

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Corporate Performance Panel		
DATE:	3 June 2026		
TITLE:	2025-26 Corporate Complaints and Data Protection Monitoring Report		
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:
<p>This is the annual monitoring report for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026 and provides a high-level breakdown of MP enquires, Corporate and Ombudsman Complaints and provides details on compliments and comments received during this period.</p> <p>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.</p>
KEY ISSUES:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compliance with Data Protection legislation is a statutory requirement for any organisation that processes personal data. 2. We are required to follow the guidance and best practice from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman on the handling of complaints.
OPTIONS CONSIDERED:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report is presented to the Corporate Performance Panel members for oversight and scrutiny.
RECOMMENDATIONS:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members of the Corporate Performance Panel are asked to scrutinise the content of this report.
REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The recommendation is made to align with the Corporate Performance Panel's core role in scrutinising corporate performance.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This annual monitoring report covers the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 and sets out the council's performance in complying with data protection legislation, internal policies, and the codes of practice governing the handling of complaints.
It provides a high-level breakdown of MP enquires, Corporate and Ombudsman Complaints and provides details on compliments and comments received during this period.
- 1.2 The annual monitoring report for the last financial year identified several risks arising from the council's Data Protection practices. Work was already underway to strengthen the strategic and operational approach in this area, and we are starting to see compliance improve, particularly in relation to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 1.3 Revised policies for Corporate Complaints and Data Protection are currently being finalised and will be presented to the committee in due course for consideration.
- 1.4 It is worth noting that the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 places new duties on organisations to publish a data protect complaints process, this new requirement comes into force at the end of June 2026. Our revised Data Protection policy will include a strengthen data protection complaint process in response to this new requirement.
- 1.5 The Corporate Governance team have faced significant resources challenges over the past few months, particularly affecting the staff that are responsible for managing and coordinating data protection matters.

2. Monitoring Report

2.1 Summary

- 46% increase in MP Enquiries from the previous year
- 47% increase in Corporate Complaints from the previous year
- FOI/EIR requests remain stable, although very high
- FOI/EIR compliance has increased to 91% - demonstrating a 30% increase in our compliance rate from the previous year

2.2 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 138 MP enquires were received during 2025-26, compared with 94 the previous year (2024-25).

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

2.3 Corporate Complaints

72 Corporate Complaints were received during 2025-26, compared with 49 the previous year (2024-25). A breakdown of the outcomes of these complaints is included in the table below:

Stage 1

Justified and upheld	15
Not justified, not upheld	40
Partially upheld	10

The outcomes of 18 of those 72 complaints received were appealed (stage 2). A breakdown of the appeal outcomes is included below

Stage 2

Justified and upheld	2
Not justified, not upheld	12
Partially upheld	4

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

2.4 Ombudsman Complaints

In total 9 complaints were considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), none were investigated. Attached at Appendix C is the Ombudsman Annual Report 2025-26 for information.

2.5 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 feedback is shared with the relevant service manager and is celebrated in Our News to acknowledge the service provided by that individual or team.

During 2025-26, the Corporate Governance team received 10 compliments from our residents regarding the below services:

- Planning
- Property Services
- Waste and Recycling
- Crematorium
- Street cleaning

- Parking
- CSNN/out of hours

The Customer Information Centre (CIC) team also receive several compliments over the telephone from customers, but these are not formally recorded.

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

- The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives the public a right of access to recorded information held by public authorities, subject to defined exemptions. The Council must respond to requests within 20 working days and maintain.
- The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 give the public a right of access to environmental information, with a stronger presumption in favour of disclosure than FOIA. EIR requests arise frequently across planning, highways, flood risk and waste services and are subject to the same 20 working day response obligation.

During 2025-26 a total of 789 FOI/EIR requests were received, this is broadly in line with the previous year (794).

Of the 789 requests **91.2%** were completed within the statutory timeframe of 20 working days. Our compliance rate for responses within the statutory timeframe last year was 61% - this clearly demonstrates a significant positive increase in our compliance and demonstrates the improvements we have made so far. The ICO states compliance rates that are less than 90% are 'unsatisfactory'. We are now above the 90% threshold that the Information Commissioner's Officer (ICO) specify as a satisfactory compliance rate. We are committed to increasing compliance further.

A graphical illustration and breakdown of requests received are attached at Appendix D.

