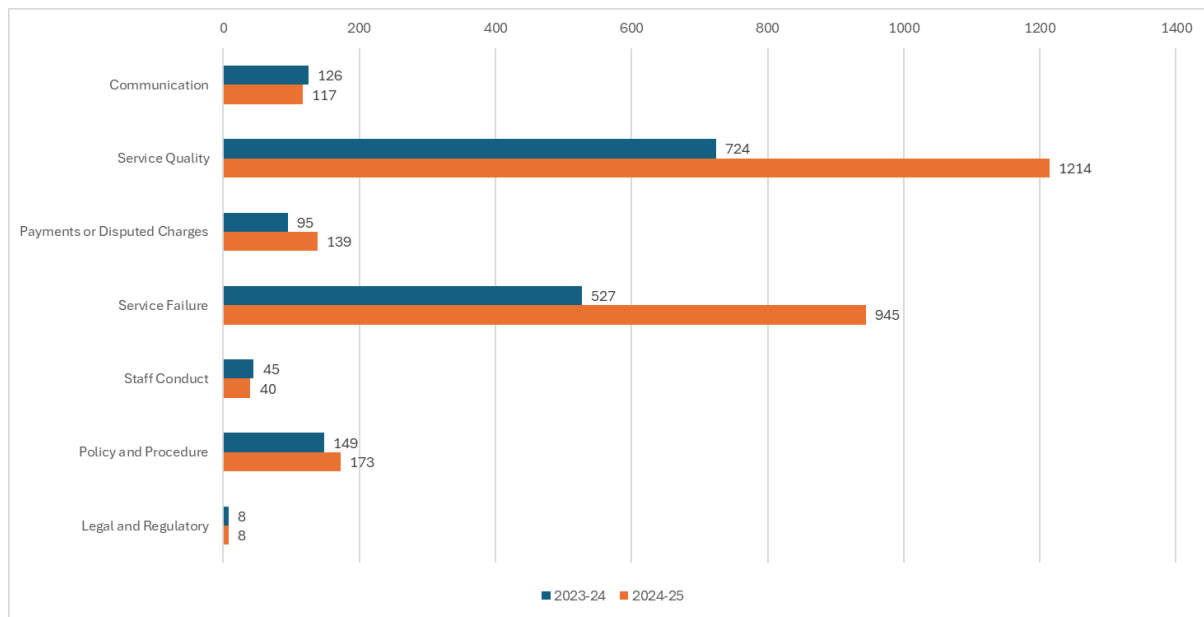
Environment and Communities

- 98 Environment and Communities received 2,636 complaints in 2024/25. 61% of the total received by the council. Of these, 83 complaints were rejected, withdrawn, or not pursued; the remaining 2,553 were processed as official complaints.
- 99 2024/25 saw a 57% increase in processed complaints compared with 2023/24 (1,625). There were 120 Stage 2 complaints in 2024/25.
- 100 Environment and Communities received 110 compliments in 2024/25.

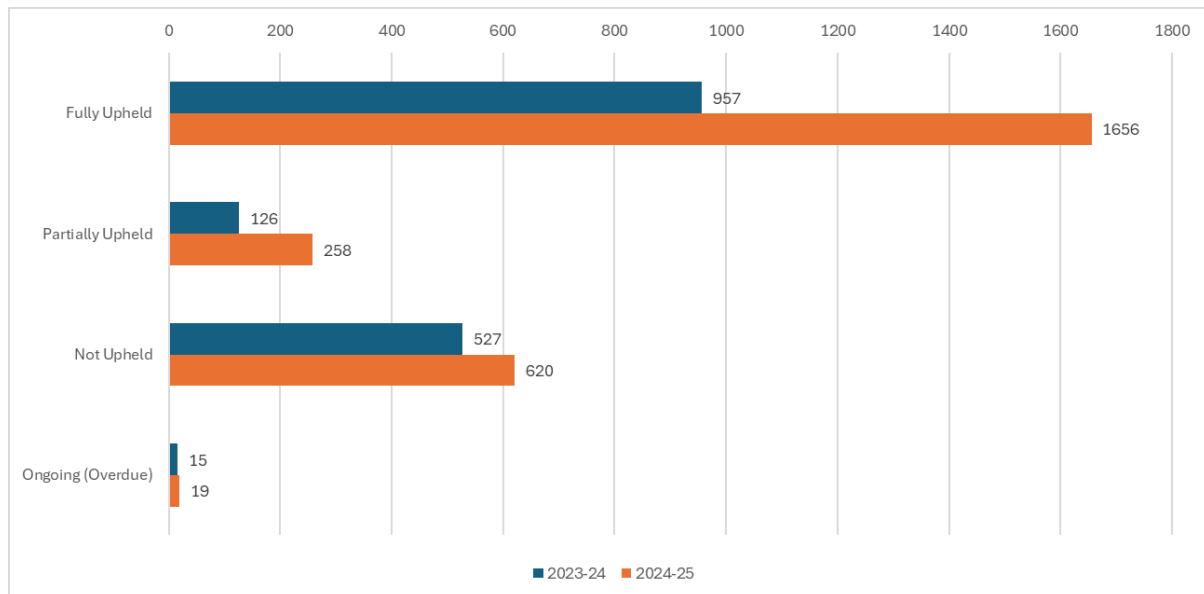
101 **Table 57:** Complaints Volumes received by Service



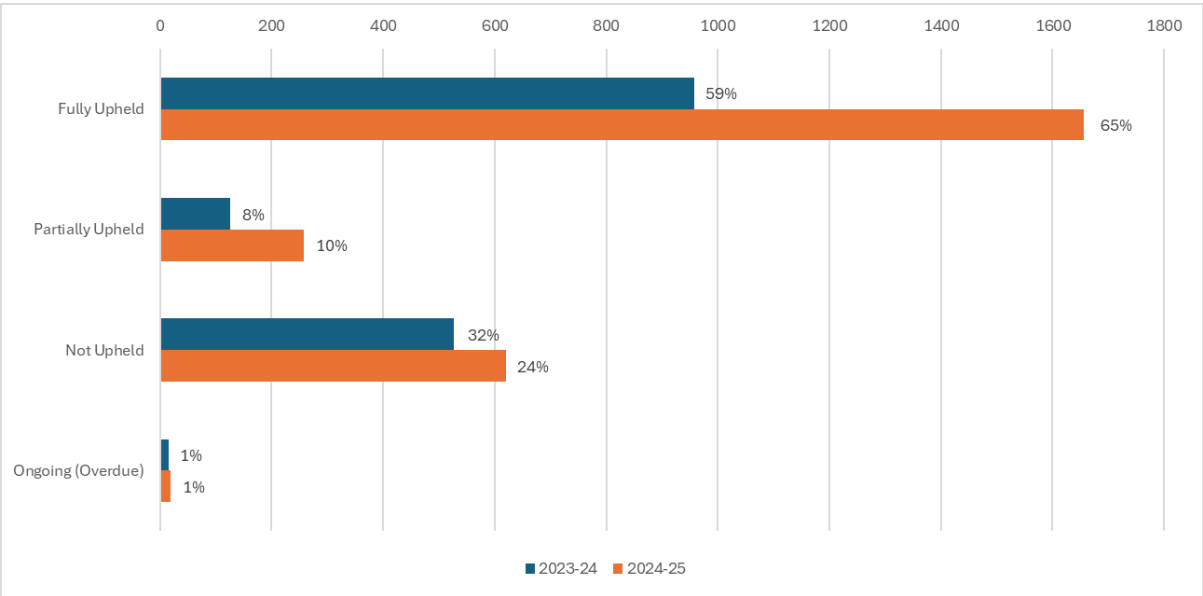
102 **Table 58:** Complaint Primary Causes in 2023/24 and 2024/25



