

Children and Families (C&F) Feedback Report

Financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail the four types of customer feedback which have been received by Children and Families Service (C&F) during financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 including volume, efficiency of processing and outcome for the customer.

Background

This report will detail and analyse the following:

- Volume -
 - Cases created during the period – compliments, complaints, questions and comments
 - Cases processed and closed within the period
- Timeliness – Feedback closed within the appropriate Service Level Agreement (SLA)
- Complaint issues
- Outcomes and remedies for customers
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)
- Learning from feedback

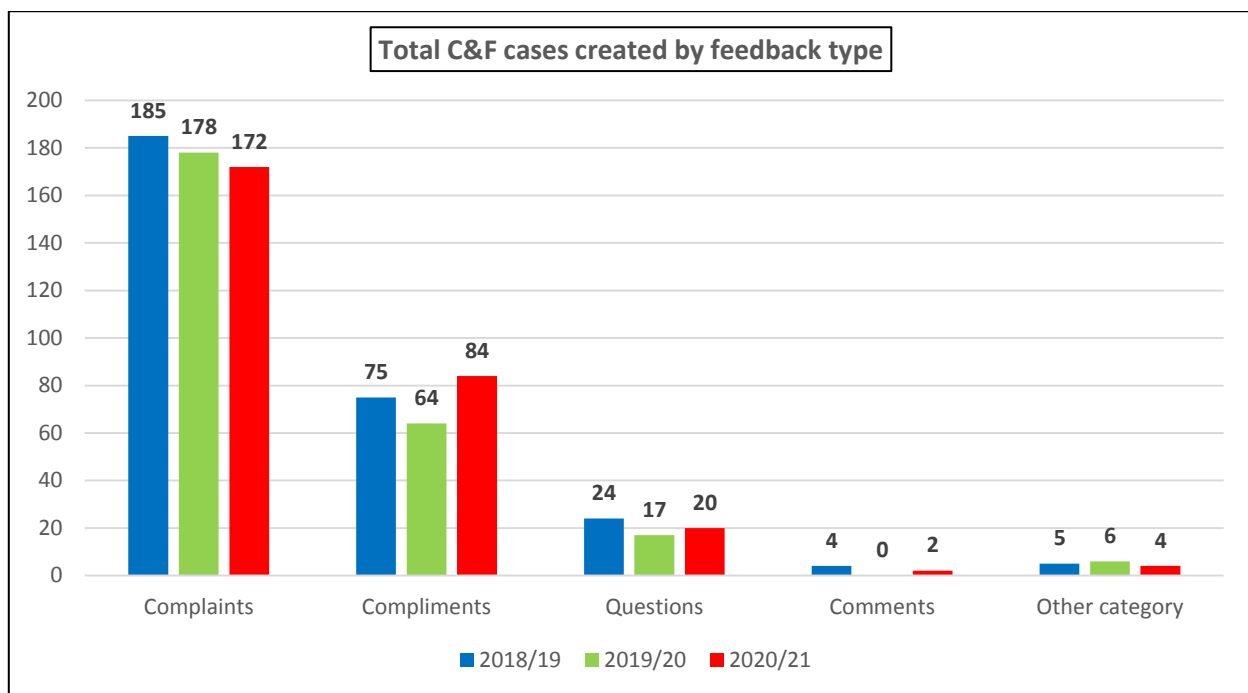
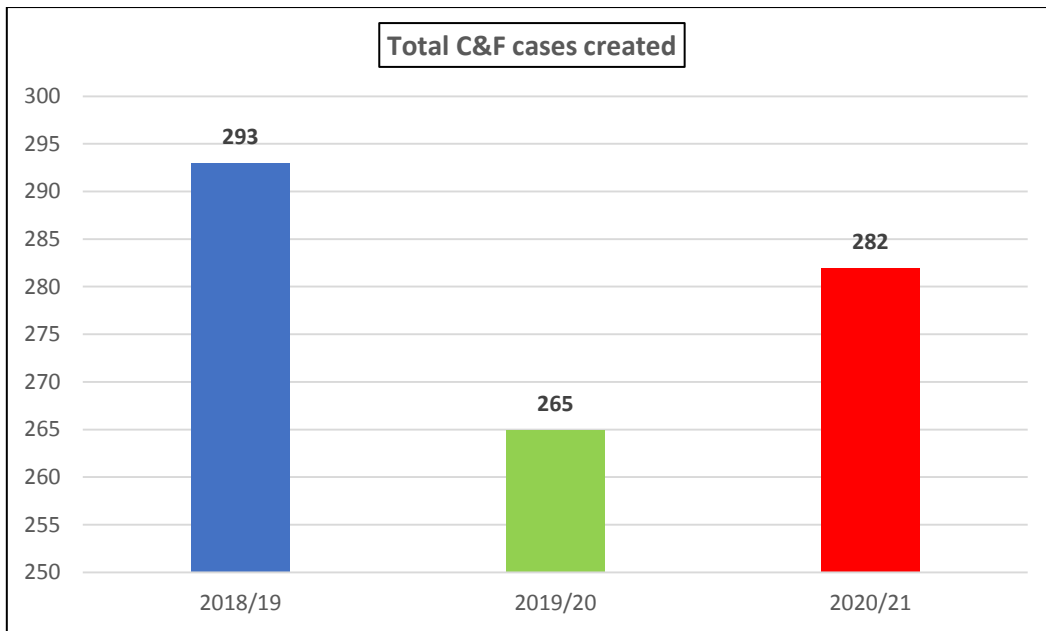
Overview of performance – C&F

