



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

17 July 2025

Customer Feedback Reports for 2024-25

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Zona Hannington –Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance & Customer Services
Lead Director:	Katherine Kynaston – Director: Housing, Commercial and Customer Services
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	SMT - 17 June 2025 Business Briefing - 26 June 2025 Cabinet - 17 July 2025

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note that Telford & Wrekin Council has been awarded ServiceMark accreditation by The Institute of Customer Services. The first Council to achieve a ServiceMark, this recognises excellence in customer service standards across the public and private sector.

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- 1.2 Review the Customer Feedback Reports for 2024-25 in respect of Adult Statutory Complaints, Children's Statutory Complaints and Corporate Customer Feedback, and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Review Letter 2025.
- 1.3 Note the improvement in complaint handling performance and the increase in positive feedback.

2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The Council through its existing Customer Strategy is committed to work collaboratively with our customers to develop quality services that are accessible to all.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the Council's customer feedback received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, to provide assurance that the Council is actively listening and responding to the views of our customers, and that services are learning from complaints and wider customer feedback to continuously improve.
- 2.3 The last year has seen an ongoing increase in the number of compliments received from customers, with complaints representing a very small proportion – less than 1% - of the many thousands of interactions with customers each year. As an early adopter and pilot authority for the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's new complaint handling code our response times have surpassed the forthcoming targets. We continue to offer multi-channel access, which is recognised by our customers.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Council has a well-established process for customers to tell us when things have gone well, they have received an excellent service, or we have exceeded their expectations and if they need to raise any concerns regarding the service they have received.
- 3.2 Our new Customer Strategy, which will be presented to Cabinet in September 2025, will reiterate our commitment to service excellence and will further embed the existing 'Everything Speaks' approach, paying attention to detail and reporting any issues they see with our services. As part of our established Customer Insight Programme, we have recruited Mystery Customers who help us to review our services from the customers' perspective, providing valuable feedback that allows our services to continually improve.
- 3.3 Following a rigorous external assessment the Council recently became the first Local Authority to receive a ServiceMark accreditation from the Institute of Customer Service (ICS). ServiceMark is a national standard, independently recognising an organisations commitment to customer service and to upholding high standards as part of a long-term embedded strategy.

- 3.4 Through the Institute of Customer Services (ICS), we are able to benchmark our services against public and private sector organisations across the UK. In September 2024 we completed our second customer benchmarking survey. The feedback from this and the accompanying workforce survey was excellent allowing the Council to be considered for a ServiceMark accreditation by the Institute.

Key results from the benchmarking survey include

- Our UK Customer Satisfaction Index Score improved from 72.1 achieved in 2022 to 74.0. Demonstrating a clear improvement in our customers experiences. Our score is more comparable to the scoring across all sector organisations in the UK, such as Amazon and John Lewis (76.1) than other public services (71.0)
- Our Net Promoter score also improved from 18.0 in 2022 to 19.4, demonstrating that an increasing number of our customers are likely to promote our organisation to others
- A Customer Effort Score of 4.3, this score reflects the effort our customer must make to access our services (the lower the score the better). This is an excellent score comparing to the average for other local councils which was 5.8 and exceeding the average for Public Services at 5.1 and the average for all organisations across the UK which is 4.5. This is a clear indicator that improvements to our online offer and service access is being received positively by residents.

- 3.5 Following the assessment the Council became the first Council to be awarded the ICS ServiceMark reflecting our performance and continued ambition to listen to our customers and to drive further improvement. The assessor confirmed that *'Telford & Wrekin Council's commitment to service excellence is evident in its strategic direction, the engagement and motivation of its workforce and the effectiveness of its day-to-day service delivery'*. This accreditation fulfils our ambition when developing our 2021 Customer Strategy which was titled 'Our journey to excellence by 2025'. The accreditation provides us with a platform for continual improvement and to shape our 2025 Customer Strategy.

- 3.6 Our customers can also raise issues directly with the Council's Leader, Cabinet and Ward Members via our Cabinet and Member Enquiry processes, which also allows any trends to be identified and highlights any service development opportunities.

- 3.7 Compliments and positive feedback are shared across the Council and within teams, to inspire, motivate and build confidence and ensure that examples of best practice are used to help develop services.

- 3.8 To demonstrate a robust approach to responding to customer feedback and complaint handling, the Council produces an annual report on complaint handling for Children's Statutory Complaints, Adult's Statutory Complaints and Corporate Feedback. These reports can be found at Appendices A, B and C.