If the requestor is not satisfied with the response to their information request, they can complain to the ICO. For the year 2025-26, 7 FOI/EIRs were escalated to the ICO, none were upheld.

2.7 Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs)

- The UK GDPR provides the right for individuals to request copies of their personal data from an organisation.

During the 2025-26 financial year we received 18 DSARs. These requests are often complex in nature and time consuming for Officers to respond to. Statutory timeframe for response is typically one calendar month. Our response compliance rate for 2025-26 was 94%.

2.8 Schedule 2 Requests

- A Schedule 2 data protection request is a legal provision under the Data Protection Act 2018 that allows specific organisations, such as the police, to request personal data without the data subject's consent, typically for crime prevention or detection.

During 2025-26 we received 136 schedule 2 requests, compared to 58 requests the previous year (134% increase). These requests often require immediate attention and responses, however the statutory timeframe is the same as a DSAR – one calendar month.

Our Schedule 2 request compliance for 2025-26 was 95%.

2.9 Data Breaches

- A data breach is an incident where data we are responsible for is lost, viewed by an unauthorised individual, corrupted or stolen.
- Breaches that pose a high risk to individuals must be reported to the ICO 'without undue delay, and at the latest within 72 hours after having become aware of the breach'.

During 2025-26, 34 data breaches were reported to the Data Protection Officer (DPO), a slight increase from the previous year (32). 23 were assessed confirmed breaches.

Reported breaches are assessed by the DPO to establish if they are reportable to the ICO. Of the 23 confirmed breaches, 4 were assessed as high risk and reported to the ICO. The ICO took no further action on 3 cases, we are still awaiting the outcome of the fourth case.

2.10 Code of Conduct Complaints

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

2.11 Leisure and Culture Services

The below information has been provided by our Leisure and Culture team, as they are not currently aligned with corporate processes, and therefore record and monitor these functions separately. Work is underway to align these key corporate functions for 2026-27.

No. of MP Enquiries	0
No. of complaints received	199
No. justified - upheld	-

No. not justified – not upheld	-
No partially upheld	-
Total no. of stage 2 complaints (appeals)	
Total no. of stage 2 complaints (appeals)	0
Justified and upheld	0
Not justified, not upheld	0
Partially upheld	0
Ombudsmen complaints	
Ombudsmen complaints	0
No of compliments received	
No of compliments received	191
No of FOI/EIR received	
No of FOI/EIR received	19
Compliance with statutory timeframe (%)	100%
No referred to ICO	0
No of DSARs received	
No of DSARs received	2
No of data breaches reported	
No of data breaches reported	0

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, however, it is worth noting the financial risk that non-compliance can result in.

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.