This report focuses on the feedback received from users and customers of C&F services within People Directorate during the period of this report.

Volume

The tables below detail the number of cases created in relation to C&F services and the number of each of the 4 types of feedback received during 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Appendix 1



Please note that 'Other category' are cases that provide additional information on closed or open cases.

Cases created are all feedback cases that have been received within the period. This does not include cases that were created in the previous year which had not been closed in the same financial year. The total number of cases created during 2020/21 was 282 which is an increase of over 6% on the created cases (265) during 2019/20. 2019/20 saw a decrease of almost 10% (293) on 2018/19.

Cases created during 2019/20 compared to 2018/19:

- Complaints have reduced by almost 4%

Appendix 1

- Compliments have reduced by nearly 15%
- Questions have reduced by just over 29%
- Comments have decreased by 100%, however the percentage is high due to the low absolute numbers.
- Other category feedback has increased by 20% again low absolute numbers.

During 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 feedback has increased apart from complaint and other category cases:

- Complaints have reduced by 3%
- Compliments have increased by just over 31%
- Questions have increased by nearly 18%
- Comments have increased by 200%, however the percentage is high due to the low absolute numbers.
- Other category feedback has decreased by one third, again low absolute numbers.

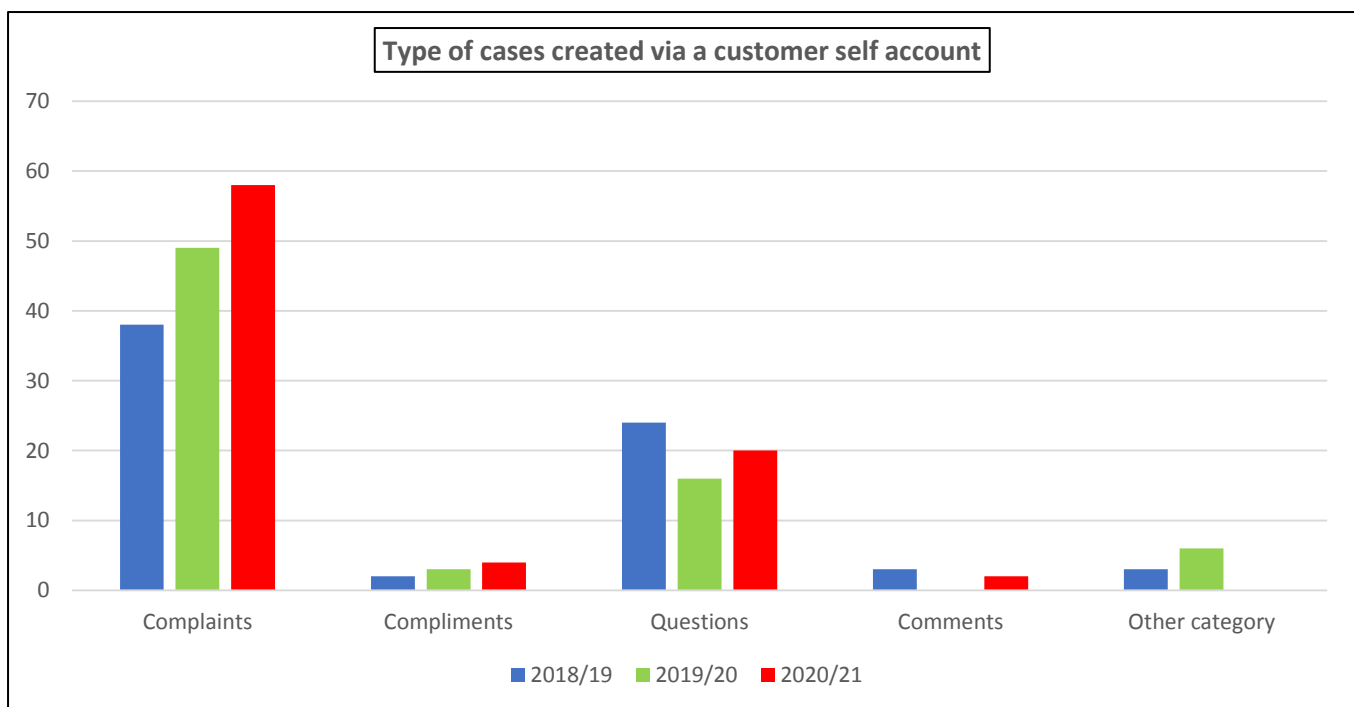
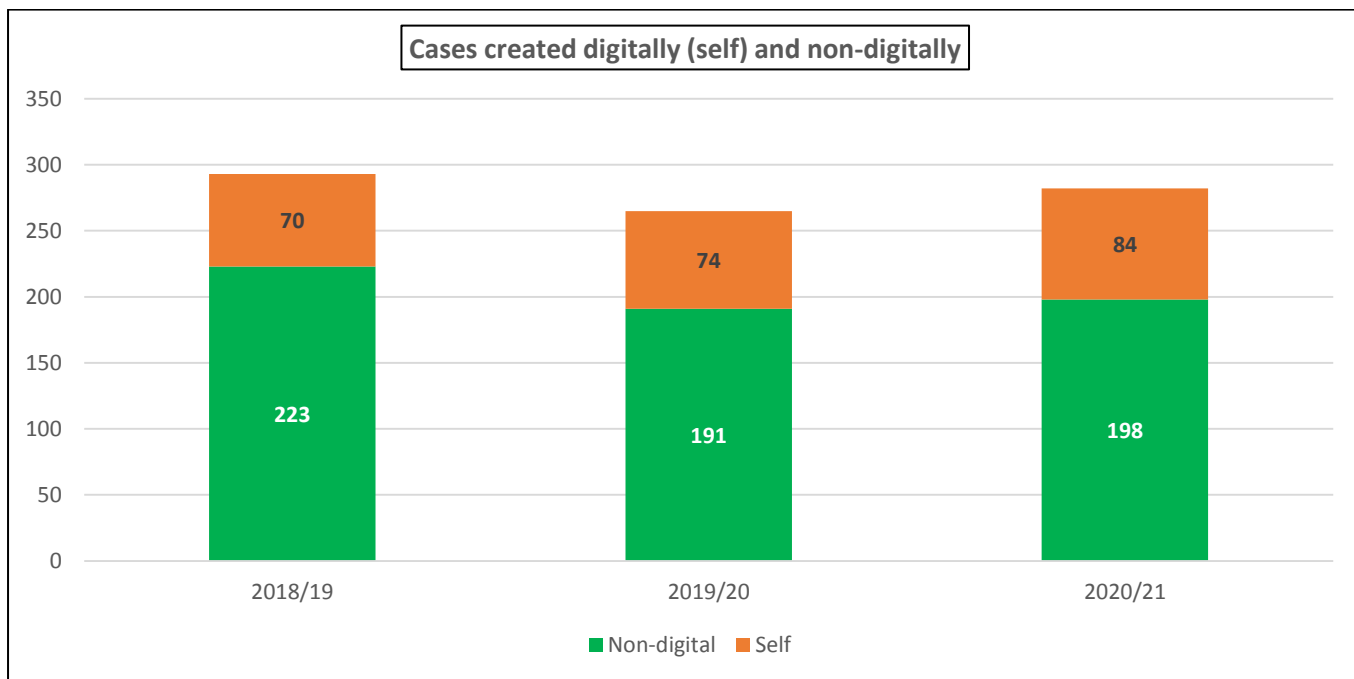
Complaint cases in 2020/21 amounted to 61% of all feedback cases received by C&F. The table below details which teams were allocated complaint cases created during the periods of this report.