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- 3.9 Our residents are continuing to experience the impact of ongoing cost of living pressures. These impact upon almost every aspect of our residents' lives, including their health and wellbeing, their housing options and family life. This in addition to the boroughs growing and aging population has resulted in the Council continuing to see significant demand, rising expectations and increased pressure on, all its services.
- 3.10 The ICS continues to report that across all organisations customer's needs and expectations have changed and there is a general increase in complaints as a result. Nationally, customer satisfaction has fallen.
- 3.11 In 2024/25 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman published their new complaint handling code. While not due to be formally monitored until 2026/27 Telford and Wrekin Council became early adopters of the code in May 2024 and have been working with the Ombudsman as part of a pilot of a small group of unitary authorities to assist in the development of guidance for Council's when using the code.

4 Summary of main proposals

4.1 Corporate Feedback Report (Appendix A)

- 4.1.1 The Corporate Feedback Report shows that there has been a sustained increase in compliments. The Council has seen a 128% increase in compliments in the last 6 years – 17% in the last 2 years.
- 4.1.2 The Customer Insight Programme now has 235 volunteers registered as Mystery Customers and undertaking assignments to help us shape and improve our services. We have seen a 9% increase in volunteers during 2024/25.
- 4.1.3 During 2024/25 the Customer Insight Programme completed a number of reviews of different elements of the customer experience focussing particularly on our access channels including physical locations, digital channel, telephone services and Ask Tom Telephony. This feedback has shaped the development of the new Customer Strategy.
- 4.1.4 Alongside the Customer Strategy reviews, Mystery Customers have also completed other reviews including the new Community Calendar. During the year 158 Customer Insight assignments were completed with an overall 86% satisfaction with the experience when using the Council's services, across all the assignments completed.
- 4.1.5 Feedback from customers in relation to our Corporate Contact Centre indicates that performance is excellent. Customer satisfaction on our contact centre telephone calls was 95%, an increase on 93% in 2023/24. In addition, 98% of customers also expressed satisfaction with the experience of using our online Automated Assistant, Ask Tom.

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- 4.1.6 During 2024/25 focused work has begun on improving the overall satisfaction of logging jobs through MyTelford. The total number of jobs logged through MyTelford during 2024/25 was 86,749. A satisfaction survey was included on all job closure emails to customers. There is also an ongoing review of all closing emails that are sent to customers to ensure that the information provided is clear and outlines the reasons why the job has been closed. Whilst this work is ongoing, there have been clear improvements in our customers satisfaction particularly with the use of the MyTelford App with satisfaction improving from 52% in January 2024 to 72% by the end of March 2025.
- 4.1.7 There continues to be a range of ways that our customers can provide feedback e.g. QR Code Surveys, automated telephone surveys at the end of calls, Mystery Customer programme and other mechanisms such as the Making It Real Board. Any improvements made are included on our 'You said, We did' webpage, which can be found here [You said, We did](#).
- 4.1.8 In 2024/25 a total of 790 complaints were received across the Council, including statutory complaints, from 735 complainants. This is an incredibly small proportion, less than 1%, of the many thousands of transactions and interactions that take place across the organisation every year.
- 4.1.9 In 2024/25 710 of these were corporate complaints, an increase on the 659 that were received in 2023/24. Sixteen anonymous complaints were received. The remaining complaints were children's and adult's statutory complaints (see Section 4.2 and 4.3).
- 4.1.10 During the year, at the first stage of the complaints process, 12 complaints were not accepted because they were subject to court proceedings, a Tribunal process or related to historic matters. All cases were provided with the details of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. 40 complaints were received which were for other organisations including, Police, Wrekin Housing Group, Schools, Telford Town Centre owners. These were appropriately signposted.
- 4.1.11 Of the 711 corporate complaints that were responded to in the year 40% (281) were upheld, this is where services have acknowledged that we could have done better. This is a reduction in the percentage of upheld complaints compared to 2023/24 (42%). 56% (400) were not upheld, 4% of complaints were either withdrawn or resolved by service before the complaint was processed.
- 4.1.12 During 2024/25 the Council has responded to corporate complaints in an average of 8 days (improving on the average response timescale of 10 working days achieved in 2023/24) and well within the new timescale of 10 working days introduced from 16 May 2024 and in accordance with the Local Government Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. This reduced the required timescale for a stage one response from 15 to 10 working days.
- 4.1.13 Since the new timescale of 10 working days was formally approved in May 2024, 84% of corporate complaints were responded to within this timescale.

