

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Corporate Performance Panel		
DATE:	25 February 2026		
TITLE:	Corporate Complaints and Data Protection monitoring report 1 April 2024- 31 March 2025		
TYPE OF REPORT:	For information only		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Cllr Alistair Beales		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Charlotte Marriott – Interim Corporate Governance Manager		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	No

REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE

PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY: This is the annual monitoring report for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 and provides a high-level breakdown of MP enquires, Corporate and Ombudsman Complaints and provides details on compliments and comments received during this period. This report also provides an overview of Data Protection and Information Governance processes, including Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received, Data Protection breaches reported corporately, together with breaches reported to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), for the same period.
OPTIONS CONSIDERED: The report is presented to the Corporate Performance Panel members for information only.
RECOMMENDATIONS: Members of the Corporate Performance Panel are asked to note the content of this report.
REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: Report presented for information only.

1. Introduction

1.1 During 2024-25, Officers began work to substantially updated the current Complaints Policy (2019), redesigning it into the Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy. The revised policy has been updated in line with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman complaints handling code, in addition to providing a clear process for residents to submit compliments and comments about our services.

Other key changes include:

- Clarity of process
- A strengthened focus on engaging directly with complainants at an early stage, alongside an enhanced emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Inclusion of definitions
- Expansion of the legal framework section
- Clarity of matters not in scope

1.2 Alongside the revised policy, we have begun to review our internal administration processes and the support available to Managers at each stage of the process.

The revised policy will be presented to CPP and Cabinet in due course.

1.3 There is a revised and strengthened approach to Data Protection and Information Governance, with a clear focus on embedding a data protection culture within the council and a clear direction of improving compliance and reducing risk.

A presentation outlining the proposed approach was delivered by the Interim Corporate Governance Manager to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) on 2 December 2025 and received CLTs full support.

The Information Governance Officer position had been vacant for an extended period. Recruitment was undertaken during December 2025, and the successful candidate commenced employment in January 2026. This role is central to delivering and embedding the council's revised data protection approach, ensuring consistent compliance and strengthened governance across all services.

1.4 As requested by Councillor David Sayers: Data Use and Access Act 2025 update.

The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 received royal ascent in June 2025. This act places a duty on organisation to have procedures in place to handle data protection complaints by June 2026.

Data protection complaints can come from anyone who's unhappy with how we've handled their personal data. For example, they may come from people who:

- are unhappy with our response to their subject access request (SAR)
- have been impacted by a data breach
- are unhappy about the way we've used their personal information (e.g. where it is stored, how long it has been kept for, or its accuracy).

Our current [data protection policy](#) (section 15) contains information on how individuals can raise a complaint about how their personal data is, or has been, processed. Officers are currently working on strengthening this approach and developing a standalone Data Protection Complaint procedure to ensure we fully comply with the requirements on the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

2. Monitoring Report

2.1 MP Enquiries

MPs are often contacted by their constituents for help and advice on a range of local issues or individual problems with a service delivered by the council. These are then passed to the relevant Service Manager for a response.

A total of 94 MP enquires were received during 2024-25, compared with 119 the previous year (2023-24).

A breakdown of the MP enquiries received and the service area they relate to is attached at Appendix A.

2.2 Corporate Complaints

49 Corporate Complaints were received during 2024/25, compared with 53 the previous year (2023-24). A breakdown of the outcomes of these complaints is included in the table below

Stage 1

Justified and upheld	7
Not justified, not upheld	25
Partially upheld	17

The outcomes of 12 of those 49 complaints received were appealed (stage 2). A breakdown of the appeal outcomes is included below

Stage 2

Justified and upheld	3
Not justified, not upheld	7
Partially upheld	2

A breakdown of the complaints received and the service area they relate to is attached at Appendix B.

2.3 Ombudsman Complaints

In total 13 complaints were considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), only 1 of these complaints was investigated by the LGSCO and was not upheld. Attached at Appendix C is the Ombudsman Annual Report 2024/25 for information.

2.4 Compliments

Whilst we receive complaints about a range of issues, we also receive compliments from customers, visitors and businesses expressing their gratitude and thanks for the service they received. This information is captured via online form and feedback is shared with the relevant colleagues and service areas to acknowledge the service provided by that individual or team.