Appendix 1

Number of complaints created, and teams allocated			
Team	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Bedworth and North Warwickshire Childrens Team	22	37	22
Children in Care 14018	0	0	4
Childrens Assurance IROs LADO	3	0	0
Childrens Corporate Parenting	1	5	0
Childrens Countywide Fostering Adoption Asylum	6	0	0
Childrens Early Help and Targeted Support	0	0	3
Childrens Emergency Duty Team	0	0	3
Childrens Fostering	0	0	1
Childrens Independent Reviewing Officer Team	0	1	2
Childrens Initial Response	4	19	28
Childrens Leaving Care	10	9	2
Childrens MASH	10	13	17
Childrens North & East A&I	8	13	21
Childrens Ops North Bedworth	14	0	0
Childrens Ops North Nuneaton	4	0	0
Childrens Ops North Rugby	5	0	0
Childrens Ops North Warwickshire	18	0	0
Childrens Ops South Central	10	0	0
Childrens Ops South Stratford	8	0	0
Childrens Ops South Warwick	11	0	0
Childrens SEND Social Care	5	0	0
Childrens Special Intervention Family Focus	2	0	0
Childrens Strengthening Families	1	4	10
Childrens with Disabilities	9	31	11
Family Information Services	0	2	0
Innovate	0	0	5
Local Authority Designated Officer Team	0	0	1
Nuneaton Childrens Team	11	17	9
Rugby Childrens Team	12	4	8
Stratford Childrens Team	6	13	13
Warwick Childrens Team	5	10	11
Youth Justice Service	0	0	1

Use of self accounts

Customers have a choice of channels to provide their feedback: digitally via a self account they can set up through the WCC website, telephone, face to face at an outlet or by post. The chart below shows the total cases which were created* both digitally (Self account) and non digitally during 2018/191, 2019/20 and 2020/21. Generally, for WCC over the past few years this has been steadily increasing and is currently over 77% overall, for C&F services it is 30%, which is up nearly 2% on 2019/20 and almost 6% up on the previous year.



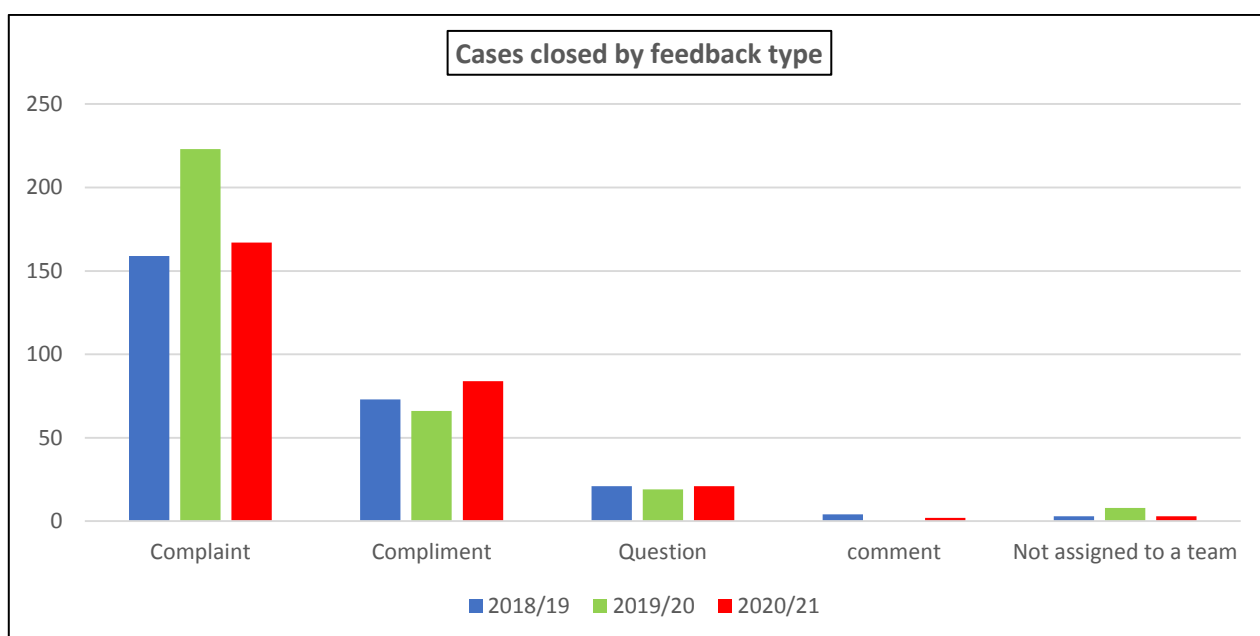
* Note cases created is different from cases closed.

