



South Tyneside Council

Complaints and Compliments - Annual Report 2025/26

**This document has been classified as:
Not Protectively Marked**

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Standards Committee – 6 July 2026

Report to Standards Committee

Cabinet Portfolio/Lead Member: Councillor Susan Sybenga, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Report of Lucy Keating, Director of Legal and Governance – Monitoring Officer

Subject: Complaints and compliments – Annual Report 2025/26

Date: 6 July 2026

Wards affected: All

Council ambitions: Part of strong communities
Targeting support to make things fairer

Does the report and any appendices contain information which has been identified as confidential or exempt?

- No, this report does not contain information identified as confidential or exempt.

For Executive Decisions only:

Is the decision a Key Decision? N/A

Is it included in the Forward Plan? N/A

If not in the Forward Plan is the report: N/A

Relevant Scrutiny Chair: Councillor Shirley Ford

Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny? No

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on complaint handling throughout 2025/26 and offer assurance to the Committee that the Corporate Complaints Framework is effective.

Background Information

1. The role of the Standards Committee is to have an overview of the Complaints Handling Procedures and the Ombudsman's Investigations.
2. This report covers complaints about service delivery which have progressed through the Council's Corporate Complaints process, as well as Statutory Complaints for both Children and Adult Services.
3. The report also provides information on cases which have been independently considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).
4. The report also provides information on compliments received about Council services.
5. The committee are asked to consider a range of data, including that in the public domain (LGSCO website) and data compiled to support them to ask questions on complaints that have been investigated internally.

Main issues and Options to be Considered

2. 951 corporate complaints were received in 2025/26; a 16% reduction compared to 2024/25. This continues the overall downward trajectory of complaints received since 2017 (not including Covid year).
3. The majority of complaints were related to quality of service (29%), delays in providing a service (19%) or unhappiness with a decision we have made (16%).
4. 42% of complaints were either partially or fully upheld, the same amount as 2024/25.
5. 86% of corporate complaints were dealt with at Stage 1 of the complaints process.
6. 30 LGSCO decisions were received in 2025/26, 7 of which were upheld.
7. 1,112 compliments were received in 2025/26.
8. The committee are asked to note the information presented.

Implications

Financial and Resources

9. There are no direct financial or value for money implications arising from the Report.

Legal and Governance

10. There are no identified legal implications arising from the Report.

Risk

11. There are no direct risk implications arising from the Report.

Equality and Diversity and Community

12. There are no identified equality and diversity implications arising from the Report.

Environmental and Sustainability

13. There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising from the Report.

Council Ambitions, Policies, Strategies and Plans

14. It is important that the Council has a robust framework in place to ensure that complaints are managed appropriately, and that residents, customers and service users have confidence that any complaints are dealt with in a professional manner.

Consultation and Engagement

15. This report is publicly available to the press and public. Members of the Standards Committee may wish to signpost colleagues across the Council to this Report for wider awareness.

Recommendations

16. The Committee are asked to note the content of the report.

Reasons for Recommendations

17. To ensure that Standards Committee have confidence that the Council's Complaints framework is fit for purpose.

List of Appendices

18. Presentation – Complaints and Compliments – Annual Report 2025/26

Complaints and Compliments

Annual Report 2025/26

The following is a list of the background papers (excluding exempt papers) relied upon in the preparation of the above report:

Background Paper	File Ref:	File Location