8. Environmental Considerations

8.1 None

9. Consultation

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

10. Conclusion

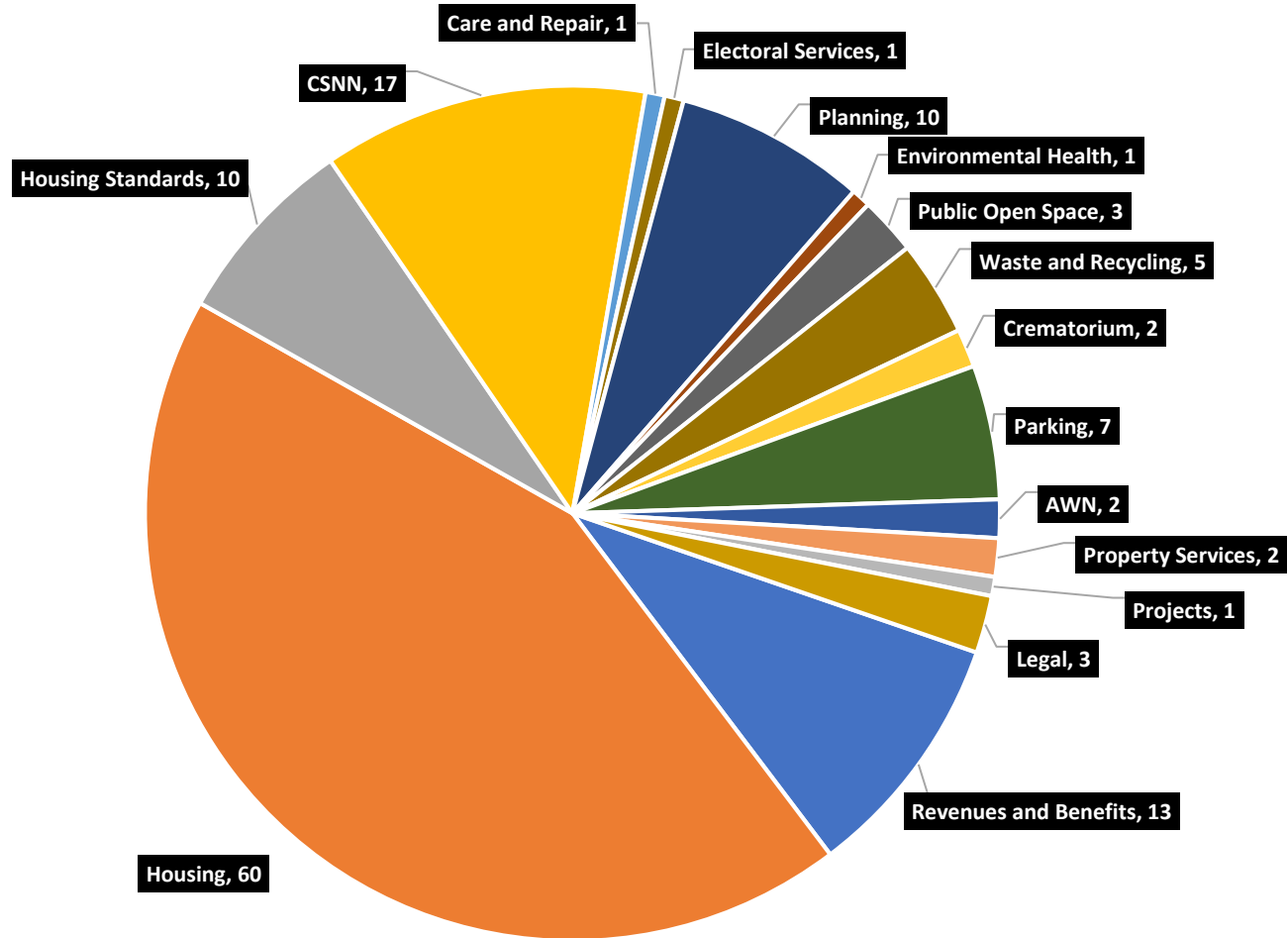
10.1 The panel are asked to scrutinise the content of this report.

11. Background Papers

11.1 [Agenda for Corporate Performance Panel on Wednesday, 25th February, 2026, 4.30 pm](#)