Cases closed

All cases received into Contact Us have to be processed prior to closing in the system. There are 2 different types of processing required:

1. A complaint or question relating to WCC and/or its services requires processing and a response provided to the customer within an agreed timescale i.e. SLA, as set out in our complaint policy link [here](#) , Customer Care Charter and Standards link [Customer care](#) or in legislation.
2. Feedback received within the system which is not with regard to WCC or the services it delivers or not appropriate for the system requires a specific response (generally signposting) to the customer.

The chart below details the number of cases that have been processed and closed by C&F teams over the past 3 years.



It should be noted that cases closed during a period represent those that have been processed, however there were existing cases which were carried over from the previous financial year, just as there were cases received but not processed by the end of the current period.

Timescales

Cases Closed at Initial Triage

WCC has specific SLA's for timeliness of response to feedback classed as a question or a complaint, customers do not receive a response to comments or compliments made. Where a response is required, most of these cases are dealt with by the appropriate Directorate team. However, there are cases which are submitted digitally by customers via

their self-account that are either not for WCC or not appropriate for the Contact Us process. These cases are:

1. Services delivered by another authority, a district or borough or another organisation
2. The reporting of an initial service request, generally highways related
3. Anonymous submission of question or complaint whereby it is not possible to fully process and respond to the customer.
4. Or can be answered by the Customer Relations Team immediately

Cases which fall into the above categories are closed at initial triage and the customer responded to accordingly. These cases are referred to as 'not assigned a team/closed at triage'. **All these cases are closed within the SLA.** In addition, comments and compliments do not require a response to the customer and are generally processed and closed at triage. Those that are not closed at triage are those that have been incorrectly classified by the customer and do require a response from WCC.

Cases closed within SLA

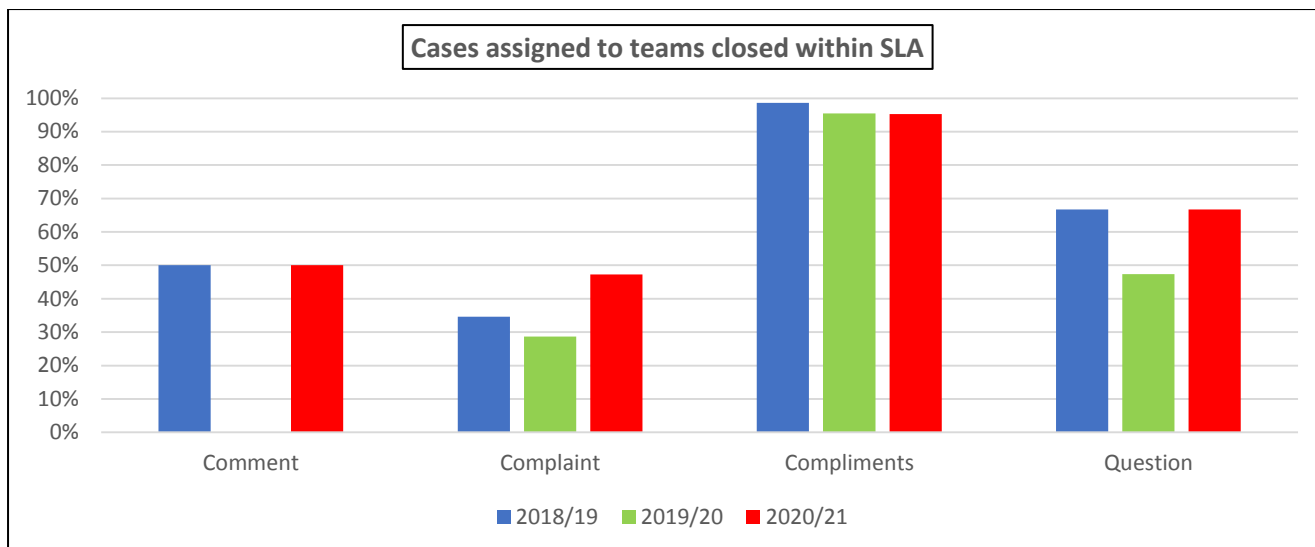
During the financial year 2020/21 the volume of cases processed and closed (277) decreased by over 12% (316) on 2019/20, however is 6.5% higher than 2018/19.