During 2024-2025, we received 14 compliments from our residents. The Customer Information Centre (CIC) team also receive several compliments over the telephone from customers, but these are not formally recorded.

2.5 Freedom of Information (FOI) & Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Requests

During 2024-25 a total of 794 FOI/EIR requests were received, this is a slight increase from the previous year (781).

Of the 794 requests only 61% were completed within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days. The ICO states compliance rates that are less than 90% are 'unsatisfactory'.

A graphical illustration and breakdown of requests received, and compliance levels is attached at Appendix D.

If the requestor is not satisfied with the response to their information request, they can complain to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). For the year 2024-25, three FOI/EIRs were escalated to the ICO, none were upheld.

2.6 Data Protection

During 2024-25, 32 data breaches were reported to the Data Protection Officer (DPO), increasing from 28 the previous year. 30 were confirmed breaches. Reported breaches are assessed by the DPO to establish if they are reportable to the ICO. Of the 32 breaches, 4 were assessed as high risk and reported to the ICO. The ICO took no further action in all 4 cases.

2.7 Code of Conduct Complaints

This information is reported to the Standards Committee on an annual basis. Further information can be found [here](#)

2.8 Alive West Norfolk

The below information has been provided by Alive West Norfolk, as they are not currently aligned with corporate processes, and therefore record and monitor these functions separately.

No. of MP Enquiries	0
No. of total Corporate Complaints received (stage 1)	160
No. justified - upheld	-
No. not justified – not upheld	-

No partially upheld	-
Total no. of stage 2 complaints (appeals)	0
Justified and upheld	-
Not justified, not upheld	-
Partially upheld	-
Ombudsmen complaints	0
No of compliments received	Not tracked
No of FOI/EIR received	7
Compliance with statutory timeframe (%)	100%
No referred to ICO	None – see below
No of data breaches reported	3 (1 was referred to BCKLWN; 2 Alive – no data breaches). No ICO reporting needed.

- During 24/25 AWN did not track compliments.
- Complaints – founded and unfounded. AWN did not track this and since moving to IDOX this year there does not appear to be a way to track this either.

3. Issues for the Panel to Consider

3.1 The panel are asked to note the content of this report.

4. Corporate Priorities

4.1 Data protection and corporate complaints, compliments and comments processes span all corporate priorities.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 N/A – report is for monitoring purposes only.

6. Any other Implications/Risks

6.1 Reputational risk if complaints and data protection matters are not handled effectively

6.2 Financial risk if complaints and data protection matters are not handled correctly and in line with ombudsman and statutory requirements

7. Equal Opportunity Considerations

7.1 None – report is for monitoring purposes only.

It is worth noting that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) matters have been enhanced within the revised Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy, it will also be subject to our Equality Impact Assessment processes, as will any revised data protection policy and procedure.