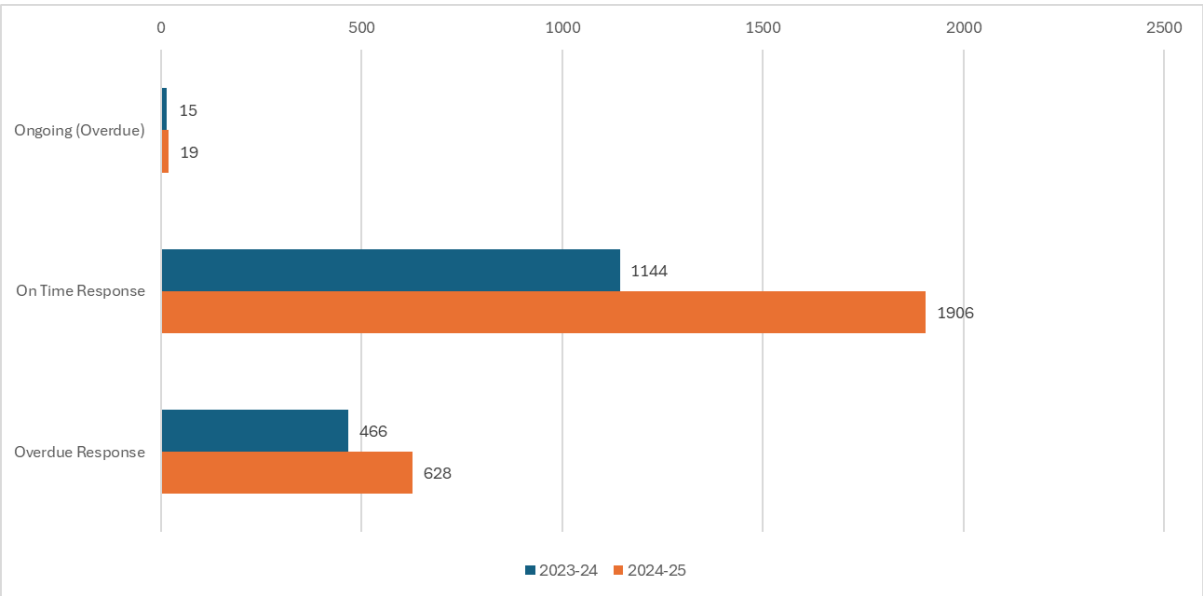
103 **Table 59:** Complaints Outcomes – Numbers



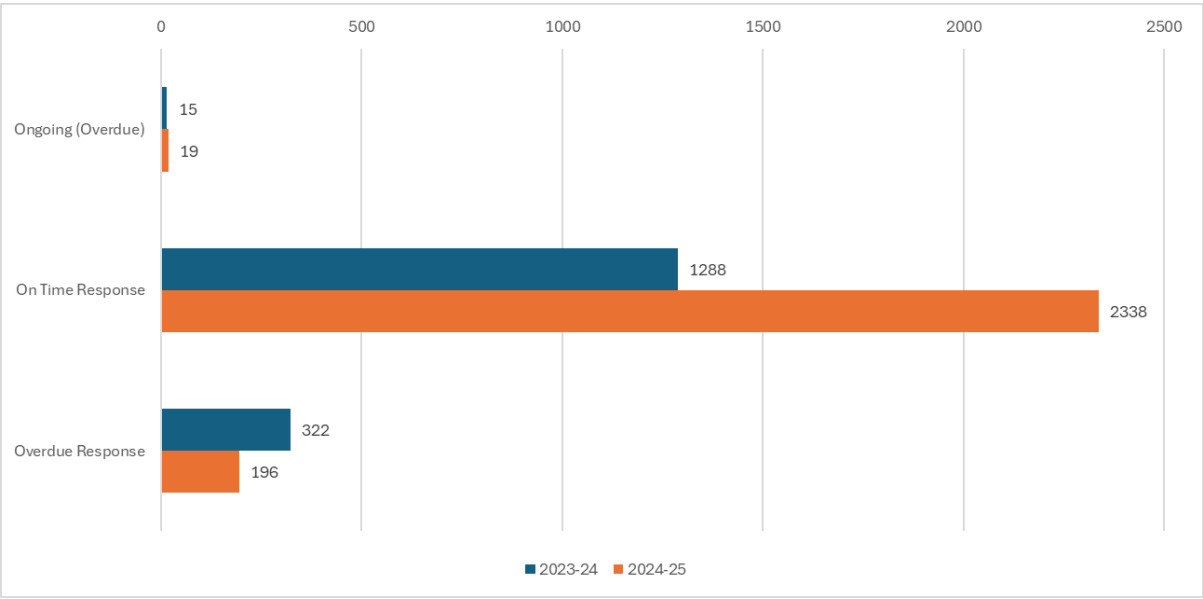
104 **Table 60:** Complaints Outcomes – Percentage