The table and diagram below show the split by type of feedback of cases that were closed within the appropriate SLA. Complaints are the only feedback type which have a WCC performance target for response. The target is 70% within SLA, the average response time within C&F over the past 3 years is 36%.

Of the 167 complaint cases processed during 2020/21, 79 cases achieved the SLA (i.e. timeliness requirement), which means that 47.31% of complaints were managed within required timescales. This is an increase of over 18% from the previous financial year.

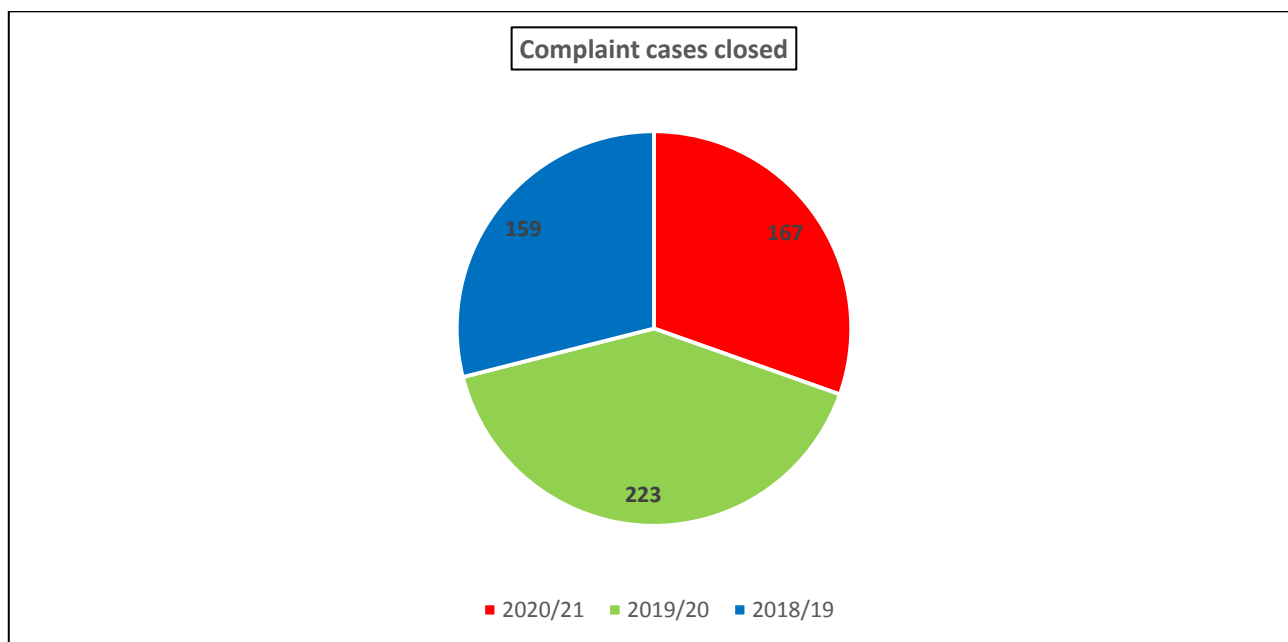
	2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
	No. of Cases	Within SLA	%	No. of Cases	Within SLA	%	No. of Cases	Within SLA	%
Comment	4	2	50	0	0	0	2	1	50
Complaint	159	55	34.59	223	64	28.70	167	79	47.31
Compliments	73	72	98.63	66	63	95.45	84	80	95.24
Question	21	14	66.67	19	9	47.37	21	14	66.67
Total assigned	257	143	55.64	308	136	44.16	274	174	63.50
Not assigned to a team	3	0	0	8	1	12.50	3	3	100
Total	260	143	55	316	137	43.35	277	177	63.90