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- 4.1.14 13% of the corporate complaints received escalated to stage two of the procedure. In terms of numbers. This equates to 91 stage two complaints and is a 30% increase on the 70 that progressed in 2023/24. Of the 87 received in year and completed to date, 26% were upheld.
- 4.1.15 All complaints upheld have been reviewed to ensure wider learning to avoid such issues occurring in the future. There are no major trends, however common themes across all directorates include issues with communication, complaints involving staff, incomplete work/service, lack of action and delays in processing.
- 4.1.16 Examples of positive improvements resulting from learning following complaints can be seen at page 33 of the Corporate Feedback Report (Appendix A).
- 4.1.17 As well as compliments and complaints, the Customer Relationship Team manages the Leader and Cabinet enquiry process, Member enquiry process and MP enquiries. During 2024/25 a total of 796 Leader and Cabinet enquiries were received. A proportion of these enquiries were responded to as urgent enquiries with tight timescales. However, 90% of responses were provided within the target timescales and this is in line with performance targets.
- 4.1.18 Under Telford and Wrekin Council's Registered Housing Provider status we own/manage 219 properties. 5 complaints were received from tenants in these properties during 2024/25. All complaints were responded to in accordance with the statutory code and timescales outlined by the Housing Ombudsman Service and none progressed to the Ombudsman Service.
- 4.1.19 From May 2024 the Policy and procedure for reporting complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation was combined into one corporate complaint procedure. We have produced a reference document on 'How we respond to complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)' which can be found here [Complaints procedures - Telford & Wrekin Council](#). During 2024/25 no complaints were received which involved Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

4.2 Adult Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix B)

- 4.2.1 We received 57 Adult Statutory complaints in 2024/25, an increase on the 39 received in 2023/24. A further 24 complaints were resolved under the 24-hour resolution process and were therefore not registered under the statutory procedure in accordance with legislation. Overall, the number of dissatisfactions raised has reduced to 81 compared to 94 in 2023/24. Of the complaints responded to in the year, 44% (25) were upheld – a significant reduction in the 70% upheld in 2023/24.
- 4.2.2 To provide some context, Adult Social Services have received 8,500 contacts from new people in the year and 2,085 people are receiving long term services. Therefore, the number of complaints received equates to less than 1% of all transactions.

- 4.2.3 The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) regulations 2009 set a benchmark for all Adult Statutory Complaints to be investigated within six months. When an Adult statutory complaint is received, we negotiate a timescale with the complainants, depending on the complexity of the case, this is typically 35 working days. We aim to respond to all Adult Statutory Complaints within a maximum of 65 working days. In 2024/25 the average number of days to respond was 24 working days a reduction on the 29 working days achieved in 2023/24. Due to the complexity of the cases, two did exceed 65 working days during the year. Whilst these complex cases were being investigated, we kept in touch with the complainants in order to keep them informed.
- 4.2.4 Examples of positive improvements resulting from learning following complaints can be seen from page 11 of the Adult Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix B).
- 4.2.5 Our Adult Social Care service is committed to achieving improved outcomes through continuous learning and improvement. A key area of quality assurance is using feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families to understand experiences and shape improvements, demonstrating a commitment to learning from all feedback, regardless of source, format or process.
- 4.2.6 During 2024 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out an assessment of our Adult Social Care, following which it was confirmed that it had received a 'Good' rating in relation to how well we are meeting our statutory responsibilities to ensure people have access to adult social care and support. The CQC report highlighted many key strengths within the Adult Social Care service, including our innovative approach to co-production, engagement, and inclusion, as well as promoting independence, which places community participation at the heart of strategy and service development. The CQC confirmed that *'As part of the assessment, we received multiple examples of leaders engaging effectively with staff, partners and people using services. People told us of genuine cooperative approaches which made them feel listened to'*. Further *'There was clear evidence learning from concerns and incidents was a key contributor to continuous improvement'*.
- 4.2.7 Quality assurance reports are prepared, shared and discussed at the ASC Quality Assurance Delivery Group and subsequently at the ASC Assurance Board. These include a quarterly report on 'Feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families' that includes issues, areas for reflection and improvement and learning outcomes.

4.3 Children's Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix C)

- 4.3.1 We received 23 Children's statutory complaints in 2024/25, in line with the 23 received in 2023/24. Four cases progressed to an independent Stage 2 investigation during the year. One Stage 3 panel was completed in 2024/25.
- 4.3.2 To provide some context, Children's Safeguarding and Family Support received a total of 6,687 contacts during the year, this includes telephone calls and emails

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and had 1,402 referrals into the service completed during the year. Therefore, the number of complaints received equates to less than 1% of all transactions.