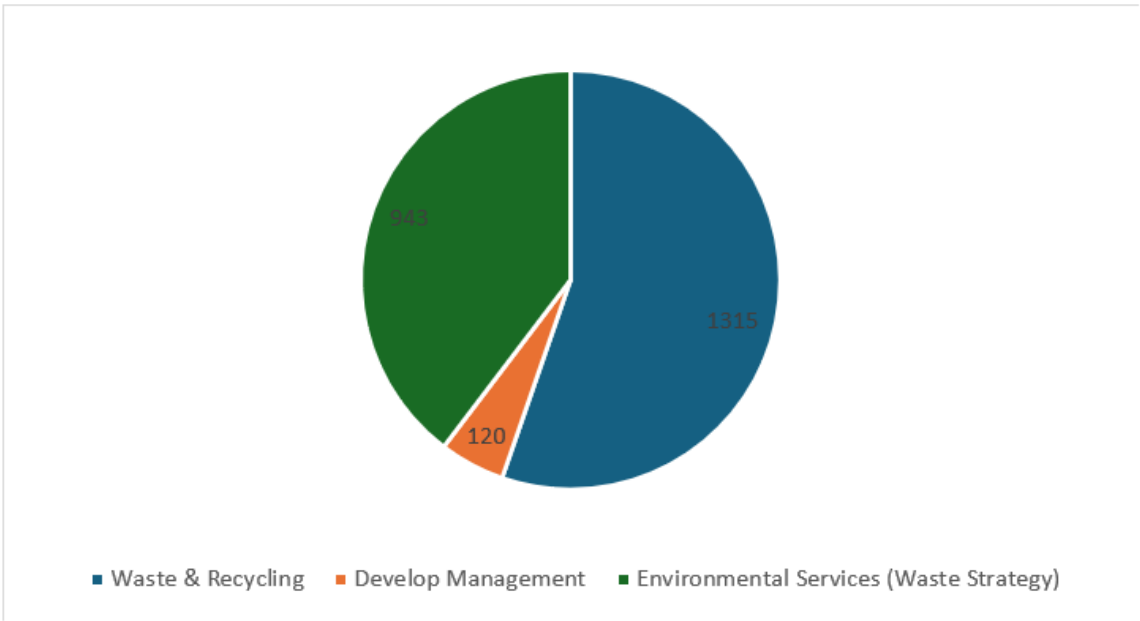
105 **Table 61:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Static (answered within 10 working days)



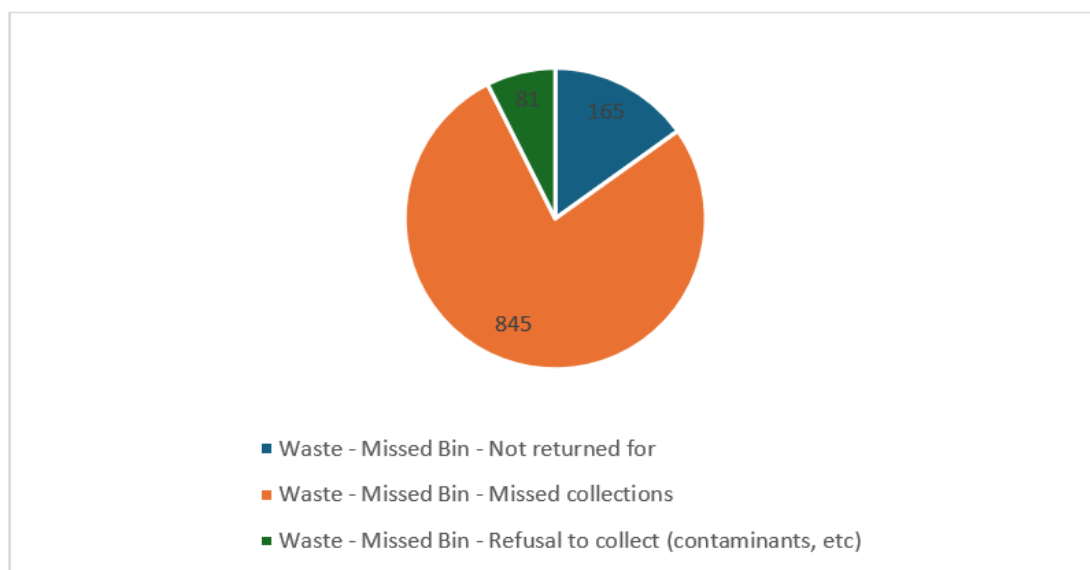
106 **Table 62:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Non-Static



107 **Table 63:** Themes Tracker – Top 3 Services (processed complaints)



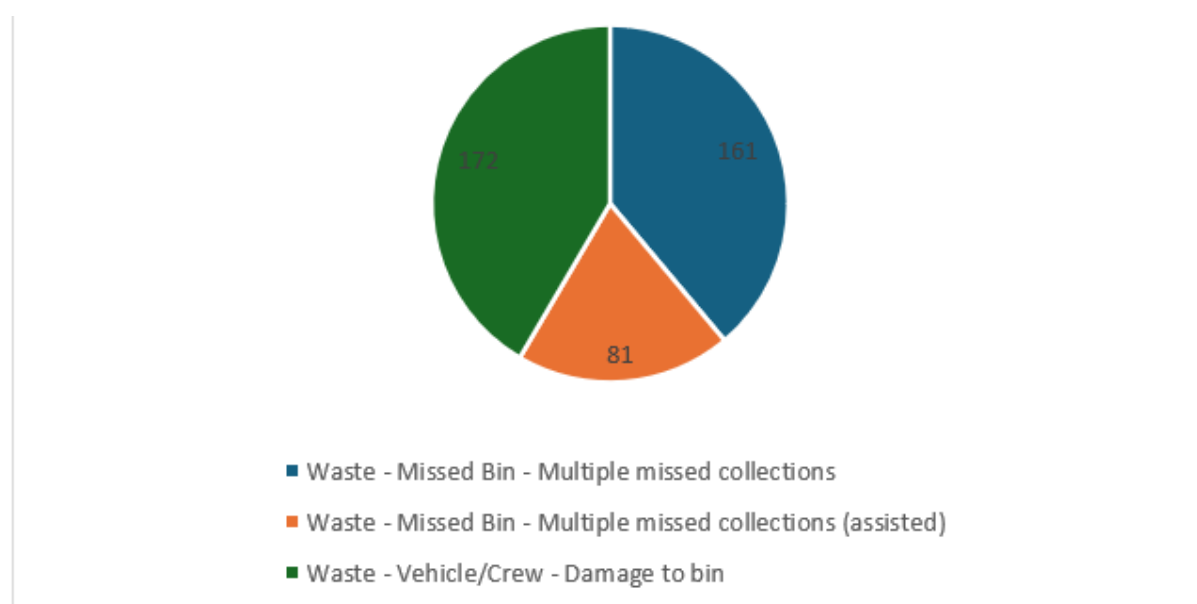
- 108 **Table 64:** Top 3 themes by Service – Waste & Recycling (processed complaints)



- 109 **Table 65:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes – Waste & Recycling (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Waste - Missed Bin - Missed collections	741	47	57
Waste - Missed Bin - Not returned for	155	3	7
Waste - Missed Bin - Refusal to collect (contaminants, etc)	47	4	30