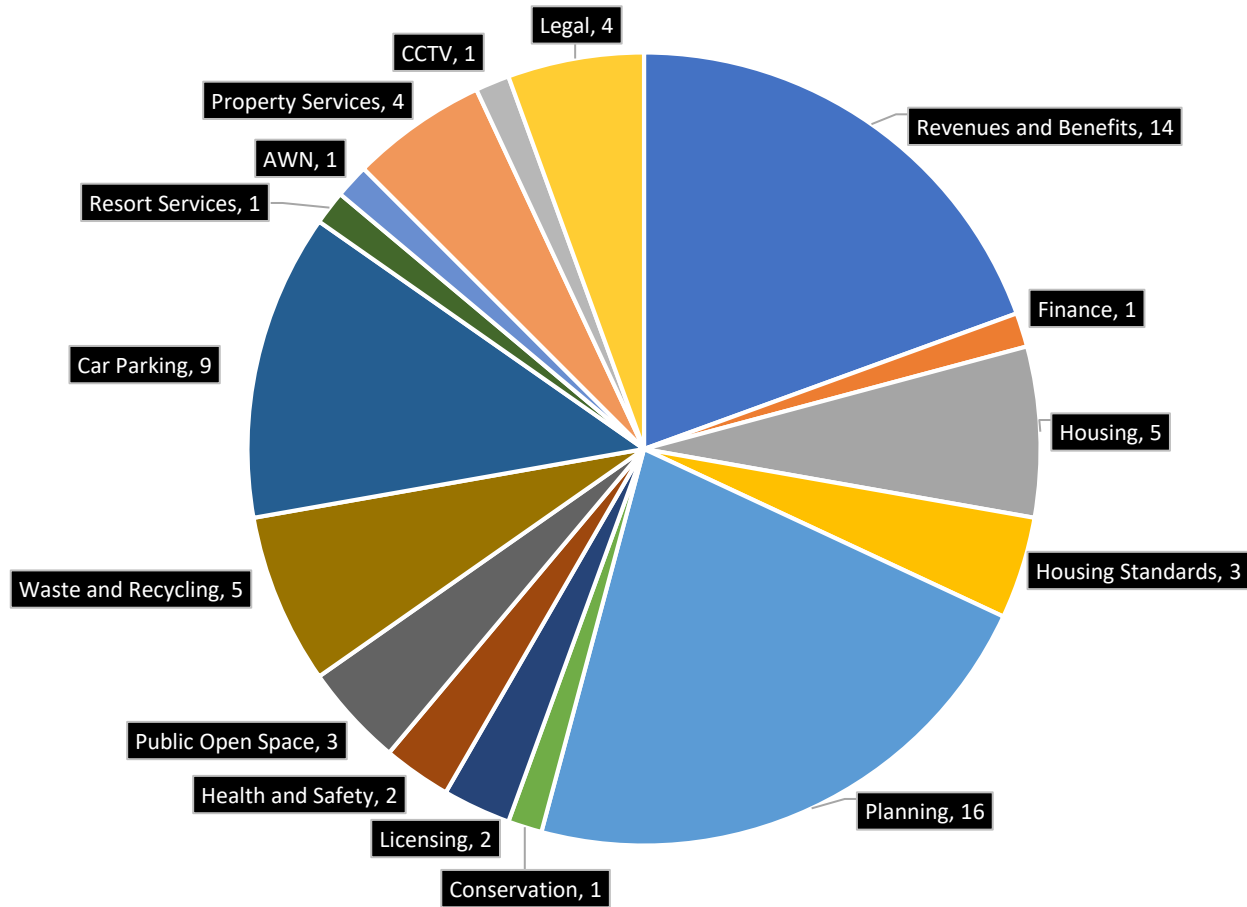
Appendix A -

MP enquiries by service area 2025-2026



Appendix B -

Stage one corporate complaints by service area 2025-2026



Appendix C – HOLD FOR LGSCO letter



20 May 2026

By email

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

Dear Ms Blakemore

Annual Review letter 2025-26

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 2026.

We recognise that local authorities continue to face significant pressures in delivering services to their communities. We hope the data and insight we share with you each year remains a useful tool for reflection and continuous improvement. Please consider it as part of your corporate governance processes.

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

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read 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.

We will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about 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 15 July 2026.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

We remain committed to supporting the sector to embed effective systems of redress. Where authorities are navigating reorganisation and devolution, we are ready to help ensure that robust complaint handling is built into new arrangements from the outset. Please do get in touch if your organisation would benefit from our advice and guidance.

Our [Complaint Handling Code](#), in force since April 2025, is now applied in our casework and offers structure and support to your local complaint system. Our training programme provides a flexible, expert-led route to building complaints capability across your teams, with courses open for individual delegates to book. Contact training@lgo.org.uk for more information.

Our Annual Review of Local Government Complaints will be published in July 2026, setting out the national picture of complaints, trends across service areas, and emerging systemic issues. We encourage you to read it alongside your own organisation's data.

Yours sincerely,

A. K. Clarke

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

Complaint overview

Reporting year

2025 / 2026

Update results

Between 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, we dealt with 9 complaints. Of these, 3 were not for us or not ready for us to investigate. We assessed and closed 6 complaints. We investigated 0 complaints.

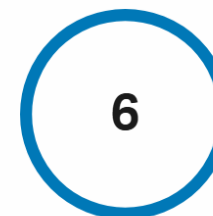
You can [search the decisions](#) behind these statistics and read our [annual letters to this council](#).