- 4.3.3 Of the complaints completed in the year, 43% (10) of the complaints were upheld.
- 4.3.4 The average number of days to respond to Children's Statutory Complaints during the year was 14 working days, which is in line with the 14 working days achieved in 2023/24.
- 4.3.5 At stage 2, three complaints were not upheld, with one which was still subject to investigation on 31 March 2025 subsequently progressing to stage 3. This case was upheld but this related to historical service standards which have subsequently improved.
- 4.3.6 Examples of positive improvements resulting from learning following complaints can be seen from page 10 of the Children's Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix C).
- 4.3.7 Our Children's Safeguarding and Family Support Service is committed to continuous learning and improvement using feedback from customers who use our services, such as parents, carers, professionals, colleagues, children and young people and their families.
- 4.3.8 The service has also introduced a Voice of the Child Team, which includes four young people with lived experience who are completing apprenticeships with the Council. Their goal is to drive positive change by making sure young people's voices are truly heard. They have launched youth forums, delivered participation events all designed to connect, uplift and empower. They are also representing young voices nationally and they are supporting ideas to engage with children and young people which will inform continuous learning and improvement.
- 4.3.9 During 2024 children's services were inspected by Ofsted. The HMI Inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of Telford & Wrekin's Children's Services as 'Outstanding'. The Lead Inspector commented that '*Children and families in Telford and Wrekin continue to experience exceptional social work practice when they are in care and as care leavers.*' Participation and co-production, through having children's and families involved in development of services, was also highlighted as a real strength of the service. '*Participation is a real strength and children's and families' involvement is threaded throughout service developments.*'
- 4.3.10 Feedback from customers about their experiences of children's social care provisions is monitored in accordance with our Quality Assurance Framework. A monthly Quality Assurance meeting is held to discuss issues identified, areas for reflection and improvement and learning outcomes from feedback. All of this ensures that we continue to 'close the loop' to ensure that learning from Quality Assurance is used in a meaningful way. Actions informed by this feedback can be found at page 13 of Appendix C.

4.4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Enquiries (Appendix D)

- 4.4.1 During 2024/25 a total of 30 new enquiries were escalated to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, three remained outstanding from the year before and decisions were received in this year. Two detailed investigations remained open on 31 March 2025 (One corporate and one Children's Statutory complaint).
- 4.4.2 During the year, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman made the decision that they were not going to investigate 21 of the enquiries. However, they did complete 9 detailed investigations. The Ombudsman upheld six detailed investigations although in three of these cases they did not formally investigate but confirmed the Council's findings. The Council has already implemented remedies in all of these cases, in three of the cases a satisfactory remedy and been provided by the Council before it the complaint reached the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman has confirmed the council has complied with 100% of the recommendations made during the year. Three detailed investigations were not upheld.
- 4.4.3 In all cases where complaints were upheld the Council has apologised to customers and has taken learning forward to improve practices.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Failure to robustly manage and monitor customer feedback and complaints would not accord with duties placed on Local Authorities to do so and would undermine the Council's ability to deliver continuous improvement in services that meet resident's needs.

6 Key Risks

- 6.1 Ineffective handling of complaints and management of the complaints procedures may result in reputational damage and financial costs to the Council.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 A community- focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

Key outcome: Our customer experience is the best possible and facilities are accessible to all.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The cost of dealing with complaints is mainly in the form of officer time and is therefore met from existing Council budgets within Customer Services. If a complaint is upheld, additional costs may be incurred in particular to those that are requested by the Ombudsman re a financial remedy; these costs would also

be met by existing council budgets within this respective service area. The 2024/25 cost of membership to the Institute of Customer Services (ICS) and the mystery customer exercise has been funded from one off reserves.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. It should be noted, however, that under the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, there are some complaints involving Children's Services and Family Safeguarding which must follow the procedure contained within the Regulations. Where a complaint is made which is of a type that should be dealt with under the Regulations, the Council is required to ensure that this occurs.
- 9.2 Complaints about Adult Social Care Services are governed by The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 and guidance: Listening, responding, improving: a guide to better customer care.
- 9.3 The policies to which the Council works in respect of customer feedback and complaints is in line with the latest guidance issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service.
- 9.4 The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 Not applicable

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 Some complaints relate to Social Care, there are strong links into the local health and care system.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 All our complaints policies provide an opportunity for residents to raise any concerns around inequality. Our policies take account of our customers communication accessibility needs.
- 12.2 The policies specifically meet the aims of the public sector equality duty; eliminate unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations, for people who share protected characteristics. To ensure that we continue to meet this enduring duty we collect data on a regular basis on complainants and report on the protected characteristics of complainants and nature of any discrimination or inequality.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 Not applicable

14.0 Background Papers

14.1 You said, We did [webpage](#).

‘How we respond to complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)’-
[Complaints procedures - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

The Tenant Satisfaction and Complaints Report 2024-25
[Complaints and compliments annual reports - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

15.0 Appendices

- A Corporate Feedback Report 2024-25
- B Adult’s Statutory Complaint Report 2024-25
- C Children’s Statutory Complaint Report 2024-25
- D Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Review Letter 2025 link to [Telford & Wrekin Council - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	09/06/2025	12/06/2025	SH
Finance	07/07/2025	08/07/2025	CM