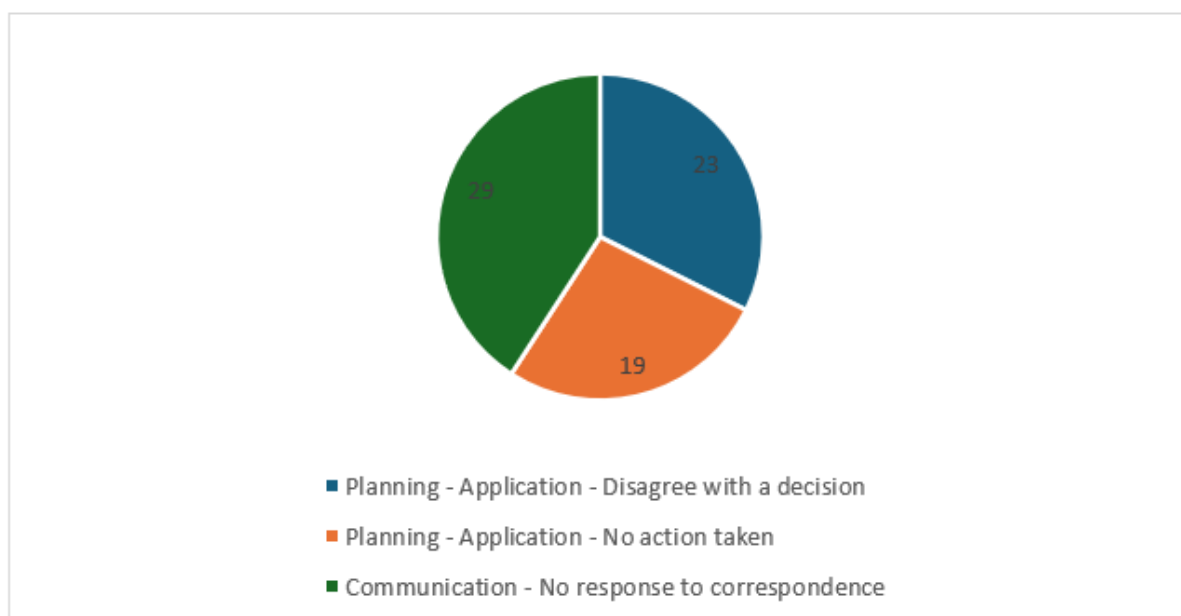
- 110 **Table 66:** Top 3 themes by Service - Environmental Services (Waste Strategy) (processed complaints)



111 **Table 67:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes - Environmental Services (Waste Strategy) (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Waste - Missed Bin - Multiple missed collections	93	49	19
Waste - Missed Bin - Multiple missed collections (assisted)	73	6	2
Waste - Vehicle/Crew - Damage to bin	81	1	90

112 **Table 68:** Top 3 themes by Service - Development Management (processed complaints)



113 **Table 69:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes - Development Management (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Communication - No response to correspondence	14	9	6
Planning - Application - Disagree with a decision	1	4	18
Planning - Application - No action taken	13	4	2

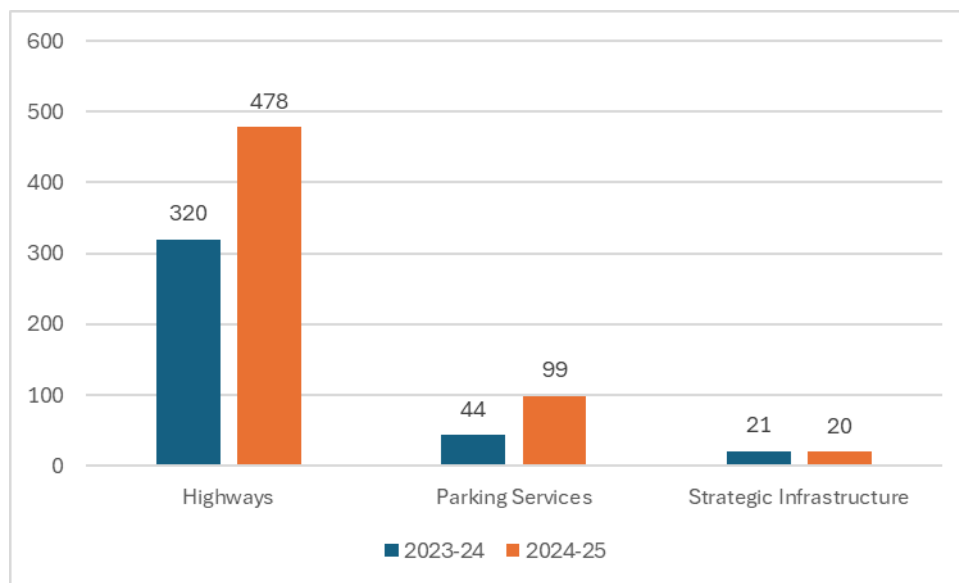
- 114 **Table 70:** Environment and Communities received 110 compliments in 2024/25 across 9 services.

Team	2023-24	2024-25
Grounds Maintenance	19	19
Street Cleansing	8	9
Transport	2	1
Waste & Recycling	44	48
Building Control, Land Charges, Planning Support & Address Management	2	0
Development Management	2	3
Environmental Protection	3	1
Environmental Services (Waste Strategy)	3	15
Everybody Leisure (ESAR)	0	1
Libraries	11	12
Planning Enforcement	1	0
Spatial Planning	1	0
Licensing	0	1

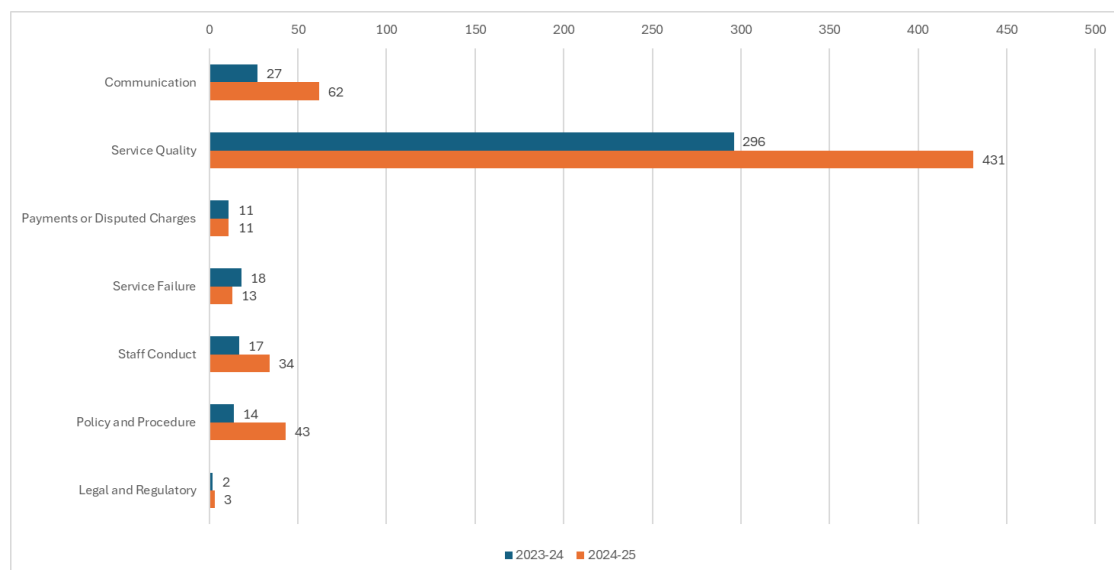
Highways and Transport

- 115 Highways and Transport received 597 complaints in 2024/25. 14% of the total received by the council. Of these, 31 complaints were rejected, withdrawn, or not pursued; the remaining 566 were processed as official complaints.
- 116 2024/25 saw a 47% increase in processed complaints compared with 2023/24 (385). There were 43 Stage 2 complaints in 2024/25
- 117 Highways and Transport received 26 compliments in 2024/25.