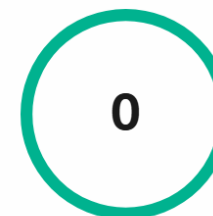
Complaints dealt with



Not for us



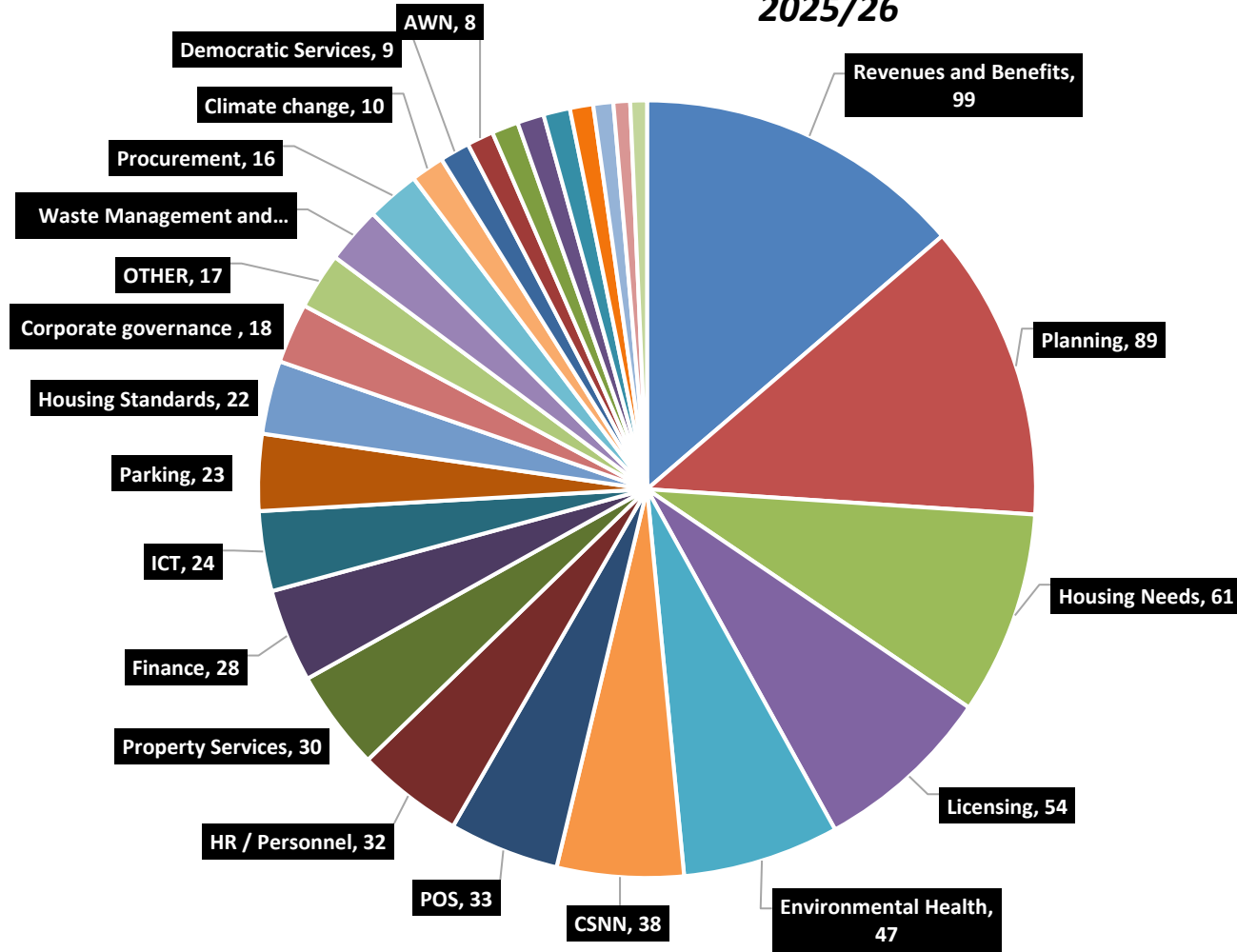
Assessed and closed



Investigated

Appendix D –

**Number of FOI/EIR Requests Received by Department
2025/26**



Service area	Number of Request Received
Revenues and Benefits	99
Planning	89
Housing Needs	61
Licensing	54
Environmental Health	47
CSNN	38
POS	33
HR / Personnel	32
Property Services	30
Finance	28
ICT	24
Parking	23
Housing Standards	22
Corporate governance	18
OTHER	17
Waste Management and Recycling	17
Procurement	16
Climate change	10
Democratic Services	9
AWN	8
Crematorium and Cemeteries	8
Planning Enforcement	8
Resorts	8
Housing Strategy	7
Legal Services	6
Comms	5
Regeneration	5