Appendix 1



Closed Complaints

During 2020/21 there was a reduction of over 25% in the number of complaint cases closed than during 2019/20 however it was 5% higher than during 2018/19.



Complaint Issues

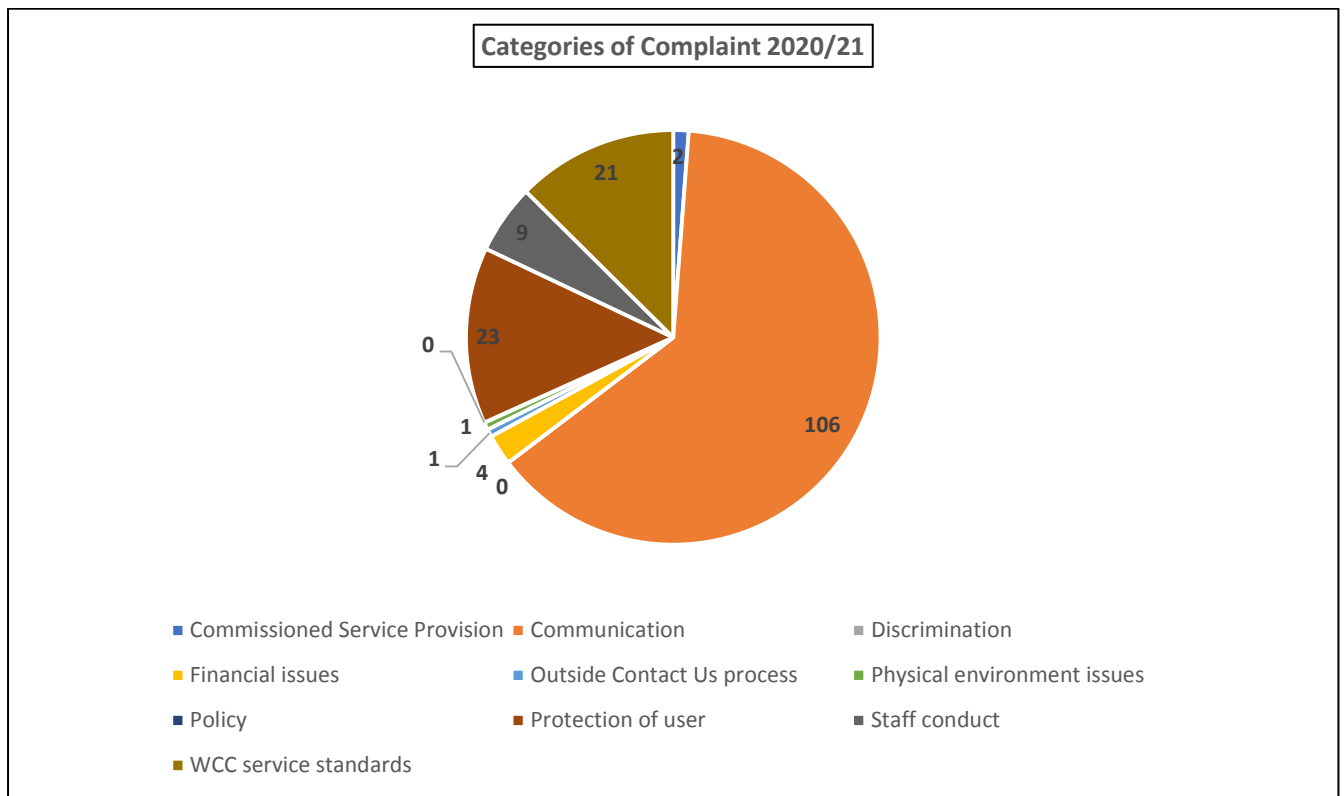
Most of the complaints raised focused on perceived issues with: Communication, protection of user, and WCC service standards. However, Contact Us currently only allows the selection of one complaint reason for each complaint raised therefore this may not provide a holistic view of all issues.