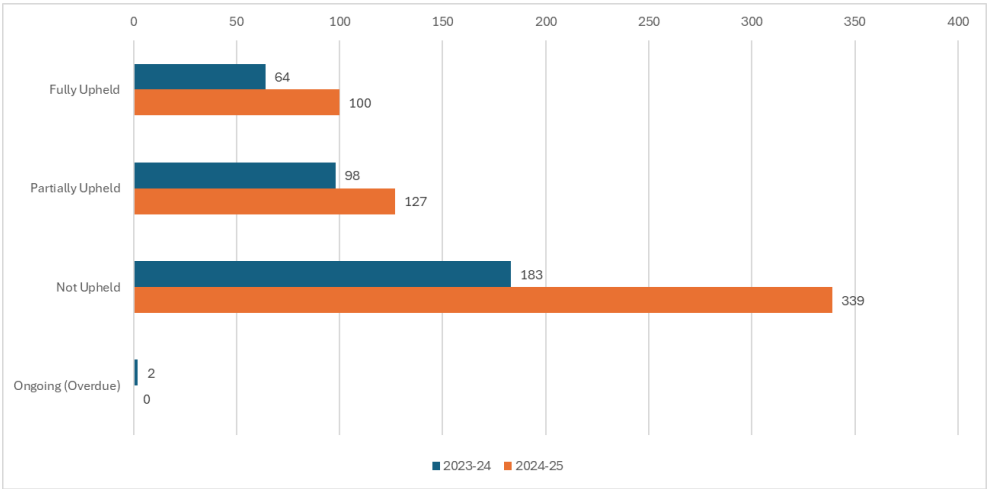
118 **Table 71: Complaints Volumes received by Service**



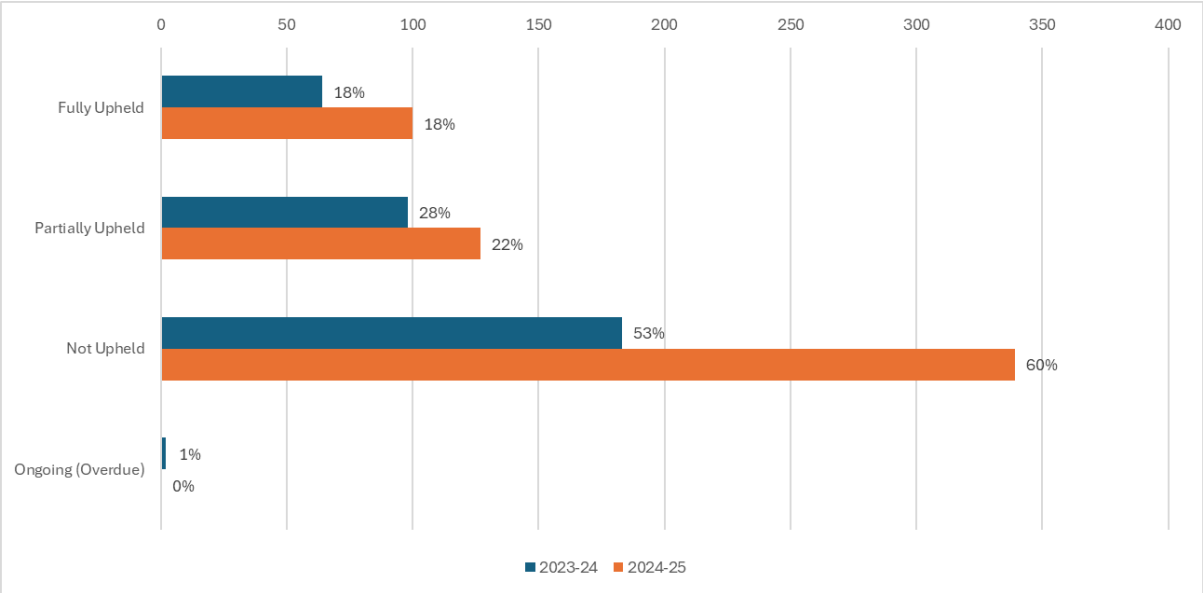
119 **Table 72: Complaint Primary Causes in 2023/24 and 2024/25**



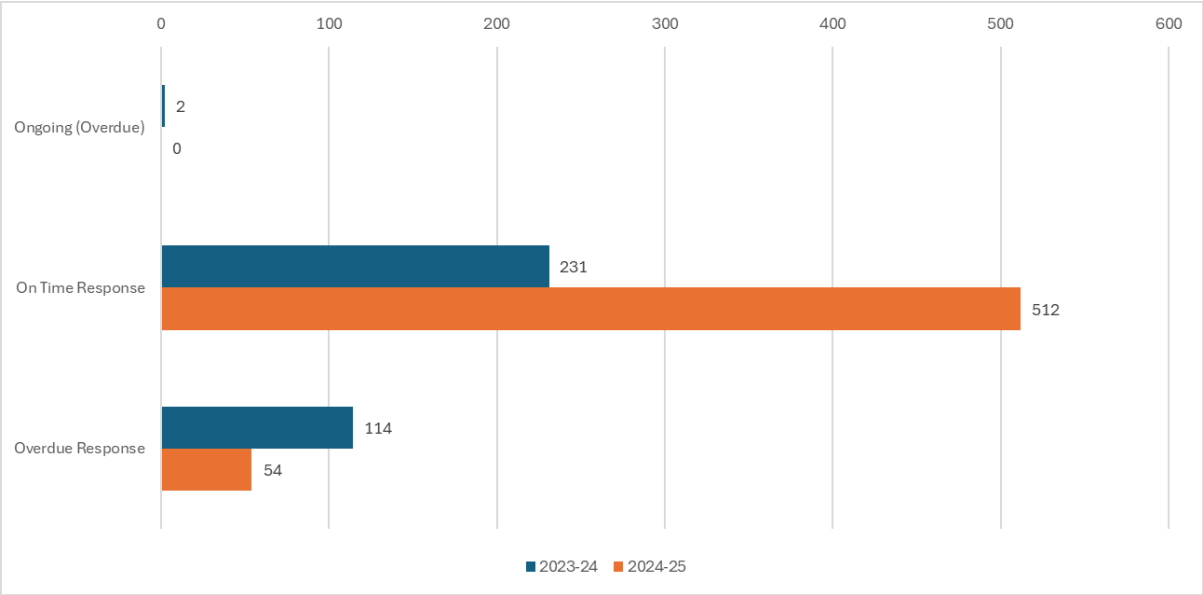
120 **Table 73: Complaints Outcomes – Numbers**