8. Environmental Considerations

8.1 None

9. Consultation

9.1 N/A - report is for monitoring purposes only.

10. Conclusion

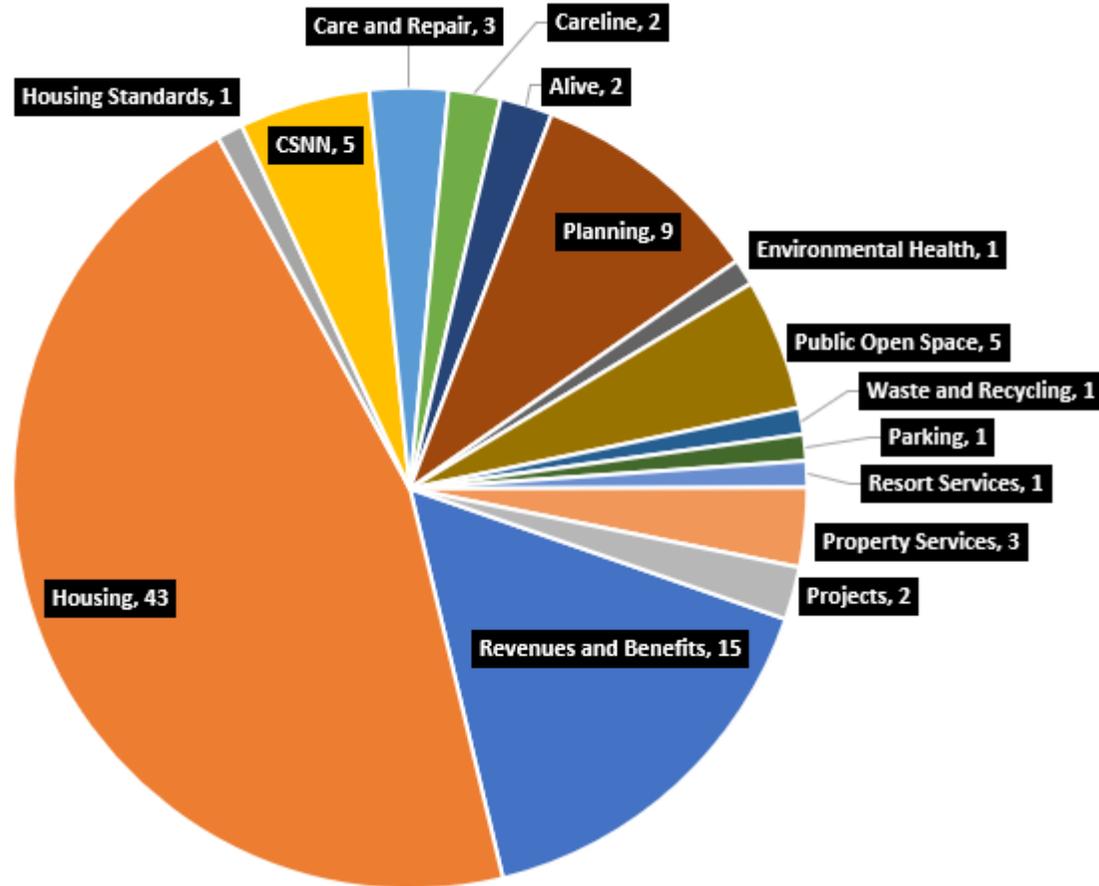
10.1 The panel are asked to note the content of this report.

11. Background Papers

11.1 None

Appendix A – Breakdown of MP enquiries received

MP enquiries by service area 2024-2025



Appendix B – Breakdown of the complaints received by service area

CORPORATE COMPLAINTS COMPLIANCE

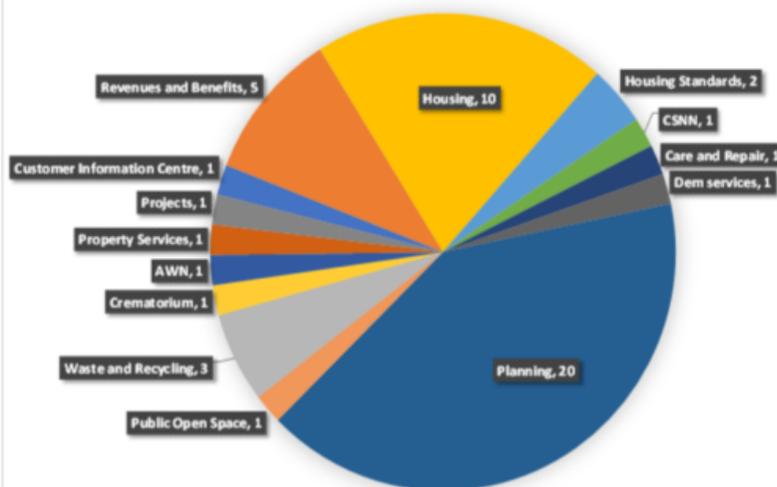
FY 2024-2025

Outcome	Justified	Not-justified	Partially justified
Of stage one	7	25	17

Outcome	Upheld	Not-upheld	Partially upheld
Of stage two	3	7	2

Stage 1 by month		Stage 2 by month	
Month	Total Received	Month	Total Received
April	6	April	2
May	10	May	0
June	3	June	0
July	4	July	1
August	3	August	1
September	2	September	0
October	4	October	1
November	3	November	0
December	2	December	1
January	4	January	2
February	2	February	3
March	6	March	1
Total:	49	Total:	12

Stage one corporate complaints by service area 2024-2025



Stage 2 by Service area	
Service area	Total Received
Revs and bens	2
Housing needs	3
Housing Standards	1
Planning	5
POS	1
Total:	12

Appendix C – LGSCO Annual Contact Review



21 May 2025

By email

Ms Blakemore
Chief Executive
King's Lynn & West Norfolk Council

Dear Ms Blakemore

Annual Review letter 2024-25

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2025. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints, and I know you will consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. We have listened to your feedback, and I am pleased to be able to share your annual statistics earlier in the year to better fit with local reporting cycles. I hope this proves helpful to you.