The table below shows the trend in categories of complaint to C&F services during the past 3 financial years.

Appendix 1

Complaints by Category			
Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Commissioned Service Provision	2	2	2
Communication	23	65	106
Discrimination	3	0	0
Financial issues	3	4	4
Outside Contact Us process	3	2	1
Physical environment issues	1	0	1
Policy	7	12	0
Protection of user	13	16	23
Staff conduct	37	49	9
WCC service standards	67	73	21

The pie chart details the categories of complaints closed during 2020/21.



Outcome and remedy for customers

Complaints closed by Outcome			
Outcome	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
No outcome provided	0	0	3
All: Transferred	2	0	3
Complaint: Deemed to be Withdrawn	6	6	7
Complaint: Inconclusive	6	9	7
Complaint: Not upheld	76	74	57
Complaint: Partially Upheld	29	42	25
Complaint: Upheld	12	14	11
Complaint: Withdrawn by Customer	2	7	4
Question: Answered	19	57	26
Question: Partially Answered	1	4	0
Question: Unable to Answer	5	10	24
	1	0	0

During 2020/21:

- Just over 34% of the complaints closed were not upheld
- Almost 22% of complaints have been either fully or partially upheld
- Almost 16% of questions have been answered as part of a complaint.

Complaints by Remedy			
Remedy	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Apology	25	52	30
Explanation	135	192	131
Financial Remedy	3	2	2
Policy Change	0	0	0
Process	2	2	4
Service	56	35	17

There can be more than one remedy to a complaint, but most of customers' issues have been resolved - at least partially - with an explanation being provided. A further significant proportion have been resolved by providing an explanation and/or apology.

Investigation Actions

Complaints by Investigation Action			
Action	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Complete Evidence Review	4	13	7
Confirm Investigation Action Plan	12	13	5
Contact Complainant to agree issues, desired outcomes and timescales	1	1	4
Finalise Response or Report	42	13	19
Make Recommendations	8	6	10
N/A - Question Answered	47	41	28
Reviewed Necessary Documents	141	204	144
Draft Response and Update with Comments	4	5	6
Use Evidence to Demonstrate Findings	3	3	5

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

During the financial year 2020/21 there were 21 complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO in respect of Warwickshire County Council. Of those the area of Children Social Care represented 2 cases, 1 which was upheld and 1 which was closed after initial enquiries.

Further information is available on the LGSCO website [here](#)

Learning from feedback

Putting things right where they have gone wrong and learning from issues raised is the most important part of our customer feedback process.

As mentioned, the current complaints case management system, Contact Us, is under review due to failings around the level of information it captures, as well as its ability to manage that information in a user-friendly, customer-centric way. Much of the detail in relation to learning from our customers' feedback therefore has been captured outside the system. There is a field 'Lessons learned' within Contact Us which should be completed by

the investigating officer once the complaint has been closed however on most occasions this field is used for case notes, is marked N/A or is left blank.

However, from the responses captured on the system the main categories of learning for the authority have been recorded as follows:

- Poor communication by officers both internally and with the customer
- Better planning required
- Staff training needed
- Improve the time for completing cases

Summary

Understanding our customers and their views is key to delivering the best possible service, which is something Warwickshire County Council is committed to striving to achieve.

Managing the timeliness of our responses is a high priority and this will be helped by a new case management system as it will give us greater visibility.

Performance highlight

- Number of cases created during 2020/21 was 6.4% up on 2019/20 however, nearly 4% down on 2018/19.
- Percentage of complaint cases closed within the SLA was 47% which is 18% higher than 2019/20 and 12% up on 2018/19.
- Compliments have increased by just over 31% on 2019/20 and 12% on 2018/19.
- Cases created digitally for C&F is currently (2020/21) almost 30% of all cases compared to approximately 77% corporately.
- 90% of the complaint cases were in relation to:
 - Communication 63%
 - Protection of User 14%
 - WCC service standards almost 13%

Maureen Oakes

July 2021