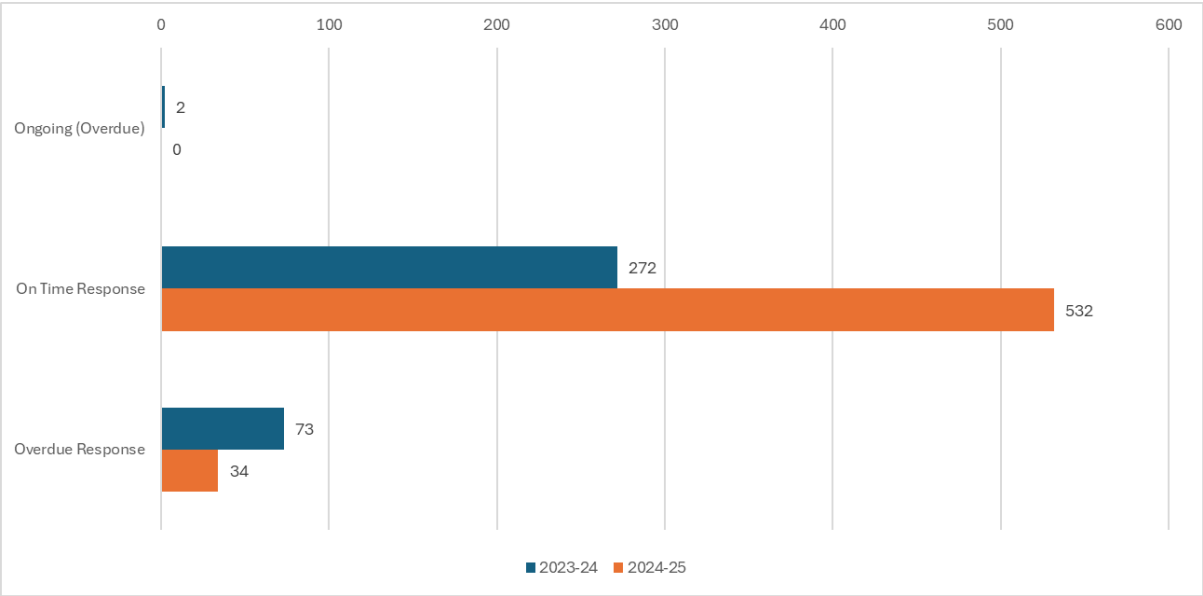
121 **Table 74: Complaints Outcomes – Percentages**



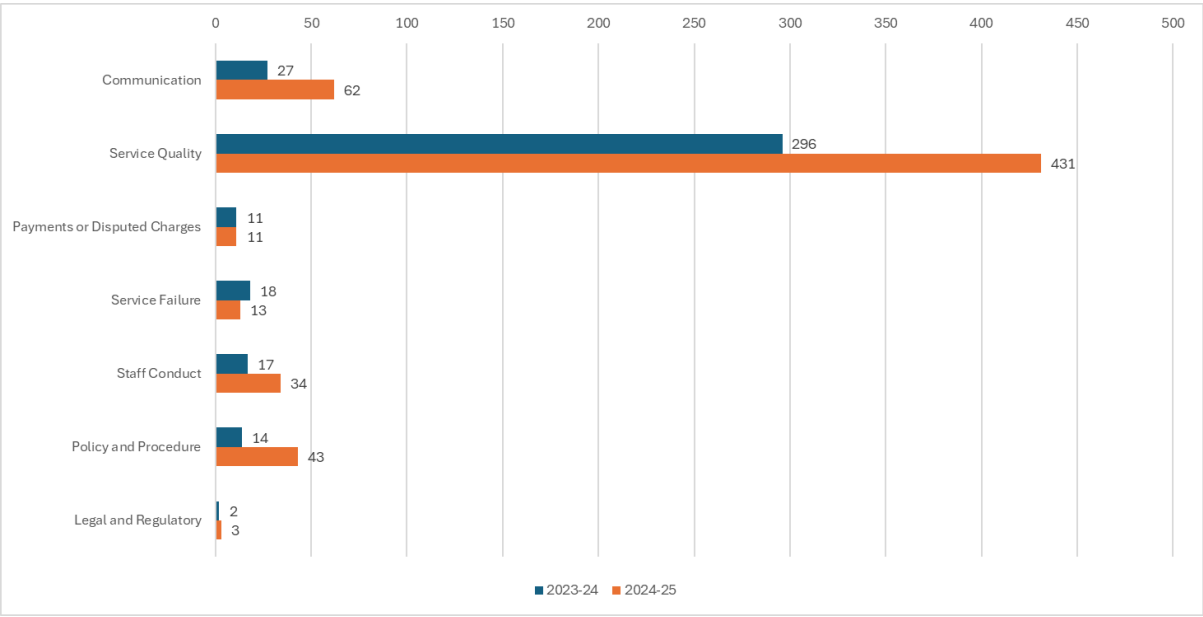
122 **Table 75:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Static
(answered within 10 working days)