[Your annual statistics are available here.](#)

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

In a change to our approach, we will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about an organisation's complaint handling. Not all organisations will get a letter. If you do receive a letter it will be sent in advance of its publication on our website on 16 July 2025, alongside our annual Review of Local Government Complaints.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

In February we published [good practice guides](#) to support councils to adopt our [Complaint Handling Code](#). The guides were developed in consultation with councils that have been piloting the Code and are based on the real-life, front-line experience of people handling complaints day-to-day, including their experience of reporting to senior leaders and elected members. The guides were issued alongside free [training resources](#) organisations can use to make sure front-line staff understand what to do when someone raises a complaint. We will be applying the Code in our casework from April 2026 and we know a large number of councils have already adopted it into their local policies with positive results.

This year we relaunched our popular [complaint handling training](#) programme. The training is now more interactive than ever, providing delegates with an opportunity to consider a complaint from receipt to resolution. Early feedback has been extremely positive with delegates reporting an increase in confidence in handling complaints after completing the training. To find out more contact training@lgo.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Amerdeep Somal
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaint overview

2024 / 2025

Between 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, we dealt with 13 complaints. Of these, 3 were not for us or not ready for us to investigate. We assessed and closed 9 complaints. We investigated 1 complaints.

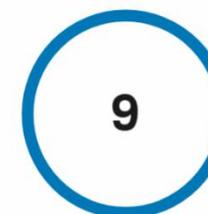
[More about this data](#)



Complaints dealt with



Not for us



Assessed and closed



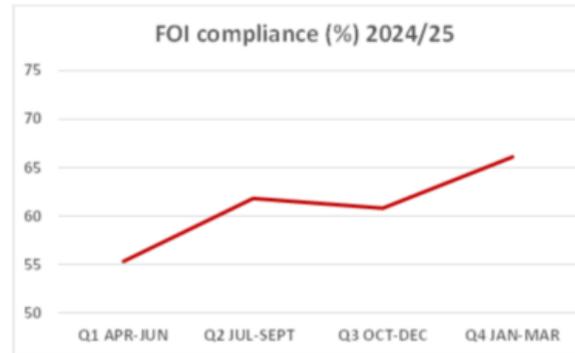
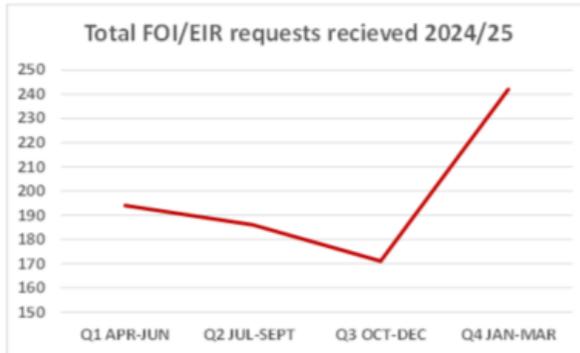
Investigated

Appendix D – FOI/EIR Breakdown

FOI STATISTICS & COMPLIANCE

FY 2024 –2025

FY 2024 –2025	Q1 APR - JUN	Q2 JUL - SEPT	Q3 - OCT - DEC	Q4 JAN - MAR	OVERALL
Total requests received (FOIA/EIR)	194	186	171	242	794
Response issued within statutory deadline	107	115	104	160	486
Response not issued within statutory deadline	87	71	67	82	307
Compliance rate (%)	55.1	61.8	60.8	66.1	61.2



Most Queried Service areas



The most queried departments for 24-25:

- 1) **Planning**—received 94 requests directed solely to them.
- 2) **Revenues and Benefits**—received 65 requests directed solely to them.
- 3) **Housing Needs**—received 51 requests directed solely to them.
- 4) **HR** —received 45 requests directed solely to them.
- 5) **Licensing**— received 40 requests directed solely to them.