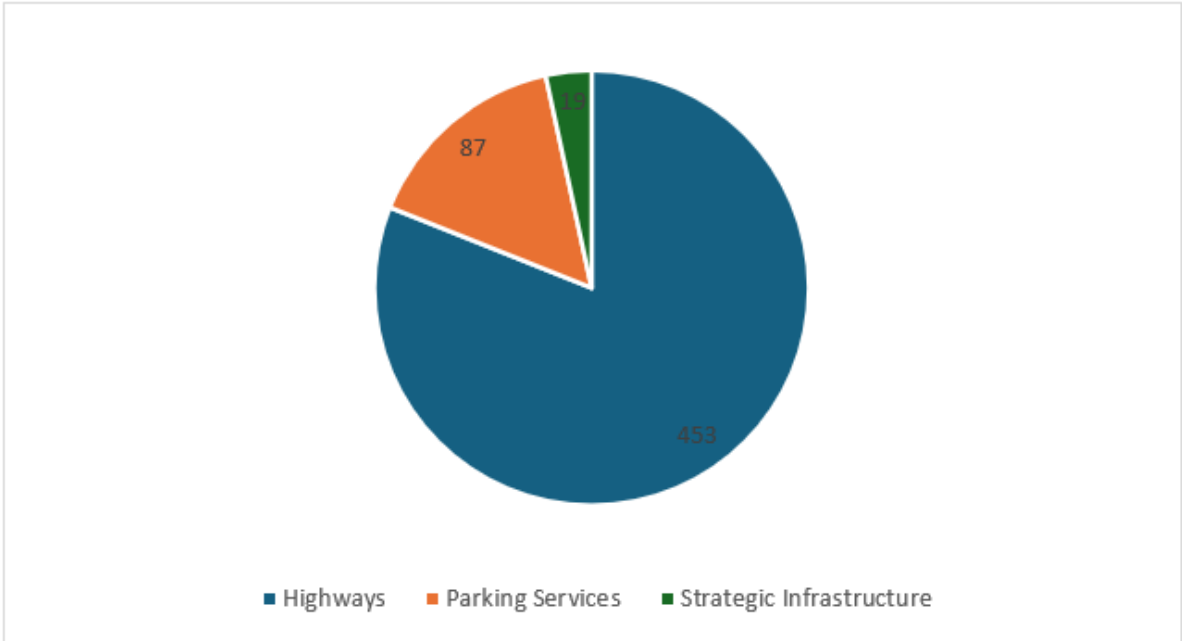
123 **Table 76:** Complaint Timeframes in 2023/24 and 2024/25 – Non-Static



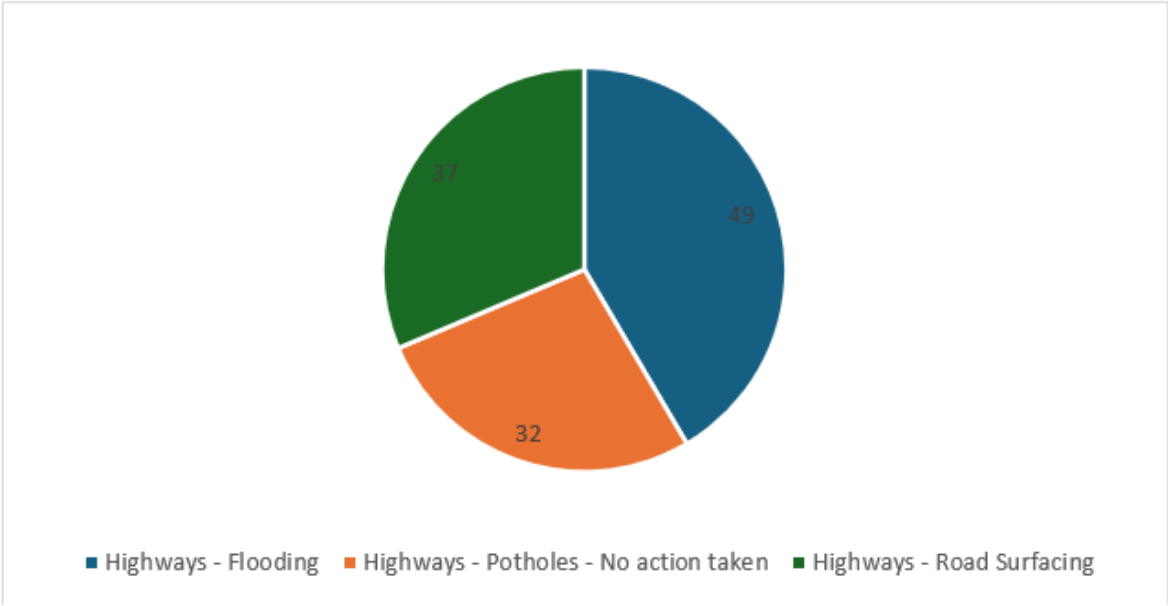
124 **Table 77:** Complaint Primary Causes in 2023/24 and 2024/25



125 **Table 78:** Themes Tracker – Top 3 Services (processed complaints)



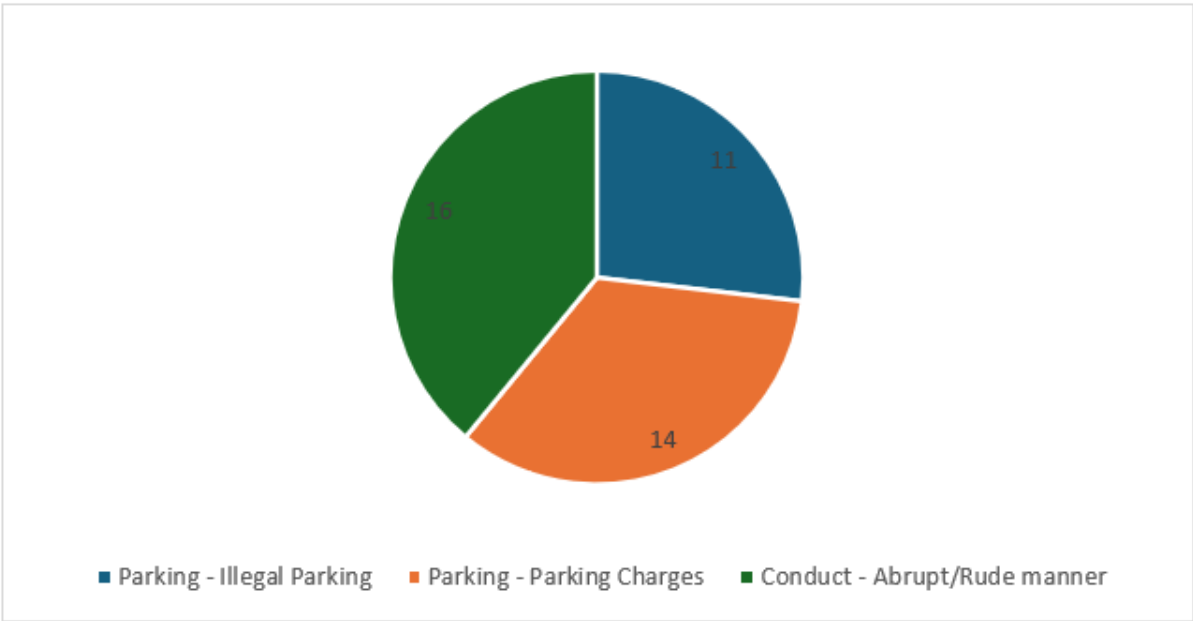
126 **Table 79:** Top 3 themes by Service – Highways (processed complaints)



127 **Table 80:** Top 3 themes by Service outcomes – Highways (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Highways - Flooding	14	20	15
Highways - Potholes - No action taken	3	7	22
Highways - Road Surfacing	3	6	28

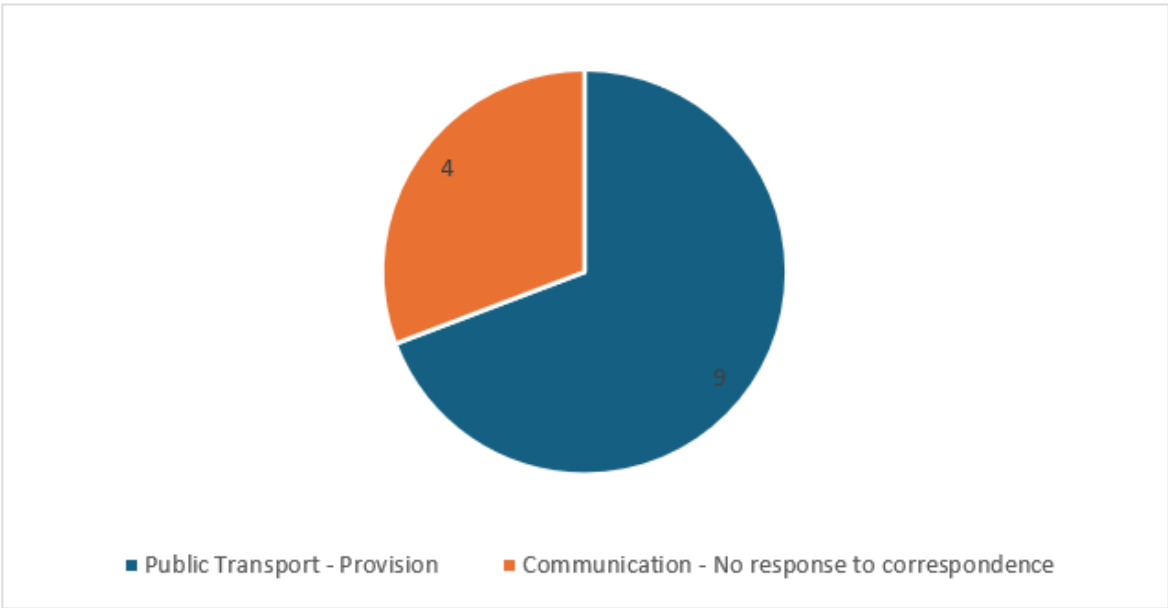
128 **Table 81:** Top 3 themes by Service – Parking Services (processed complaints)



129 **Table 82:** Top 3 themes by Service – Parking Services (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Parking - Illegal Parking	0	0	11
Conduct - Abrupt/Rude manner	0	2	14
Parking - Parking Charges	2	0	12

130 **Table 83:** Top 2 themes by Service - Strategic Infrastructure (processed complaints)



131 **Table 84:** Top 2 themes by Service outcomes - Strategic Infrastructure (processed complaints)

Theme	Upheld	Partly Upheld	Not Upheld
Public Transport - Provision	5	1	3
Parking - Parking Charges	2	1	1

132 **Table 85:** Highways and Transport received 26 compliments in 2024/25, spread across 3 services.

Team	2023-24	2024-25
Highways	23	25
Parking Services	2	1
Strategic Infrastructure	1	0

133 Examples of Compliments in 2024/25

- *I reported a loose kerb with East Cheshire Council, it was noted through "Fix My Street " giving a 20 day follow up repair. I noticed within less than a week, white markers on the kerb in question. Following that, a team arrived in less than 10 days and the kerb was promptly rectified to its correct location. Excellent service given where it is due, and an impressive follow up on my complaint from start to finish was achieved. Thanks to the team and Cheshire Council for the rapid response!*
- *Huge thanks to the parking officer (& team) at Macclesfield town council short stay cp behind the council offices. I had a fall & broke my shoulder & had to leave my car in the cp for several hours whilst I went to A&E on Wednesday 27th November. An officer kindly put a note on my car & informed his team, so I didn't attract any penalties. This meant I could go to hospital without stressing about the car & potential fines. I didn't get the officers name, but he put his reference number on the note, so thank you.*
- *I write to express our thanks for the considerable efforts made to resolve the drainage issues on Mill Lane. We have not experienced any significant rainfall since, but the initial signs look good.*

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 134 Whilst there are no legal implications flowing directly from the content of this report, there are legal, reputational and resource implications in complaints that are taken through the corporate process and in addressing complaints which reach LGSCO and Public Report. Providing services with the data and trends is a means to influence and improve customer engagement.
- 135 It is recommended that this report goes to Audit and Governance Committee for the committee's oversight and assurance, as these matters lie within its remit.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 136 If Fault causing Injustice is found, the Council can be asked to pay compensation to a complainant, the level of which is determined on a case by-case basis. The cost of such compensation is paid for by the service at fault. In 18 cases where the Ombudsman found Fault with

Injustice in 2024/25, the Council was required to make compensation payments totalling £106,342. An increase of 521% on 2023/24 where payments totalled £17,125.

Human Resources

- 137 Whilst the primary purpose of this report is to inform Members of the outcome of complaints and to seek to secure improvements in performance, resource implications arise from the high numbers of complaints. These relate to the increased demand upon officers in researching the background to complaints and responding appropriately. Where complaints relate to specific staff members, for example because of behaviour or attitude, these are escalated to the appropriate manager.

Risk Management

- 138 If recommendations made by the Ombudsman are not followed, this could trigger a public report, as detailed in paragraphs 17 to 19.

Impact on other Committees

- 139 The report will also go to Corporate Policy Committee.

Policy

- 140 Analysis of complaints enables services to identify and deliver improvements in service aligned with the Council's Customer Experience Strategy. If a high volume of complaints were received about a specific policy, a review of the relevant policy could be triggered and referred to the relevant service committee.

Commitment 1: Unlocking prosperity for all	Commitment 2: Improving health and wellbeing	Commitment 3: An effective and enabling council
		1.Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation

Other Implications

- 141 There are no direct implications for rural communities.
- 142 There are no implications for Children and Young people, though the number of complaints received relating to lack of SEND provision and social care support is noted.
- 143 There are no direct implications for public health.
- 144 There are no direct implications for climate change

Consultation

Name of Consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy) :</i>			
Karen Grave	Director of People and Customer Experience	19/05/25	22/05/25
Janet Witkowski	Acting Monitoring Officer	02/06/25	02/06/25
<i>Legal and Finance</i>			
Sal Khan	Director of Finance (Deputy S151)	02/06/25	02/06/25

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Lee Washbrook, Head of Customer Experience Lee.Washbrook@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Outcome of complaints to the LGSCO by committee Appendix 2 - Summary of Recommended Actions from Ombudsman Decision Notices where Fault was found (as per Appendix 1) Appendix 3 – Complaints Customer Satisfaction Data
Background Papers:	N/A